School Profile

Created Tuesday, September 18, 2012

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School Information

School Information	District Name:	Pierce County Schools
School Information	School or Center Name:	Pierce County Middle School

Level of School

Middle (6-8)

Principal

Principal | Name:	Perry Tison
Principal | Position:	Principal
Principal | Phone:	912-449-2077
Principal | Email:	ptision@pierce.k12.ga.us

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

School contact information | Name:	Amanda Gay
School contact information | Position:	Instructional Coach
School contact information | Phone:	912-449-2077
School contact information | Email:	agay@pierce.k12.ga.us

Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

6-8

Number of Teachers in School

45

FTE Enrollment

950

Fiscal Agent Memo of Understanding

The application is the project <u>implementation plan</u>, not simply a proposal. This project is expected to be implemented with fidelity upon SBOE approval. When completing the application, please remember that sub-grantees will not be permitted to change the project's scope that is originally outlined in the application, scored by reviewers during the application review process, and approved by SBOE. This policy is designed to provide basic fairness to applicants for discretionary sub-grants.

Fiscal Agent/Applicant Required Signatures:

I hereby certify that I am the an authorized signatory of the fiscal agent for which grant application is made and that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and accurate. I further certify, to the best of my knowledge, that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, application guidelines and instructions, assurances, and certifications. I also certify that the requested budget amounts are necessary for the implementation of the program described in the attached application.

Please sign in blue ink.

Name of **Fiscal Agent's** Contact Person: ___Tonya Johnson___

Position/Title of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: <u>Dir. of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment</u>
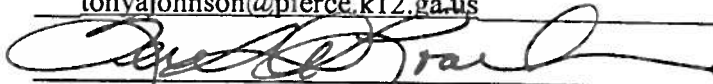
Address: ___P.O. Box 349___

City: ___Blackshear, GA___   Zip: ___31516___

Telephone: (_912_) __449-2044__   Fax: (_912_) __449-2046__

E-mail:
___tonyajohnson@pierce.k12.ga.us___

Signature of Fiscal Agency Head (District Superintendent or Executive Director)

___Terri DeLoach, Superintendent___
Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head (District Superintendent or Executive Director)

___10/23/12___
Date (required)

Georgia Department of Education
Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy

Georgia's conflict of interest and disclosure policy is applicable to entities conducting business on behalf of and /or doing business with the Department and entities receiving a grant to implement a program and/or project approved by the State Board of Education. This policy is applicable for entities receiving state and/or Federal funds.

Questions regarding the Department's conflict of interest and disclosure policy should be directed to the program manager responsible for the contract, purchase order and/or grant.

I. **Conflicts of Interest**
It is the policy of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to avoid doing business with Applicants, subcontractors of Applicants who have a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest. The purpose of this policy is to maintain the highest level of integrity within its workforce, and to ensure that the award of grant Agreements is based upon fairness and merit.

a. **Organizational Conflicts of Interest**.
All grant applicants ("Applicants") shall provide a statement in their proposal which describes in a concise manner all past, present or planned organizational, financial, contractual or other interest(s) with an organization regulated by the GaDOE, including but not limited to Local Education Agencies (LEAs), or with an organization whose interests may be substantially affected by GaDOE activities, and which is related to the work under this grant solicitation. The interest(s) in which conflict may occur shall include those of the Applicant, its affiliates, proposed consultants, proposed subcontractors and key personnel of any of the above. Past interest shall be limited to within one year of the date of the Applicant's grant proposal. Key personnel shall include:

- any person owning more than 20% interest in the Applicant
- the Applicant's corporate officers
- board members
- senior managers
- any employee who is responsible for making a decision or taking an action on this grant application or any resulting Agreement where the decision or action can have an economic or other impact on the interests of a regulated or affected organization.

i. The Applicant shall describe in detail why it believes, in light of the interest(s) identified in (a) above, that performance of the proposed Agreement can be accomplished in an impartial and objective manner.
ii. In the absence of any relevant interest identified in (a) above, the Applicant shall submit in its grant application a statement certifying that to the best of its knowledge and belief no affiliation exists relevant to possible conflicts of interest. The Applicant must obtain the same information from potential subcontractors prior to award of a subcontract.

    iii. GaDOE will review the statement submitted and may require additional relevant information from the Applicant. All such information, and any other relevant information known to GaDOE, will be used to determine whether an award to the Applicant may create a conflict of interest. If any such conflict of interest is found to exist, GaDOE may:

        1. Disqualify the Applicant, or

        2. Determine that it is otherwise in the best interest of GaDOE to make an award to the Applicant and include appropriate provisions to mitigate or avoid such conflict in the grant awarded.

    iv. The refusal to provide the disclosure or representation, or any additional information required, may result in disqualification of the Applicant for an award. If nondisclosure or misrepresentation is discovered after award, the resulting grant Agreement may be terminated. If after award the Applicant discovers a conflict of interest with respect to the grant awarded as a result of this solicitation, which could not reasonably have been known prior to award, an immediate and full disclosure shall be made in writing to GaDOE. The disclosure shall include a full description of the conflict, a description of the action the Applicant has taken, or proposes to take, to avoid or mitigate such conflict. GaDOE may, however, terminate the Agreement for convenience if GaDOE deems that termination is in the best interest of the GaDOE.

b. Employee Relationships

    i. The Applicant must provide the following information with its application and must provide an information update within 30 days of the award of a contract, any subcontract, or any consultant agreement, or within 30 days of the retention of a Subject Individual or former GaDOE employee subject to this clause:

        1. The names of all Subject Individuals who:

           a. Participated in preparation of proposals for award; or

           b. Are planned to be used during performance; or

           c. Are used during performance; and

    ii. The names of all former GaDOE employees, retained by the Applicant who were employed by GaDOE during the two year period immediately prior to the date of:

        1. The award; or

        2. Their retention by the Applicant; and

        3. The date on which the initial expression of interest in a future financial arrangement was discussed with the Applicant by any former GaDOE employee whose name is required to be provided by the contractor pursuant to subparagraph (ii); and

        4. The location where any Subject Individual or former GaDOE employee whose name is required to be provided by the Applicant pursuant to subparagraphs (i) and (ii), are expected to be assigned.

    iii. "Subject Individual" means a current GaDOE employee or a current GaDOE employee's father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, spouse of an in-law, or a member of his/her household.

    iv. The Applicant must incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements awarded under this Agreement and must further require that each such subcontractor or consultant incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements at any tier awarded under this Agreement unless GaDOE determines otherwise.

    v. The information as it is submitted must be certified as being true and correct. If there is no such information, the certification must so state.

c. **Remedies for Nondisclosure**
The following are possible remedies available to the GaDOE should an Applicant misrepresent or refuse to disclose or misrepresent any information required by this clause:

    1. Termination of the Agreement.
    2. Exclusion from subsequent GaDOE grant opportunities.
    3. Other remedial action as may be permitted or provided by law or regulation or policy or by the terms of the grant agreement.

d. **Annual Certification**. The Applicant must provide annually, based on the anniversary date of Agreement award, the following certification in writing to GaDOE. The annual certification must be submitted with the grantees annual end of year program report.

ANNUAL CERTIFICATION OF DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

The Applicant represents and certifies that to the best of its knowledge and belief that during the prior 12 month period:

[ ] A former GaDOE employee(s), current GaDOE employee, or Subject Individual(s) has been retained to work under the Agreement or subcontract or consultant agreement and complete disclosure has been made.

[ ] No former GaDOE employee(s), current GaDOE employee, or Subject Individual(s) has been retained to work under the Agreement or subcontract or consultant agreement, and disclosure is not required.

II. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest after Agreement Execution**

If after Agreement execution, Applicant discovers a conflict of interest which could not reasonably have been known prior to Agreement execution; an immediate and full disclosure shall be made in writing to GaDOE. The disclosure shall include a full description of the conflict, a description of the action the Applicant has taken, or proposes to take, to avoid or mitigate such conflict. GaDOE may, however, terminate this Agreement for convenience if GaDOE deems that termination is in the best interest of GaDOE.

Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

III. <u>**Incorporation of Clauses**</u>

The Applicant must incorporate the clauses in paragraphs A, B, and C of this section into all subcontracts or consultant agreements awarded under this Agreement and must further require that each such subcontractor or consultant incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements at any tier awarded under this Agreement unless GaDOE determines otherwise.

_____
Signature of Fiscal Agency Head (official sub-grant recipient)

 Terri DeLoach, Superintendent
Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head and Position Title

 November 26, 2012
Date

_____
Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

 Perry Tison, Principal
Typed Name of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head and Position Title

 November 26, 2012
Date

_____
Signature of Co-applicant's Authorized Agency Head (if applicable)

_____
Typed Name of Co-applicant's Authorized Agency Head and Position Title (if applicable)

_____
Date (if applicable)

Preliminary Application Requirements

Created Monday, October 22, 2012
Updated Tuesday, October 23, 2012

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Click on the General Application Information link below to assist you in the grant development process.

General Application Information

Did you download and read the General Information document to assist you with writing the grant?

- Yes

Click on the SRCL Rubric link below to assist you in the grant development process.

SRCL Rubric

Did you download and read the SRCL Rubric to assist you with writing the grant?

- Yes

Click on the Assessment Chart link below to assist you in the grant development process.

Assessment Chart

Did you download and read the Assessment Chart to assist you in writing the grant?

- Yes

Assessments

I understand that implementing the assessments mentioned on page 5 in General Application Information is a necessary part of receiving SRCL funding.

- I Agree

Unallowable Expenditures

Preparation of the Proposal: *Costs to develop, prepare, and/or write the SRCL proposal cannot be charged to the grant directly or indirectly by either the agency or contractor.*

Pre-Award Costs: *Pre-award costs may not be charged against the grant.* □*Funds can be used only for activities conducted and costs incurred after the start date of the grant.*

Entertainment, Refreshments, Snacks: *A field trip without the* **approved** *academic support will be considered entertainment. End-of-year celebrations or food associated with parties or socials are unallowable expenditures. Game systems and game cartridges are unallowable.*

Unapproved out of state or overnight field trips, including retreats, lock-ins, etc.

Incentives *(e.g., plaques, trophies, stickers, t-shirts, give-a-ways)*

Advertisements, Promotional or Marketing Items

Decorative Items

Purchase of Facilities or vehicles *(e.g., Buses, Vans, or Cars)*

Land acquisition

Capital Improvements, Permanent Renovations

Direct charges for items/services that the indirect cost rate covers;

Dues to organizations, federations or societies for personal benefits

Any costs not allowed for Federal projects per EDGAR, which may be accessed at http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html. □
NOTE: This is NOT an all-inclusive list of unallowable expenses. If you have questions about unallowable expenses please e-mail your questions to jmorrill@doe.k12.ga.us

Upon approval by the State Board of Education, sub-grantees will be required to submit electronic budgets through GaDOE Consolidated Application Portal. All budget requests must be made in accordance with the use of funds for the SRCL project and must meet the requirements in EDGAR and OMB circulars. □

- I Agree

Grant Assurances

Created Wednesday, October 24, 2012
Updated Monday, November 26, 2012

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The sub-grantee assures that it has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive a SRCL Grant.

- Yes

Sub-grantee certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

- Yes

The SRCL projects will target students who attend Title I schools or schools eligible for Title I schoolwide programs and their families.

- Yes

The SRCL project will be administered in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations, program plans, and applications.

- Yes

The Grantee will participate in all technical assistance/information-sharing opportunities and professional development activities provided through the STRIVING READER COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY GRANT Project Grant Program.

- Yes

All activities must be correlated with the development of STRIVING READER COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY GRANT goals for children birth through grade 12.

- Yes

The second year of funding is dependent upon successful program implementation and progress aligned with the components of the request for application submitted.

- Yes

Prior to any material change affecting the purpose, administration, organization, budget, or operation of the SRCL project, the Sub-grantee agrees to submit an appropriately amended application to GaDOE for approval.

- Yes

The Sub-grantee agrees to notify the GaDOE, in writing, of any change in the contact information provided in its application.

- Yes

The activities and services described in the application shall be administered by or under the supervision and control of the Sub-grantee. The Sub-grantee shall not assign or subcontract, in whole or in part, its rights or obligations without prior written consent of GaDOE. Any attempted assignment without said consent shall be void and of no effect.

- Yes

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The Sub-grantee will use fiscal control and sound accounting procedures that will ensure proper disbursement of and account for Federal and state funds paid to the program to perform its duties.

- Yes

Funds shall be used only for financial obligations incurred during the grant period.

- Yes

The Sub-grantee will, if applicable, have the required financial and compliance audits conducted in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1966 and OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."

- Yes

The fiscal agent will adopt and use proper methods of administering each program, including: (A) the enforcement of any obligations imposed on agencies, institutions, organizations, and other recipients responsible for carrying out each program; and (B) the timely correction of deficiencies in program operations that are identified through audits, monitoring, evaluation and/or technical assistance.

- Yes

The Sub-grantee will cooperate in carrying out any evaluation of each such program conducted by or for the Georgia Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Education, or other state or Federal officials.

- Yes

The Sub-grantee will submit reports to GaDOE as may reasonably be required. The Sub-grantee will maintain such fiscal and programmatic records and provide access to those records, as necessary, for those departments to perform their duties.

- Yes

The Sub-grantee will submit an annual summative evaluation report no later than June 30.

- Yes

The Sub-grantee agrees that GaDOE, or any of its duly authorized representatives, at any time during the term of this agreement, shall have access to, and the right to audit or examine any pertinent books, documents, papers, and records of the Sub-grantee related to the Sub-grantee's charges and performance under the SRCL sub-grant.

- Yes

The property (e.g., computers, equipment, classroom desks, tables, and pilferable items) purchased with the SRCL grant funds must be managed in accordance with EDGAR section 74.34 through 74.37 (for non-profit organizations) and with EDGAR section 80.32 and 80.33 (for school districts).

- Yes

The Sub-grantee certifies that it will abide by GaDOE's Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy. Applicants with a conflict of interest must submit a disclosure notice.

- Yes

The Sub-grantee will comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (34 C.F.R. 99).

- Yes

Sub-grantee will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits discrimination on a basis of disability.

- Yes

In accordance with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace and Community Act Amendments of 1989 and the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the Sub-grantee understands that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance, marijuana, or dangerous drug is prohibited at geographic locations at which individuals are directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the 21st CCLC grant.

- Yes

All technology purchases (software and hardware) will be approved by the LEA Technology Director for compatibility with current operating systems and building infrastructure. The Technology Director must ensure that any purchases for the building will be able to be implemented and sustained beyond the grant period.

- Yes

An expenditure in the amount of $582.50 to Dennis Michael Pack.

TITLE I On-site Review: In general, technical assistance for schoolwide planning is an allowable expense. However, a review of the District's approved Consolidated Application revealed Midway Elementary was not a Title I school in FY 2010. The check (#6059420) issued by the District to Dennis Michael Pack was dated March 8, 2010. Title I, Part A funds may only be expended for activities in the District's Title I schools; therefore, this expenditure is unallowable under Title I, Part A.

System's Response: The Director of Federal Programs will continue to follow the budget approval process as outlined by the Federal Programs Division of the Georgia Dept. of Ed. Details were outlined in the budget and submitted for approval. The expense was approved in the Consolidated Application and consequently the amount was expended at the local level. Pierce County will issue a repayment to the GaDOE in the amount of $582.50.

Brief History

Pierce County, located in southeast Georgia, is a rural community with a population of 18,770, and 18 percent is below the poverty line. The per capita income is $14,230. The school system, comprised of five schools, has a total student population of 3,746. These schools include Blackshear Elementary, Patterson Elementary, Midway Elementary, Pierce County Middle, and Pierce County High.

Although the Pierce County School System is highly impacted by poverty, 59.6 percent free and reduced lunch, the system lives by our motto *Excellence is Standard.* The district has made AYP for the past 6 years, led the Okefenokee RESA District in graduation rate and SAT scores, and received state and national recognition for academic achievements.

Demographics

School	Student	Black	White	Multi Racial	Hispanic	Other	Free and Reduced Lunch
Blackshear Elementary	846	13%	77%	2%	7%	1%	72.19%
Midway Elementary	486	2%	86%	2%	9%	1%	53.59%
Patterson Elementary	482	7%	80%	2%	10%	1%	59.92%
Pierce Middle	912	7%	85%	1%	6%	1%	61.98%
Pierce High	1,020	10%	84%	1%	4%	1%	50.44%

Current Priorities

Literacy requirements of the CCGPS are forcing the system to implement additional interventions in order for students to meet the demands of a more rigorous curriculum. Our school system has identified priorities to support the implementation of CCGPS as well as College and Career Readiness Standards.

Priority	Initiatives	School Implemented
Professional Learning	Professional Learning Communities	All
	Differentiation	
	Lexiles	
	Common/Benchmarks/Assessments	
	CCGPS Implementation	
Reading Fluency and Comprehension of Informational Text	SRA	All
	Success Maker	BES, MES, PES, PCMS
	Study Island	BES, MES, PES, PCMS
	Fast Forward	BES
	Reading Assistant	BES
	Reading Academy	PCMS
Writing across the Curriculum	My Access	PCMS, PCHS
	Lucy Calkins	All
	Writing to Command	BES, MES, PES
	Literacy Design Collaborative	PCMS, PCHS
CCGPS Implementation	Standards-based Planning	All
	CCGPS and CCR Webinars	All
	Math Design Collaborative	PCMS, PCHS

With the growing needs of students and dwindling budgets, in-house professional learning is vital to sustainability of system initiatives. As a result, each school has developed professional learning communities to achieve the expectations set by state and national curriculum.

Strategic Planning

The district plans for improvement by disaggregating data to determine areas of strength and weakness. Results from parent surveys are included when developing our district plan and goals. Each school incorporates the system goals but maintains site-based management. System and school goals include: 1) Raise the academic rigor and performance of all students, 2) Ensure

quality personnel in all positions, 3) Provide safe and orderly environments that support learning, 4) Develop and manage resources to maximize student learning, and 5) Increase stakeholder understanding, trust and support of the school system.

Current Management Structure

Our system operates around the premise of site-based management which allows school leaders to make decisions that are specific and targeted for their students. System support includes a team of district personnel dedicated to high academic success for students. The district office consists of Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Student Services, Director of Federal Programs, K-8 Director of Curriculum, and 9-12 Director of Curriculum that also serves as Assistant Principal at the high school. The table below identifies the personnel who will be in charge of administration of the Striving Readers Grant.

District Management of Striving Readers Grant (SRG)

Department	Department Head	Task One	Task Two	Task Three
Financial	LeVance Gay	Request and allocate grant funds	Issuance of purchase orders	Audit grant
Technology	David Pittman	Recommend technology resources based on school needs	Inventory and track technology equipment purchased through grant	Support and maintain technology purchase through grant
Professional Learning	Tonya Johnson	Plan and coordinate professional learning activities for SRG Initiatives	Issue Professional Learning Units for staff participating in SRG activities	Monitor implementation of SRG initiatives
Curriculum and Instruction	Tonya Jonson and Dara Bennett	Ensure SRG initiatives align with district priorities	Coordinate alignment of curriculum documents and assessments with CCGPS and CCR Standards	Evaluate effectiveness of SRG initiatives

School Management of Striving Readers Grant

At the school level the principal will be responsible for the overall management of the grant.
The table below shows the plan for implementation of the grant.

Person Responsible	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4
School Principal	Overall management of grant at the school level	Request purchase orders for resources needed	Document the receipt of purchased materials or services	Ensure SRG initiatives are carried out in the school
Curriculum AP or ILT	Ensure staff members participate in professional learning activities	Support and observe implementation of professional learning activities	Assist principal in selecting, purchasing, processing materials needed	Assist with CCGPS and CCR implementation
School Media Specialist	Support use of technology needed to implement	Select materials aligned with SRG and CCGPS for the media center	Encourage, facilitate reading, and support SRG initiatives	Inventory technology purchased
School Literacy Team	Align literacy needs with SRG	Recommend materials/services needed to implement school literacy plan	Evaluate effectiveness of strategies and materials used	Support the implementation of literacy plan

Past Instructional Initiatives
- Reading Recovery
- Reading First
- Ruby Payne Understanding Poverty
- GPS Implementation

Other instructional strategies that are part of our system's culture
- Learning Focused Schools
- Assessment for Learning
- Standards-Based Grading
- Modified Block Scheduling
- Extended Learning Time
- Least Restrictive Environment and Co-Teaching

- Reading and Writing Across Curriculum
- My Access
- Differentiation
- Response to Intervention
- SRA
- CCGPS Implementation

Literacy Curriculum

The current literacy curriculum in Pierce County is transitioning from roots in the GPS to fast and ever growing roots in CCGPS. Teachers are developing lessons and assessments that encompass the CCGPS and have embraced that literacy is the foundation for success. In order to prepare students for the rigorous expectations set by these standards, all schools have adopted a literacy plan that aligns to the beliefs and mission of the system plan. The areas addressed in the plan include 1) Engaged leadership; 2) Continuity of care and instruction; 3) On-going formative and summative assessments; 4) Best practices in literacy instruction; 5) System of tiered intervention; 6) Professional learning and resources.

Literacy Assessments

Assessment	Grades
Work Sampling Online	PreK
GKIDS, GRASP Universal Screeners	K
GRASP, District Benchmark Assessments	1-2
NNAT 2	2
GRASP, District Benchmark Assessments, CRCT	3-8
3, 5, and 8 Writing Assessments	3,5,8
9th EOCTs	9
American Lit. EOCT	11
PSAT	10
SAT	10-12
GHSWT	11

Need for Striving Reader Project

Pierce County Schools experienced cuts in state funding of $10.3 million over the past five years. In order to maintain excellence as our standard, we have taken extreme measures which include increasing local taxes twice in the past two years. In addition to tax increases, the BOE has reduced staff, increased class sizes, decreased funding for instructional supplies, reduced funds for maintenance and operations, implemented six calendar adjustment days, and decreased local supplements by 50 percent. Our system has not adopted textbooks in ten years. In addition, other print materials are in poor shape, limited, and many times, not aligned to the current standards. However, our teachers have managed to maintain our literacy program by supplementing supplies with their own money and accepting donations from community and parents. Now we are faced with a more rigorous curriculum that requires teachers to take students to the next level. If cuts continue as projected, our next option will be to cut parts of our instructional program that data has proven to be effective. Literacy is the cornerstone to learning and with the Striving Reader Project our system will be able to maintain effective initiatives already in place, as well as, seek other research-based practices that will promote on-going, sustainable literacy for all students.

Pierce County Schools – District Management Plan and Key Personnel

The Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy Grant (SRCL) will be managed through the office of the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Ms. Tonya Johnson. Ms. Johnson will coordinate grant implementation with the district technology department, financial department, and each school. Mr. LeVance Gay, Assistant Superintendent of Finance, heads the district financial department and will oversee the requesting and allocating of grant funds, purchase orders, and auditing the grant. Mr. David Pittman, Director of Technology, will assist and advise as needed the correlation technological needs. Mrs. Yvette Newton, Director of Federal Programs, will advise on federal programs regulations and guidelines. Ms. Johnson, the district curriculum director and professional learning coordinator, will manage the following: aligning instructional and technology resources with grant priorities, planning professional learning activities funded through the grant, issuing professional learning units, and aligning grant initiatives with CCGPS rollout. The following table identifies tasks and individuals needed to successfully implement the SRCL at the district level.

Department	Department Head	Tasks		
Financial	LeVance Gay	Request and allocate grant funds	Issuance of purchase orders	Audit grant
Technology	David Pittman	Recommend technology resources based on school needs	Inventory and tracking technology equipment purchased	Support and maintain technology purchased
Professional Learning	Tonya Johnson	Plan and coordinate professional learning activities for SRCL Initiatives	Issue Professional Learning Units for staff participating in SRLC activities	Monitor implementation of SRLC initiatives
Curriculum and Instruction	Tonya Jonson	Ensure SRCL initiatives align with district priorities	Coordinate alignment of curriculum documents and assessments with CCGPS	Evaluating effectiveness of SRLC initiatives

Pierce County Schools – District Management Plan and Key Personnel

The individuals listed in the previous table worked collaboratively with school teams to set goals and objectives when developing our system's strategic implementation plan and balanced scorecard. The schools' literacy plans were a continuation of this process. Needs assessments and root cause analyses were completed throughout the system, with all stakeholders involved in the analyzing of data and development of implementation plans. Throughout the process, literacy needs of students were at the forefront of all efforts. Leaders realized a substantial need to improve our literacy instruction at all grade levels. Most importantly, administrators and teacher leaders across the district realized the unequivocal need to move forward in the development of literacy plans that will enhance literacy instruction in our schools.

To ensure that the Striving Readers project is implemented successfully, constant communication of the goals, objectives, budget, and implementation will be on agendas at district and school level professional meetings. The following table portrays the make-up of district and school level teams that will safeguard the success of the Striving Readers project. The district office will maintain sign in sheets and agendas for these meetings.

Team	Personnel on Team	Meeting Frequency
District Administrative Team	Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Finance, Directors of Technology, Curriculum, Federal Programs, Testing, Special Education	Monthly
District and School Administrative Team	Those listed above, school principals, school psychologist	Monthly
System Literacy Team	Directors of Curriculum, School Level Instructional Coaches and/or teacher leaders, Superintendent	Monthly and twice monthly if needed
School Level Better Seeking Teams & Leadership Teams	School Administration, Instructional Coaches, Teacher leaders	Monthly and twice monthly if needed
School Literacy Teams	School Administration, Instructional Coaches, Teacher leaders	Monthly and twice monthly if needed

Regular, on-going meetings will be conducted between district and school teams to ensure goals and objectives are implemented as stated in each school's literacy plan. These meetings will also serve to monitor compliance of budgetary guidelines set forth by the SRCL Project.

Pierce County Schools – Experience of the Applicant

The Pierce County School District has a $30 million budget for the 2012-2013 school year. About 10 percent of each year's budget includes state and Federal funds to meet the needs of specific student populations, help keep parents and community engaged in student achievement, ensure proper nutrition programs, and enhance and extend the educational offerings to our students. Each of these programs has its own unique expenditure and procurement guidelines and is managed by a designated administrator in the district.

Administrators are trained on the requirements of their program(s) and work in concert with the finance department to ensure program guidelines are followed and proper internal controls and separation of duties are in place. Over the past three years, these funds have been expended by the district to benefit students without any material findings.

The need for instructional technology continues to accelerate despite no new funding to replace outdated equipment or buy newer interactive technology tools. Initially, the state provided lottery money to help Georgia school districts stay current. These funds ended six years ago and Pierce County has had to sustain these projects using local as well as Federal funds in an effort to remain current. The E-rate program has also allowed Pierce County to update our internal and external infrastructure and purchase modern technology services.

Past instructional initiatives such as My Access, Fast Forward, Reading Assistant, Science Research Associates (SRA), Reading Recovery, and Learning Focused Schools have been sustained primarily with state, federal and local funds. Our most valued method of sustainability is professional learning. We have maintained our instructional coaches and they offer professional learning for teachers on a variety of topics. For example, two coaches are Reading Recovery trained and provide teachers with strategies and interventions for struggling readers. While economic hardships are making it challenging to educate children in the 21st century, Pierce County continues to set high expectations for students and teachers and has accountability measures in place to gauge the attainment of these expectations.

The number of students attending Pierce County Schools has been growing for the past 10 years. The student population has increased by over 600 students, leading to the addition of wings at Blackshear Elementary and Pierce County Middle and building a new elementary school (Midway Elementary). These capital projects have been funded by local e-SPLOST and

state facilities funds. Currently, the district is using e-SPLOST and state facilities funds to replace outdated heating and cooling equipment, improve lighting, and make improvements to the existing campuses.

Other Initiatives

Facility/Capital Outlay Project	Funding	Project Duration
Midway Elementary ($7.3 million)	e-SPLOST and state capital outlay	18 months
Blackshear Elementary HV/AC ($900,000)	e-SPLOST and state capital outlay	7 months
Pierce Middle HV/AC ($800,000)	e-SPLOST and state capital outlay	4 months
Patterson Elementary HV/AC ($200,000)	e-SPLOST and state capital outlay	4 months
Patterson Elementary Bathroom Addition ($65,000)	e-SPLOST	3 months
Patterson Elementary Roof ($400,000)	e-SPLOST and state capital outlay	4 months
Pierce High ($3 million)	e-SPLOST	10 months
Pierce Middle Multi-Purpose Room ($550,000)	e-SPLOST and state capital outlay	5 months
Financial Software ($150,000)	Vendor Partner Grant and local	24 months
Telecommunications/E-Rate ($320,000)	federal and local	annually

The financial statements over the past three years do show a number of findings involving internal controls, separations of duties, reconciliation of the bank statements to the general ledger, and proper reporting of capital assets. All of these finding are directly related to data issues with our prior financial software, the data conversion process to our new system, and the implementation of the new financial software. All of these findings have been resolved.

Pierce County Middle School

School History

Pierce County Middle School (PCMS) is the only middle school in the county. PCMS opened in the fall of 1996 housing grades 6-8. The school's staff is comprised of 60 certified personnel, two counselors, one Instructional Coach, a school nurse, a media specialist, five paraprofessionals, four office staff members, a technology specialist, five custodians, and nine school nutrition staff. In addition, PCMS has one principal and one assistant principal. The current student population is 918, of whom 62.05% qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Administrative and Teacher Leadership Team

The school leadership team is comprised of the administration, department heads, and teacher leaders. Leadership and department meetings are held once a month to help foster collaboration throughout the school. The members of the school leadership Team include the following:

Team Member	Position
Perry Tison	Principal
Lanna Denison	Assistant Principal
Amanda Gay	Instructional Coach
Neile Bennett	Science Department Head
Jessica Briscoe	Science Teacher Leader
Vickki Carter	Language Arts Department Head
Brandon Carlson	Math Teacher Leader
Andrea Dixon	Social Studies Teacher Leader
Corey Lesseig	Social Studies Department Head
Stephanie King	Counselor
Scott Kirkland	Special Education Teacher Leader
Angie Meadows	GATE
Brandi Metts	Connections Department Head
Courtney Morgan	Language Arts Teacher Leader
Hannah Murray	Media Specialist

Terry Tatum	Counselor
Bryany Walker	Math Department Head
Mysti Walker	Special Education Lead Teacher

Past Instructional Initiatives

- Accelerated Reader
- Reading Across the Curriculum
- Ruby Payne Strategies for Poverty
- Peer Reading
- Learning Focused Schools
- Graduate 1st

Current Instructional Initiatives

- Reading Academy
- SRA
- Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum
- Assessment for Learning
- Differentiation Strategies
- Implementation of Georgia Common Core Performance Standards
- Data Disaggregation
- Successmaker
- Kansas Writing Strategies
- Extended Learning Time
- Response to Intervention
- MyAccess!
- Inclusion
- USA Test Prep

Professional Learning Needs

- Literacy strategies and implementation for all content area teachers and connection teachers

- Implementation of rigor and relevance in compliance with CCGPS

- Integration of technology into instruction to become a 21st Century School

- E-Books, Kindles, E-Readers ~ Incorporating fiction, non-fiction, and informational reading materials into the learning environment through technological devices

- Teaching the basics of reading to middle school students

- How to diagnose reading problems in middle school students

Need for a Striving Readers Project

Pierce County Middle School is a rural agrarian community with little industry and a limited tax base. Therefore, our students have limited resources in the school system as well as in their home environment. However, our standards remain high and our school strives for excellence for all students. We believe that reading is the core element for all students because it affects every area of their education. In our poverty area, it is imperative that our school provides every means possible to create strong, confident readers because reading will affect their futures in every aspect. Lexile levels are increasing, literacy demands and textual structures are more rigorous, and each grade step is becoming more challenging for students. However, professional development for teachers in literacy is lacking, technology resources are limited, and literacy efforts are almost non-existent due to the limited funding and budget restraints.

The benefits which can be gained from the implementation of the Striving Readers Project will make a difference as students move from middle to high school level and help prepare them to be college and career ready. If those frustrated readers can be encouraged to make gains at the middle school level, we believe that the drop-out rate will continue to improve at the high school level. It is our job as educators to meet the needs of all students and prepare them with the best education.

- PCMS needs to build a Literacy Framework in order to promote a culture of literacy at ALL instructional levels.

- PCMS needs to activate its Literacy Leadership Team.

- PCMS needs to define its core reading program.
- PCMS teachers need professional development in promoting literacy in content-area classes.
- PCMS would like to continue to provide more relevant reading materials for students. (Fiction, non-fiction and informational)
- PCMS would like to come up with a plan to motivate students to read. (perhaps through the use of technology.) There are several iPad apps for students to demonstrate reading comprehension.
- PCMS acquires more and more students each year who struggle with reading fluency and comprehension.
- PCMS needs to become a 21st Century School

Building Block 1. Engaged Leadership

A. Action: Demonstrate commitment to learn about and support evidence-based literacy instruction in his/her school

Pierce County Middle School and the administration are committed to learn about and support evidence-based literacy instruction in order to meet the needs of the students delving into the rigorous content area standards. They understand and agree with the research provided in the "Why" document which states, "As students move beyond the primary grades, their reading comprehension skills must become more sophisticated in order for them to comprehend challenging material. Students must be able to comprehend well. If they do not comprehend well, student performance declines." PCMS places students and their learning at the forefront and realize they must be adequately prepared to enter the world fully educated and able to comprehend challenging material. As the team further investigated the process of establishing a literacy plan, the "How" document was used to guide and develop the project plan. The administration understands that they must demonstrate a school-wide commitment to literacy and will achieve this in the following ways:

1. The administrators participate in state-sponsored Webinars and face-to-face sessions to learn about the transition to CCGPS.

   - Administrators and each department have viewed all DOE webinars related to CCGPS implementation. The DOE is currently offering face-to-face CCGPS informational meetings where PCMS administrators are participating in these through the local RESA. Also, the instructional coach is currently conducting model lessons with each department to help with the transition into CCGPS with a focus on literacy strategies and writing instruction in all content areas.

2. The administration studies research-based guidelines, strategies, and resources for literacy instruction set forth in "The Why" document.

   An initial effort was made in 2004 when the Georgia Performance Standards were implemented for teachers to focus on reading and writing across the curriculum. However, now that CCGPS, College and Career Ready (CCR) standards, and literacy standards for grades 6-8 have been initiated literacy instruction and professional learning are becoming a focus for our staff. Because PCMS lacks resources to fully incorporate these new initiatives, we are seeking avenues to fund these efforts. With limited funds at this current time, the administration is constantly searching for professional learning opportunities and free resources for the faculty that focus on the most effective ways to incorporate literacy instruction in the content areas at the middle school level. The faculty recently completed the literacy survey identifying a major need for formal training on the structure of how to teach literacy in the content area. The administrative staff has studied the "Why" document of the Georgia K-12 Literacy Plan and realizes the need for expanding and writing a literacy plan for the middle school.

3. The administration participates in literacy instruction with his/her faculty.

   - The instructional coach along with science and social studies department heads are participating in a no cost Literacy Design Collaborative training at RESA through the Department of Education. Faculty and staff are also being instructed on differentiated strategies to include vocabulary instruction and the use of Lexile levels to help with the

implementation of the literacy standards outlined in the CCGPS and CCR. However, these professional learning opportunities are conducted on site due to the deficit of funding for professional development. Also, as funds are available, book studies and article studies are conducted each month during focus group sessions with the entire faculty as well as monthly leadership meetings which are led by our administrative team. Focus groups also serve to sustain implementation of new skills and strategies that are presented to teachers to enhance their knowledge in the classroom.

4. The administration regularly monitors literacy instruction within his/her school.

   - Formal and informal observations are a part of the administration's daily routine. This allows them to constantly monitor literacy instruction in the classroom. However, administrators need more training on how to identify best practices in literacy instruction, and teachers need more training on how to implement the most effective literacy strategies in the classroom.

5. The administration schedules protected time for literacy and teacher collaboration.

   - Teachers at PCMS collaborate on a daily basis to plan instruction and assessments during their common planning time. In addition, the administration, both at the school level and the district level, is committed to providing and scheduling full-day planning time for teachers to work together during the school year. Although the county provides funding for class coverage during the year for unit planning, each department is unable to write quality units that include effective implementation of the literacy requirements outlined by CCGPS and CCR within a limited time period. In an attempt to write units that focus on the literacy standards, these days are also used to write common assessments, gather data to drive instruction for mastery of the standards, and to make a plan for meeting the needs of the students who are not mastering the material. However, with the shift from GPS to CCPGS for math and reading along with the literacy standards for science, social studies, and technology, more time is needed for teachers to properly implement the literacy standards without taking away valuable instructional time from students. Therefore, teachers expressed the need in the literacy survey for further opportunities to plan and suggested days be provided during the summer months with additional days for science, social studies, and technology teachers.

B. Action: Organize a Literacy Leadership Team

The administrators at Pierce County Middle School met at the beginning of the school year and studied the "Why," "What," and "How" documents and gained a deeper knowledge and better understood the need for a K-12 Literacy Plan. The "Why" document states, "The role of leadership in developing literacy in the nation, state, district, school and classroom cannot be overstated. It is a key piece in virtually every literacy initiative undertaken at any level in education." The "What" document provided valuable information which led us to understand what a 'gold standard' literacy program for children birth through grade 12 would entail. The "How" document provided a framework in order for PCMS to implement the plan. With this in mind, it was determined that a literacy team had to be formed in order to have a shared literacy vision for the school which would align with Georgia's K-12 Literacy Plan.

1. The literacy leadership team consists of the following stakeholders and partners, at a minimum:
   - Lanna Denison, Assistant Principal
   - Amanda Gay, Instructional Coach
   - Vickki Carter, Reading Specialist/ELA Department Head
   - Courtney Morgan, ELA Teacher Leader
   - Andrea Dixon, Social Studies Teacher Leader
   - Hannah Murray, Media Specialist
   - Shawn Smith, Business Partner
   - Leslie Johnson, Business Partner
   - Parker Smith, Student at PCMS
   - Morgan Johnson, Student at PCMS

2. A shared literacy vision has been agreed upon by the school and community that is aligned with the state literacy plan.
   - A need for a shared literacy vision has been identified and agreed upon by the literacy leadership team. The literacy vision for PCMS is to implement literacy instruction on a daily basis in each content area with common goals and consistent practices established by the team. We have a strong desire for our literacy plan to align with the system's motto: "Excellence is the Standard."
   - Develop print and electronic communication to share the literacy plan throughout the community. These communications will also provide stakeholders with resources for families of adolescents who are undergoing literacy instruction.

3. Multiple forms of student, school, teacher data, and strategic goals found on page 32 of the "Why" document (including results of the Literacy Instruction Observation Checklist or its equivalent) have been analyzed to develop a list of prioritized recommendations and goals for improvement.
   - The literacy team uses multiple sources of data to develop goals. CRCT scores, Lexile levels, benchmark analysis and data, Grade 8 Writing Assessment, and RTI screening data are used to drive instruction for content and literacy instruction.
     - Goal 1: Students at Pierce County Middle School will receive effective literacy instruction from well-trained teachers using research-based strategies and methods of delivery.
     - Goal 2: All students at PCMS will perform at a proficient or advanced level of reading fluency and comprehension commensurate with Anchor Standards for College & Career Readiness.
     - Goal 3: All students at PCMS will perform at a proficient or advanced level of written expression commensurate with Anchor Standards for College & Career Readiness. Research-based guidelines, strategies and resources for literacy instruction (as set forth in the "The Why" document of the most current iteration of the Georgia Literacy Plan) have been incorporated into all practices and instruction.
   - The literacy team will continue to analyze all formative and summative data to plan further implementation of the CCGPS and literacy standards.
   - The literacy team will prioritize resources to continue improvement initiatives ensuring that all strategies and goals set forth in the "Why" document are utilized.

C. Action: Maximize the use of time and personnel through scheduling and collaborative planning

1. The students in grades 4-12 receive two to four hours of literacy instruction across language arts and in content area classes.
   - Teachers have been implementing reading and writing across the curriculum since 2004. However, the students are receiving the bulk of their literacy instruction through the language arts classroom and that instruction is being supported in the other content area classes but on an inconsistent basis. PCMS provides a research-based program through the Reading Academy class; however, not all students who need access have this due to a lack of funding. The literacy team understands the need for embedding literacy instruction in all areas of a student's education and is in agreement with the research provided in the "Why" document.
2. Time for intervention is built into the schedule.
   - PCMS provides reading support interventions for students who have been identified weak in reading fluency and/or comprehension through the RTI process as well as Lexile levels. A combination of CRCT scores, Lexile levels, benchmark data, and teacher recommendations helps to identify students who have deficits in literacy; however, the literacy team understands that appropriate time is not allotted for true literacy interventions.
3. Instructional time for literacy has been leveraged by scheduling disciplinary literacy in all content areas.
   - Due to time and budget constraints as well as calendar adjustment days, literacy instructional time has not been leveraged to its full potential at PCMS. The literacy team is committed to research and use the research already provided in the "Why" document on page 148 to maximize time and funds for literacy scheduling in all areas of the students' education at PCMS.
4. Collaborative planning within and across content area is part of the school-wide calendar.
   - Collaborative planning is in full force among common content area teachers at PCMS. However, cross-curricular planning is underutilized due to lack of time and funding. The literacy team is committed to research and use the research already provided in the "Why" document to provide "gold standard" literacy instruction across content areas with shared goals, methodologies, and consistency.
5. Inefficient use of student and faculty time within the schedule has been identified and/or eliminated.
   - Administrators are consistently monitoring through formal and informal observations to identify unintentional and inefficient practices in the classroom. Consequently, the funding and time needed to correct such ineffective practices in the classrooms is not readily available. Through the "Why" document, the literacy team has discovered available resources to establish a protocol to address and assess these deficiencies.

D. Action: Create a school culture in which teachers across the curriculum are responsible for literacy instruction as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

1. Faculty and staff participate in targeted, sustained professional learning on literacy strategies within the content area.
   - The faculty and staff at PCMS have identified a need for professional learning on literacy strategies to be shared and applied in all classrooms. The literacy team views this as an important skill as teachers provide instruction to students with a wide range of reading and

writing abilities.
- Due to the limited funding, professional learning on literacy strategies within the content area is scarce and only available through in-house training during focus groups, common planning times, CCGPS webinars, and instructional coach redeliveries of Lexile training, differentiation, and technology strategies.

2. Walk-throughs and/or observation forms are used to ensure consistency of effective instructional practices that include disciplinary literacy across content areas.
- The administrators consistently use observation forms to monitor effective instructional practices across content areas. Since there is no formal literacy plan in place, administrators are unable to ensure consistent and effective practices of or for literacy instruction in all content areas. As a result, the literacy team has identified and is actively developing an appropriate observation tool to address effective instructional practices that include disciplinary literacy across content areas.

E. Action: Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas

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1. The school agrees upon a plan to integrate literacy in all subjects as articulated within CCGPS.
- PCMS faculty shares the sense of urgency that literacy instruction must be fully integrated in all subjects as articulated within CCGPS and in accordance with the "Why" document's research. Components of an effective literacy instructional plan include the following:
  - *Emergent* research-based strategies in place at PCMS:
    - Vocabulary Instruction
    - Comprehension Strategies
    - Fluency Strategy
    - Writing Across the Curriculum solely in the classroom
    - Continue implementing WIDA standards for ELs.
  - *Sustaining* research-based strategies in place at PCMS:
    - Reading Across the Curriculum
    - Lexile Levels
    - Differentiated Instruction
    - Computer-Based Instruction
    - MyAccess!
    - Learning Focused Strategies
    - Response to Intervention
    - Young Authors – limited to the narrative genre
  - *Fully* Operational research-based strategies **NOT** in place at PCMS but needed:
    - Common systematic literacy plan understood and embraced by all teachers
    - Increased student opportunities and participation in literacy activities in school and throughout the community
    - Resources to stay abreast of effective strategies for the development of disciplinary literacy within the content areas.
    - Technology which provides students with a competitive edge in today's society in accordance with CCR standards and research from the "Why" document.
    - Writing across subject areas through various mediums such as:
      - Student produced WIKIs, blogs, student e-mails, Edmodo, etc…

- Celebrate writing across **ALL** genres and modes
- Family night to celebrate literacy accomplishments

2. Teachers have adopted a common, systematic procedure for teaching academic vocabulary in all subjects.
    - A systematic procedure for teaching academic vocabulary in all subject areas to all students is needed at PCMS. The literacy team will implement this systematic approach with funding from the literacy grant.
3. Writing is an integral part of every class every day.
    - The "Why" document focuses on literacy through written expression as an integral part of developmental literacy. The literacy team has identified that teachers need to be provided professional development on how to identify exemplary samples of quality writing in different formats across all contents. PCMS is in the process of establishing a school-wide writing rubric closely aligned with CCGPS.
4. Teachers have or will participate in professional learning on the following:
    a. Incorporating the use of literary texts in content areas
    b. Using informational texts in all English Language Arts classes
    c. Incorporating writing instruction (narrative, argument, and informational) in all subject areas
    d. Selecting appropriate text complexity for the CCGPS implementation
    e. Selecting text complexity appropriate to the individual student
    f. Instructional strategies on how to conduct short research projects, identify and navigating the text structures most common to content areas, supporting opinions with reasons and information, and determining author bias and point of view

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F. Action: Enlist the community at large to support schools and teachers in the development of college-and-career-ready students as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

1. A community advisory board is needed to participate in developing and achieving literacy goals.
    - The literacy team desires to work with community and business leaders to establish a community advisory board. This board will be a liaison from the school to the community and will actively participate in developing and achieving literacy goals.
2. A network of learning supports within the community that targets student improvement is partially active.
    - The community's resources are limited to one organization; therefore, funding is needed for after-school tutoring and enlisting additional partners in the community such as church groups, civic groups, business partners, and community leaders to support literacy efforts within the school and among the community.
3. Social media will be further utilized to communicate and promote the goals of literacy throughout the community at large.
    - The literacy team at PCMS plans to initiate a school and community-wide literacy campaign to heighten awareness on the importance of literacy.
4. Academic successes are publically celebrated through traditional and online media.
    - Academic successes are published through the local newspaper and online via the school's website. However, the literacy team desires a strong public celebration of literacy.

Building Block 2: Continuity of Instruction

A. Action: Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams (See Leadership Sections I. D., E.)

1. Cross-disciplinary teams for literacy instruction.
   - The literacy team will establish an expectation of shared responsibility for literacy instruction that is consistent throughout the building.
2. Protocols for team meetings.
   - Teachers will follow the outlined "Norms and Covenants" which were agreed upon at the beginning of the school year.
3. Scheduled time for teams to meet for regular collaboration and examination of student data/work.
4. Team roles, protocols, and expectations are clearly articulated.
5. The components of the professional learning community model are understood and in place.
   - PCMS has participated in a book study and attended focus groups in which professional learning communities were discussed. Teachers also implemented the strategies from these resources in their team and department meetings. The literacy team expects these practices to continue to ensure a consistent literacy focus.
6. Specific, measurable student achievement goals aligned with grade-level expectations are shared by teachers in all subjects.

B. Action: Support teachers in providing literacy instruction across the curriculum

The administration supports the literacy team's vision in accordance with page 54 of the "Why" document: "The goal of reading is to comprehend text, in whatever format it is being read."

1. Teachers coach, model, co-teach, observe, and give feedback to fellow teachers on the use of literacy strategies in the classroom as outlined on page 55 of the "Why" document where it states, "In order to help students become more proficient at comprehension, teachers should model the seven habits of good readers in the classroom."
   - Awareness walks are conducted monthly among the faculty.
   - During monthly focus group meetings, teachers undergo on-site professional development where they learn a strategy, implement that strategy, and share the results at the next focus group meeting.
2. Teachers use a school-wide, commonly adopted writing rubric that is aligned with the CCGPS to set clear expectations and goals for performance.
   - PCMS currently utilizes a writing rubric tailored to the specifications of Georgia's Grade 8 Writing Assessment. However, the literacy team realizes the need for a school-wide writing rubric that is aligned with the CCGPS.
3. A variety of literacy modes will be infused into all content areas throughout the day.
   - The literacy team will actively pursue the most effective use of all modes of print and non-print literacy. Once funding is available, professional learning on research-based instructional strategies will be provided to allow all teachers to learn how to incorporate the various modes of literacy.

C. Action: Collaborate with supporting out-of-school agencies and organizations within the community

In conjunction with Reading Next, the "Why" document provides 15 research-based program elements that improve literacy achievement of adolescent learners. Element 15 states, "A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program, which is interdisciplinary and interdepartmental and may even coordinate with out-of-school organizations and the local community."

1. Various models of coordinating "wrap-around" services are being researched by the literacy team.
   - PCMS has a mentoring program currently in progress (name). The Ware Street Resource Center has afternoon tutors and mentors that work with minority students who are at risk. The literacy team will work to establish a relationship with a local community college in order to provide services preparing students for CCR standards related to postsecondary endeavors.
2. Avenues of communication (both virtual and face-to-face) are active with key personnel in out-of-school organizations and governmental agencies that support students and families.
   - The PCMS webpage and the district's Alert Now System (phone communication) are tools used to stay in contact with parents and the community. Additionally, the literacy team will investigate and consider the use of social media such as: Facebook or Twitter as alternate sources for communication.
3. A comprehensive system of learning supports to enhance motivation and capability of the critical mass of stakeholders is in place.
   - The literacy team will work with community leaders and other stakeholders to motivate students to succeed in academics and co-curricular activities by providing community-wide celebrations and activities.
4. Technologies need to be purchased and utilized to creatively and effectively support stakeholder engagement.
   - In order to be a 21st century school, the literacy team will seek funding through this grant in order to purchase technology that is adequate in our efforts to gain a competitive edge and instill a "gold standard" literacy curriculum. Due to the fact that technology constantly changes, we must also plan for constant technological software updates and hardware upgrades in order to prepare PCMS students for the digital world.

Building Block 3. Ongoing formative and summative assessments

A. Action: Establish an infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction

The literacy plan of PCMS is aligned with the Georgia Literacy Plan outlined on page 94 of the "Why" document which states, "The plan promotes the use of ongoing, frequent, and multiple measures that will be used as diagnostic and monitoring tools to plan for instruction. It is necessary to examine both summative and formative assessments, to determine how that data positively affects instruction, and to see how formative assessments enhance the overall picture of assessment."

1. Effective screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic tools have been selected to identify achievement levels of all students, advanced as well as struggling. PCMS currently uses the following data to monitor the achievement levels of all students:
   - Nine Week Common Assessments
   - Teacher made formative assessments

- Criterion Referenced Competency Test
- Grade Eight Writing Assessment
- 6th & 7th Grade Mock Writing Assessments
- MyAccess!
- GRASP

The technology currently in place at PCMS is inadequate to maximize several of the above-mentioned programs to their fullest potential. With this grant, the literacy team will ensure all components of these assessments are completely and accurately executed by the faculty for the interventions needed for each student.

2. Common mid-course assessments are available for use across classrooms and include a variety of formats.
   - PCMS has common assessments by grade level and content area that are completed on a quarterly basis. Teachers meet after the assessments and determine standards that were met and standards that need re-teaching. They also use this data to monitor individual student achievement and are required to submit this data on a class growth analysis form. This has been in place for the past five years. The literacy team realizes that common assessments must be updated and aligned with CCGPS and the literacy standards; therefore, professional development is needed to properly embed these elements. Additionally, a major concern of the literacy team is for future assessments. For example, PCMS is not technologically equipped to administer on-line assessments nor are our students equipped with the skills needed to complete assessments in a 21st century environment. The "Why" document specifically states, "To prepare all students for increased academic achievement in a technological society, the Georgia Birth-to-12 Literacy Plan must include 21st century skills that include digital-age literacy, inventive thinking, effective communication, and high productivity."

3. Additional assessment and intervention materials aligned to students' needs and will be purchased so that personnel can be trained.
   - In years past, teachers have created formative and summative assessments. They have received extensive professional development with book studies from Anne Davies and Kaye Burke. However, with the implementation of CCGPS and CCR standards teachers have not had formal professional development on current research-based strategies for assessments. While the Anne Davies and Kaye Burke materials were optional assessment choices, SRI is a required monitoring tool for the striving reader's project; yet the majority of the faculty has not received training due to financial struggles. The literacy team realizes new assessments and intervention materials must be identified and purchased to diagnose and address student needs. The team is also aware that the faculty at PCMS must receive training in order to effectively execute successful implementation of these new materials.

4. A data collection plan for storing, analyzing, and disseminating assessment results is in place.
   - A data collection plan for storing, analyzing, and disseminating assessment results is in place at PCMS. Following each quarterly common assessment, teachers complete their data disaggregation and meet with their peers. During this meeting, they discuss which standards were mastered or not mastered, and they form a plan for re-teaching and/or remediating students. Each teacher submits a copy of his or her analysis form to Mr. Tison and Mrs. Denison within one week of testing.

5. A calendar for formative assessments based on local, state, and program guidelines, including

specific timeline for administration and persons responsible has been developed and is in place.

B. Action: Use universal screening and progress monitoring for formative assessment

1. The instructional levels of all students are screened and progress monitored with evidence-based tools.
   - PCMS has a school-wide protocol for screening and progress monitoring with a universal screening tool in place for a group of specialized faculty. The literacy team realizes that all faculty members should have a working knowledge about screening and progress monitoring students.
2. Commonly shared mid-course assessments will be used to identify students needing support in all aspects of literacy.
3. Universal screening, progress monitoring, and curriculum-based assessments are used to determine instructional decisions regarding flexible 4-tier service options for Response to Intervention (RTI). However, due to limited funding, student support is limited.
4. Technology infrastructure is adequate to support administration and storage of assessments as well as the dissemination of results.
5. Limited intervention materials aligned with students' needs are in use and some staff is trained.
   - The following computer based intervention programs are available for teachers to use with students who need support: Academy of Reading, MyAccess!, USA Test Prep, and GA OAS. However, more interventions are needed and would be used by the faculty if funding, technology, and professional development are permitted.
6. A formative assessment calendar based on local and state guidelines includes times for administration and the persons responsible for administering the universal screeners.
7. Assessment measures are regularly used to identify high achieving/advanced learners who would benefit from enrichment or advanced coursework. However, due to a lack of funding and personnel, the enrichment needs of these students are not addressed outside of the regular classroom. The literacy team agrees to research possible avenues to allow for extending, refining, and challenging those students who have not been identified as gifted in literacy. Consequently, more funding is required in order to also meet their needs.

C. Action: Use diagnostic assessment to analyze problems found in literacy screening

1. A protocol is in place for ensuring that students identified by screenings routinely receive diagnostic assessment.
   - Only a small population of students receives the routine diagnostic assessments apart from the normal universal screenings given three times each year. While there is a protocol in place, PCMS does not have adequate faculty or funding to address the needs of all students meeting the requirements.
2. Where possible, diagnostic assessments isolate the component skills needed for mastery of literacy standards.
   - Due to the ever-changing population of students entering into the middle school, there is a growing need for technology that isolates component skills needed for mastery of literacy standards. PCMS needs select interventions that include diagnostic assessments and multiple entry points to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

3. PCMS will recognize and celebrate students' incremental improvement towards reaching literacy goals.

D. Action: Use summative data to make programming decisions as well as to monitor individual student progress

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1. Specific times for analysis of the previous year's outcome assessments are identified in the school calendar to determine broad student needs and serve as a baseline for improvement. Those assessments are: CRCT, GAA, Grade 8 Writing Assessment, WIDA Testing
   - Data analysis is a strength of the instructional program at PCMS. Teachers reflect on the previous year's outcome and identify areas of instructional weakness according to the CRCT. In addition, teachers analyze data for upcoming students to determine the direction of instruction.
2. Time is devoted in teacher team meetings to review and analyze assessment results to identify needed program and instructional adjustments.
   - Teachers at PCMS spend a large amount of time analyzing assessment results by domain and strands in order to determine areas that need instructional adjustments.
3. During teacher team meetings, discussions focus on changes that can be made to improve the instructional literacy program for all students.
4. Data is disaggregated to ensure the progress of subgroups.
   - Data is disaggregated by subgroups to determine the progress of students as a whole and as a subgroup. Furthermore, in an effort to make better decisions for each student based on current literacy trends, teachers need additional professional learning opportunities to make sound decisions.

Action 3.E.: Develop a clearly articulated strategy for using data to improve teaching and learning (See V. A.)

After further study of the "Why" document on page 96, the literacy team agrees that the assessment plan will assist educators in "... learning how to interpret and analyze results from multiple sources to set goals for students and to identify appropriate instructional strategies."

1. A protocol has been developed and is followed for making decisions to identify the instructional needs of students.
   - The protocol used at PCMS for identifying students with instructional needs includes CRCT scores, informal assessments, quarterly benchmarks, Lexile scores, teacher observations, and RTI. All of these areas are used in identifying needs and addressing those needs through informed instruction.
2. A data storage and retrieval system is adequate and is understood and used by all appropriate staff members.
   - Local: Teachers have created class profiles in GRASP to store and retrieve data as needed.
   - State: Georgia has added the State Longitudinal Data System that allows all staff members to track the progress of students.
3. Procedures and expectations for staff to review, analyze, and disseminate assessment results are in place.
   - Each teacher completes a data analysis of formative and summative assessments for each

student - allowing teachers to meet the instructional needs of their students. These analyses are submitted to the administration in a timely manner.

4. Protocols for team meetings are regularly followed. Each department meets to discuss student data and strategically formulate a plan of action to improve teaching and learning.

Building Block 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

A. Action: Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students

1. A core program, CCGPS, is now in use that does provide continuity based on a carefully articulated scope and sequence of skills that is integrated into a rich curriculum of literary and informational texts.
   - Even though teachers are using resources provided by the State of Georgia to implement the CCGPS and the literacy standards, the literacy team acknowledges that professional learning on direct, explicit literacy instructional strategies is needed due to the weakness among teachers at the middle school level. Results from the literacy survey supported this deficit in direct, explicit literacy instruction.
2. Student data and all components of literacy are examined regularly to identify and drive instruction based on the greatest needs of the students with regards to literacy instruction.
3. Administration conducts classroom observations using an assessment tool to gauge current practice in literacy instruction. In order to maximize the use of best practices in literacy instruction, administrators need more training, and teachers need more training on how to implement the most effective strategies in the classroom.
4. Various aspects of literacy instruction are allocated for students in all content areas. Teachers are being provided an opportunity at the school level to engage in professional development to plan and provide differentiated instruction for literacy assignments. However, due to funding issues, the depth of the training is limited and remains a much-needed source in order to provide exemplary literacy instructional strategies for all students.
5. Faculty participates in professional learning on the following:
   a. Using of data to inform instructional decisions and explicit teaching
   b. Selecting of appropriate text and strategy for instruction
   c. Telling students specific strategies to be learned and why
   d. Modeling of how strategy is used
   e. Providing guidance and independent practice with feedback
   f. Discussing when and where strategies are to be applied
   g. Differentiating instruction
      - The goal of the professional learning is for participants to be committed to continuous improvement in the use of differentiated instructional strategies to advance student achievement. The following goals have been established for teachers:
        o Support the individual student's learning through greater awareness of specific learning styles
        o Collaborate effectively with peers to develop and deliver differentiated instructional strategies
        o Analyze and assess new strategies to determine the most appropriate placement in CCGPS units

B. Action: Ensure that students receive effective writing instruction across the curriculum

1. A plan for instruction in writing is consistent with CCGPS that is articulated vertically and horizontally.
   - PCMS has an established writing plan which has been in place for the past four years and incorporates a research-based writing program MyAccess! However, the only grades that benefit from this program are 7th and 8th due to the cost of the program and the lack of technology. All teachers have developed unit plans aligning to the CCGPS or the GPS in which writing requirements are embedded.
2. A common coordinated plan has been developed for writing instruction across all subject areas. This plan will be developed to include explicit instruction, guided practice, and independent practice in all content areas. Professional learning opportunities on best practices in writing instruction in all content areas will be required for all subject area teachers. Furthermore, professional development must be provided for teachers to successfully create a plan that outlines how technology will be used for the production, publishing, and communication across the curriculum.
3. All teachers currently implement reading and writing across the curriculum in their content areas; however, professional learning on best practices in writing in the content area must be provided for the faculty at PCMS; thus, guaranteeing that all students will receive a common, articulated, and coordinating plan for writing instruction.
4. The writing instructional plan will require teachers to provide writing instruction opportunities at least once a week in the content area. Page 46 of the "Why" document outlines recommendations for improving reading comprehension through written expression; therefore, instruction will include the following:
   a. Developing an argument citing relevant and reliable textual evidence.
   b. Writing coherent informational or explanatory texts.
   c. Writing narratives to develop real or imaginary experiences to explore content area topics.

C. Action: Teachers work to develop and maintain interest and engagement as students' progress through school.

D. Teachers are intentional in efforts to develop and maintain interest and engagement as students' progress through school.
1. The literacy plan at PCMS includes teachers understanding the need for the following:
   a. Providing students with opportunities to self-select reading material and topics for research.
   b. Taking steps to provide students with an understanding of the relevance of academic assignments to their lives.
   c. Increasing access to texts that students consider engaging.
   d. Increasing opportunities for collaborating with peers in the learning process.
   e. Scaffolding students' background knowledge and competency in navigating literary and informational texts to ensure their confidence and self-efficacy.
   f. Leveraging the creative use of technology within the learning process to promote engagement and relevance.

2. The literacy plan at PCMS will ensure that incentive programs for student progress in literacy instruction are used.
    a. The incentive program will be voluntary and not tied to grades.
    b. All incentives are connected to reading.
    c. Specifically target unmotivated readers as mandated on page 51 of the "Why" document which explicitly states, "One of the most salient issues raised in *Reading Next* is that of motivation. Though it is listed as one of nine recommendations for improving instruction for adolescents, the Georgia Literacy Team has taken the stance that this is an area that requires unique focus."

3. To guarantee this plan is implemented successfully, PCMS must receive funding from the grant.

Building Block 5. System of Tiered Intervention (RTI) for All Students

A. Action: Use information developed from the school-based data teams to inform RTI process (see Section 3. E.)

The "Why" document quotes Wright on page 123, "Schools have the responsibility of implementing scientifically validated intervention methods that efficiently and effectively offer students opportunities to be successful."
1. The percentage of students currently served by grade levels K-12 in each tier is determined regularly to determine efficacy of instruction in each tier.
   - PCMS monitors students in each tier of RTI, conduct meetings with parents and teachers, and offer interventions as needed.
2. Protocols for identifying students and matching them to the appropriate intervention are in place.
   - Pierce County has established RTI protocols that are followed in the school system to ensure that students are identified and provided appropriate interventions.
   - Interventions are monitored frequently to ensure that they occur regularly and with fidelity.
   - Student progress data is monitored along with interventions by administrators and district support staff.
3. The results of formative assessments are analyzed frequently to ensure students are progressing and teachers are adjusting instruction to match their needs.
   - Teachers use formative assessments to monitor the progress of each student and to inform instruction as needed.

B. Action: Provide Tier I Instruction based upon the CCGPS in all grades to all students in all classrooms (See Sections 4. A & B)

If fewer than 80% of students are successful in any area:
1. Student data will be examined to determine instructional areas of greatest need (such as decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and written expression).
2. A checklist will be implemented to assess current practices in literacy instruction in each subject area and the checklist will serve as a guide in reviewing teachers' lesson plans.
3. Teachers will participate in ongoing professional learning on the following:
   a. Direct, explicit instructional strategies that build students' word identification, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills. (See Building Block 4. A.)

b. Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) resources for RTI, universal screening (e. g., GRASP, Aimsweb, DIBELS, STEEP, etc.)

c. Team teaching and inclusion of students with special learning needs (EL, SWD, gifted) in the general education setting.

d. School-wide understanding of assessment data and anticipated levels of student mastery during the school year.

C. Action: Implement Tier 2 needs-based interventions for targeted students

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1. Interventionists will participate in professional learning on the following:
   a. Using appropriate supplemental and intervention materials
   b. Diagnosing reading difficulties
   c. Using direct, explicit instructional strategies to address instructional needs
   d. Charting data
   e. Graphing progress
   f. Differentiating instruction
2. Specific times for collaborative discussion and planning between content area T1 teachers and interventionists will be built into the school calendar.
   - Standards-based planning days are established and built into the school calendar to provide teachers time for analysis of student data, and unit writing. However, due to a lack of funding, collaboration and planning about interventions and literacy instruction is limited at this time.
3. Teachers will participate in professional learning to ensure school-wide understanding of assessment data and anticipated levels of student mastery during the school year.
   - The literacy plan will establish time once a month for professional learning to help teachers understand how to use the assessment data from the progress monitoring.
4. Effectiveness of interventions will be ensured by the following:
   a. The literacy team will work to provide sufficient blocks of time in the daily schedule for interventions. A proposal that the literacy team will make is to use Extended Learning Time (ELT) to provide the interventions necessary to meet the needs of all the students who struggle with literacy.
   b. The literacy team will work to provide adequate teacher/student ratio most conducive to learning.
   c. The literacy team will work to assign highly-qualified teachers in reading to serve as interventionists. However, middle school teachers who are highly-qualified in reading do not necessarily have the appropriate skills to teach literacy to struggling readers. Therefore, specific professional development will be required for all teachers who are assigned an ELT literacy class. Without the funds from this grant, putting this plan into place will not be successful.

D. Action: In Tier 3, ensure that Student Support Team (SST) and Data Team monitor progress jointly

1. In addition to everything that occurs at T1 and T2, data teams will meet to:
   a. Discuss students in T3 who fail to respond to intervention.
   b. Receive professional learning on Student Support Team processes and procedures as outlined in the GaDOE manual and guidance.
   c. Verify implementation of proven interventions.
   d. Ensure that interventionists have maintained fidelity to intervention protocol prior to referral to SST.
2. T3 SST/data teams meet on a regular basis to discuss student progress based on daily interventions over 12 weeks of data collection that include a minimum of four data points.
3. Interventions will be delivered 1:1 – 1:3 during a protected time daily by a trained interventionist in the event funding becomes available at PCMS.
4. T3 SST/data teams follow the established protocol to determine the specific reason when an EL fails to make progress (i.e., language difficulty or difference vs. disorder).

E. Action: Implement Tier 4 specially-designed learning through specialized programs, methodologies, or strategies based upon students' inability to access the CCGPS any other way.

1. School schedules are developed to ensure least restrictive environment (LRE).
   - PCMS employs the middle school concept in scheduling students that is flexible based on student need. Co-teaching is used in all areas to ensure the least restrictive environment.
2. Building and system administrators are familiar with funding formulas affecting students in special programming.
   - After meeting with the principal, assistant principal, and lead special education teacher, Mrs. King, a counselor at PCMS, builds the schedule for the entire student body population at PCMS. The administrators are abreast of the current FTE rules so that funding can be maximized.
3. Most highly qualified and experienced teachers support the delivery of instruction for students with the most significant needs.
   - Teachers with the most experience, most effective strategies, and LRE training teach students with the most significant educational needs.
4. All students at PCMS with an IEP are assigned a case manager to support seamless communication with students, teachers, and parents.

Building Block 6. Improved Instruction through Professional Learning

A. Action: Ensure that preservice education prepares new teachers for all the challenges of the classroom

Representatives from the community and/or school leadership meet with representatives from Professional Standards Commission to enlist support for ensuring that:
   a. Preservice teachers receive coursework in disciplinary literacy within content areas.

   - As funding becomes available, the literacy team will appoint individuals from PCMS to provide literacy training as part of the new teacher induction program for the system.

b. Teacher preparation is revised to reflect needs of new teachers as reported by school leaders and new teacher mentors.
- PCMS has mentors for new teachers as well as a teacher induction program. However, professional learning is needed to ensure that beginning teachers receive professional learning for literacy instruction. For the past several years, funding has been limited for the new teacher induction program; therefore, they have not received appropriate training as they endeavor to be successful in the educational field.

B. Action: Provide professional learning for in-service personnel

As addressed in Section 7: Professional Learning of the "Why" document, "The goal of professional learning is to support viable, sustainable professional learning, improve teacher instruction, and ultimately promote student achievement. Professional learning is organized to engage all teachers in ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded, sustained, collaborative learning. Effective professional learning is linked to higher student achievement."

1. The school calendar includes protected time for teachers to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on practice.
- PCMS has standard-based planning days for content area teachers to analyze data, study standards, examine student work, and discuss best practices. However, due to the implementation of the CCGPS and CCR standards additional days are needed. Because of limited funding, additional days are not a possibility at this time.

2. Teachers participate in professional learning in the CCGPS based on the needs revealed by student data as well as by surveys, interest inventories and teacher observations.
- Teachers have participated in all webinars on implementing CCGPS through the Georgia Department of Education. The needs assessment showed that teachers need more face-to-face professional learning on implementing the CCGPS and in using technology for instruction; however, this cannot be accomplished at this time because funds are not available.

3. Teachers currently participate in ongoing professional learning on the use of the core literacy program only through webinars offered by the State of Georgia.
- The literacy team will develop a functional, professional on-site library that includes current research-based books, journals, magazines, and videos teachers can readily access for professional growth in literacy.
- The literacy team will plan organized professional learning for teachers to delve into the concepts of literacy and apply best practices in the all content areas.

4. Teachers' instruction is monitored through classroom observations or walkthroughs using a variety of assessment tools tied to professional learning.
- PCMS uses formal and informal observation checklists and evaluation rubrics for walkthroughs and observations and will begin using the GA Literacy Instruction Observation Checklist as literacy instruction is increased in the school.

5. An instructional coach provides site-based support for administrators, faculty and staff, where possible.
- The PCMS instructional coach serves as a liaison between the administrators and the faculty and staff. According to the "Why" document (144), "the primary role of a literacy coach is to provide continuous, embedded professional learning by implementing school

based opportunities." This year the instructional coach's focus has been on unit development for CCGPS, differentiation, and Lexile training. The coach also provides support for teachers in the areas of instruction, assessment, and data analysis.

6. Intervention providers receive program-specific training before the beginning of the year to prepare teachers and staff for implementation.
   - The literacy team will meet with faculty and staff to provide program specific training before the beginning of each year to refresh and prepare new and experienced teachers and staff for implementation on best practices of literacy instruction.

7. Administrators, faculty, and staff have received minimal training in administering, analyzing and interpreting results of assessments in all components of literacy.
   - After the first year of CCGPS implementation, the literacy team agrees on the importance of revisiting and revising professional learning based on student performance, classroom observation, and teacher feedback.

8. Some or all of the following personnel participate in all professional learning opportunities:
   a. Faculty and Staff – Faculty meetings as necessary, Focus Group meetings, CCGPS Unit Writing, Lexile, Differentiation, RESA Course Offerings, Unit Writing Planning Days
   b. Paraprofessionals – Okefenokee RESA, Lexile Training, Unit Planning with Grade Level Teacher
   c. Support Staff – Program specific trainings; SRA; ESOL training; IEP Writing; Co-Teaching Strategies
   d. Administrators – Implementation of the CCGPS with Mark Williams, Safety Training, Principals' Meetings, PBIS, CCGPS webinars, Diabetes Training, Day with PSC (legal issues)

Needs Assessment

Pierce County Middle School conducted the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment for Literacy to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, and needs. PCMS surveyed 49 faculty/staff in all content areas as well as special education, gifted, EL teachers, media specialist and paraprofessionals. The literacy team analyzed results by grade and content; the charts below indicate overall strengths and weaknesses.

BB 1. Engaged Leadership	Fully Operational	Operational	Emergent	Not Addressed
Administrator demonstrates commitment to learn and support literacy instruction	20%	29%	37%	14%
A literacy leadership team organized by the administrator/leaders in the community is active	---	6%	18%	75%
The use of time and personnel is leveraged through scheduling and collaborative planning.	4%	29%	18%	49%
A school culture exists in which teachers across content areas accepts responsibility for literacy instruction per CCGPS	12%	37%	31%	20%
Literacy instruction is optimized in all content areas.	18%	51%	16%	14%
The community supports schools and teachers in the development of college and career ready students per CCGPS.	12%	2%	6%	80%

PCMS is primarily operational in engaged leadership. The administration participates in literacy professional learning; however, there is a need for a shared literacy vision and team. Therefore, a literacy leadership team was organized and is active. A culture of continuous improvement exists at PCMS in which teachers participate in professional learning communities; therefore, this makes PCMS a great place to implement literacy initiatives. There is also a profound need for the establishment of a community literacy council which has not been created;

however, with the opening of the new public library, we are excited about the opportunity to

partner with them.

BB 2. Continuity of Instruction	Fully Operational	Operational	Emergent	Not Addressed
Active collaborative teams ensure consistent literacy focus across curriculum	6%	8%	51%	35%
Teachers provide literacy instruction across curriculum	---	49%	33%	18%
Out-of-school agencies/organizations collaborate to support literacy within the community	---	8%	14%	78%

Continuity of instruction was identified as an area of weakness. Teachers provide literacy

instruction to the best of their ability and work in collaborative teams but realize there is no

adequate training to teach literacy. Teachers participate in standards-based planning days

allowing time to develop unit plans aligning to the CCGPS. However, resources, professional

learning, and time are needed for teams to meet regularly to collaborate and examine student

data/work. No system of learning support is available in the community which continues to

hinder many of our students.

BB 3. Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments	Fully Operational	Operational	Emergent	Not Addressed
Ongoing formative and summative assessments are in place determining the need and intensity of interventions and to evaluate effectiveness of instruction.	63%	8%	14%	14%
Ongoing formative and summative assessments are used determining the need and intensity of interventions and evaluating effectiveness of instruction	65%	16%	16%	2%
Problems found in screenings are analyzed with diagnostic assessment	45%	20%	22%	12%
Summative data is used to make programming decisions and to monitor individual student progress	53%	10%	33%	4%
Strategies for using data to improve teaching and learning is followed	65%	14%	16%	4%

Formative and summative assessments are strengths because data analysis guides

instruction at PCMS. Each subject and grade utilizes common assessments and results determine

standard mastery or instructional interventions. Teachers analyze summative data to drive

programming decisions and monitor individual student progress, but teachers lack appropriate

interventions to alter their instructional practices. High achieving/advanced learners who would

benefit from advanced coursework are at a disadvantage as are students reading below grade

level because of insufficient resources to enhance literacy needs.

BB 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction	Fully Operational	Operational	Emergent	Not Addressed
All students receive direct instruction in reading	22%	37%	16%	25%
All students receive effective writing instruction across the curriculum	4%	29%	67%	
Extended time is provided for literacy instruction	---	37%	29%	35%
Intentional efforts are made to develop and maintain interest and engagement as students progress through school	69%	20%	10%	---

PCMS defines its core program as CCGPS; however, teachers remain uncomfortable with

CCGPS as indicated in the chart. PCMS offers limited reading instruction, and teachers are

requesting professional learning to provide adequate literacy instruction. PCMS has a program

in place during Extended Learning Time; however, teachers lack resources and training needed

to improve student success. Seventh and eighth grade ELA teachers believe the school is

operational in writing due to the writing plan implemented for the past five years. However,

other content area teachers are unsure about writing instruction for their classrooms. Best

practices rely heavily on a core reading program incorporating all literacy initiatives as well as

building an enriched vocabulary program.

BB 5. System of Tiered Intervention all students	Fully Operational	Operational	Emergent	Not Addressed
Information from school-based data teams is used to inform RTI process	73%	14%	12%	---
Tier I instruction based upon CCGPS in grades K-12 is provided to all students.	65%	6%	25%	4%
Tier 2 needs-based interventions are provided for targeted students.	55%	2%	43%	---
In Tier 3, Student Support Team and Data Team monitor progress.	49%	14%	27%	10%
Tier 4-specilally-designed learning is implemented through specialized programs or strategies based upon students' inability to access the CCGPS	49%	37%	6%	8%

Once students enter middle school, most have been placed into Tier-2, Tier-3, or Tier-4.
The faculty believes improving monitoring progress of Tier-2 and Tier-3 students is dire.
Interventionists work with students, but not all in Tier-2 can be progress monitored due to
lacking faculty. The RTI team meets regularly on Tier-3 students to ensure interventions are
appropriate for small group setting. Currently we do not have a 1:1 – 1:3 ratio. All special
education students, except severe or profound, are served in LRE using the co-teaching model.
Teachers feel inadequate to diagnose reading problems of Tier-2 and Tier-3 students. According
to the "What" document, Tier-3 students require additional steps if they fail to respond to
interventions, and currently, teachers are unclear of this process.

Building Block 6. Improved Instruction through Professional Learning	Fully Operational	Operational	Emergent	Not Addressed
Preservice prepares new teachers for all aspects of literacy instruction including literacy in content areas.	14%	2%	35%	49%
In-service personnel participate in ongoing professional learning in literacy instruction including disciplinary literacy in content areas.	6%	37%	51%	6%

Teachers desire professional learning in all aspects of literacy instruction, and new
teachers must be prepared during preservice to address this weakness. Teachers prefer personal

training rather than webinars to meet the literacy requirements in CCGPS and CCR. Literacy instruction must be the focus for professional learning for the next few years in order to increase student literacy.

Concerns

Concerns identified in the needs assessment: (1) Literacy Instruction, (2) Writing Across the Curriculum, (3) RTI, and (4) Resources.

Many students enter PCMS without literacy skills needed to master CCGPS rigor. Teachers are concerned because they are not prepared to provide struggling students quality literacy instruction in reading and writing.

Due to changes with new standards and assessments, students must have the ability to integrate and evaluate content, delineate and evaluate arguments, analyze similar themes/topics, and produce writing pieces that convey their perspective. MyAccess!, a computer-based writing program, implemented in 2006 has led to an increased number of essays students write and has increased student motivation; however, only select teachers can utilize the program due to limited computer availability.

Although PCMS has a plan for RTI support, interventions for Tier-2 and Tier-3 are limited and no structured programs are in place. An increase in time and frequency of interventions is necessary but there is a lack of personnel, resources, and professional development to meet students' needs.

There is also a lack of resources to aid in instructional strategies used to advance literacy needs of students. Computers, tablets, software, and other technologies are needed to promote student engagement and meet needs in the 21st century. Once these resources are obtained, teachers will need professional development to use the materials and technologies.

Root Cause Analysis

The literacy team met and discussed concerns and delved into the 5-Whys to determine the root cause of literacy needs. The major areas include: (1) Literacy Instruction, (2) Writing Across the Curriculum, (3) RTI, and (4) Resources. After researching the underlying causes, the overwhelming response was a lack of teaching literacy knowledge and a lack of funding in the system.

All PCMS teachers are highly qualified; however, they receive little training on literacy instruction. Therefore, they cannot "diagnose" student deficiencies in reading or writing. Currently, teachers assess reading levels using Lexile levels from the CRCT summary report. Unfortunately, this data does not allow teachers to track student progress throughout the year. Scholastic Reading Inventory would allow teachers to monitor student literacy progress, identify students needing literacy support, and provide interventions for Tier-2 and Tier-3. Computerized literacy programs could be utilized across the curriculum if the technology were available. Therefore, technology is crucial for PCMS to offer successful 21st Century literacy instruction.

Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

Data is analyzed constantly at PCMS as part of the school improvement process. Student data indicates that PCMS is a high performing middle school. Student enrollment data as shown in Table 1 indicates PCMS has grown in student population by almost 150 students in the last three years. The schools' student population is predominately Caucasian with African American being the second largest subgroup.

Table 1 PCMS Student Enrollment Data				
Demographic and Other Factors	**2012-13**	**2011-12**	**2010-11**	**2009-10**
Total Enrollment	915	883	857	767
Ethnicity/Race (%)				
Black/African American	7.54	9	11.58	10
Asian/Pacific Islander	< 1	< 1	.0058	.26
Caucasian	85.14	84.03	84.13	82.66
Hispanic	5.57	5.09	5.01	4.3
Other	1.31	.88	1.63	2.61
Other Subgroups %				
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	59.89	56.24	54.63	54
Limited English Proficient	2.32	1.75	2	2.6
Special Education	9.58	11.2	10.17	10.6
Gifted	12.63	13.8	13.8	11.87
Migrant	< 1	2.7	1	2.15

Table 2 displays the percentage of students absent from school fifteen or more days. Attendance is an area that PCMS monitors daily. The percentage of students absent more than fifteen days is less than two. Parents are called each day when students are absent; counselors meet with students and parents regularly to improve attendance.

Table 2 Attendance % of Students absent more than 15 days			
	2011-2012	**2010-2011**	**2009-2010**
All Students	2	2.7	2.4
African-American	0	0	2.2
Hispanic	0	0	2.6
Caucasian	2	2.8	2.2
Students with Disabilities	1	4.7	8.1
Economically Disadvantaged	2	3.9	3.7

Until 2012, AYP reports were analyzed to monitor student achievement. PCMS made AYP for eight consecutive years. In 2011, PCMS was awarded a Distinguished Breakout School by GASSP as one of only five middle schools in Georgia. In 2010, PCMS received the Platinum award for greatest gains in student achievement on the CRCT. In the area of reading, subgroups such as students with disabilities (SWD) are areas of concern. In science and social studies, all subgroups struggle. Content literacy is an area of concern for teachers. More strategies are needed for literacy instruction. Table 3 includes CRCT trend data for three years. All student performance areas of concern can be tied to a lack of reading proficiency.

Table 3
CRCT Data

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
6th grade			
Reading	95.7	94.5	93
Language Arts	95.7	91.9	95
Math	82.3	79.9	88
Science	83	80.1	81
Social Studies	84	83.7	87
7th grade			
Reading	97.8	96.3	94
Language Arts	96.2	97.1	96
Math	96.5	96.3	95
Science	93.7	92.6	92
Social Studies	89.9	91.5	90
8th grade			
Reading	98.8	98.8	99
Language Arts	97	96.9	97
Math	88.6	90	95
Science	81.7	76.4	76
Social Studies	84.8	81.5	87

Each year eighth grade students take the Georgia Grade 8 Writing Assessment while sixth and seventh graders are administered a mock writing assessment. Table 4 shows how PCMS students performed for the past three years on the writing assessment.

Table 4

Georgia Grade 8 Writing Assessment

Percent of Meets or Exceeds Standards: 2010 - 2012

	2010	2011	2012
Georgia	79%	82%	82%
OK RESA	74%	77%	83%
Pierce Middle	91%	89%	87%

Percent of Exceeds Standards: 2010 - 2012

	2010	2011	2012
Georgia	6%	5%	7%
OK RESA	5%	4%	6%
Pierce Middle	15%	10%	11%

PCMS has 11 teachers who have over 20 years of experience, 27 with 10 to 20 years and 22 with fewer than 10 years. One-third of the faculty is gifted endorsement; 88 % have advanced degrees.

Table 5
Teacher Experience

2012—2013	Number of Teachers	Percent of Faculty
0-5 years	7	12
6-10 years	15	25
11-15 years	15	25
16-20 years	12	20
21-25 years	7	12
26-30 years	2	3
Over 30 years	2	3
Gifted certification	19	32
EL certification	3	5
Reading certification	20	33
Media certification	2	3
Leadership certification	12	20
Bachelor's degree	7	12
Master's Degree	26	44
Educational Specialist Degree	24	40
EdD or PhD	3	5

The principal and assistant principal have been in their current positions for three years. The school leadership team and school focus groups help the administrative team maintain a cohesive faculty. Teachers participate in professional learning at the school level. When funds

are available, teachers participate in professional learning provided by educational experts in our region or state. All teachers at PCMS need more training in the area of teaching reading and literacy.

The principal, along with the leadership team, evaluates data by school, subgroups, strands, grade levels, and individual teacher data. Leadership team members assist departments in data analysis of test scores. Goals and objectives are written for the school and each grade level based on formative and summative assessments. Teachers then write professional learning plans and student achievement goals based on data results. Teachers meet with the principal to discuss the previous year's test data and plan for continuous improvement. Teachers use classroom profile sheets to keep up-to-date information on students which include demographic data on students, attendance, benchmark results, and CRCT scores.

PCMS has an effective Response to Intervention program in place. Instructional interventions are matched to student needs and are continuously monitored. RTI is designed as an early intervention to prevent long term academic failure. It is considered a general education service but is also required to monitor the progress of students with disabilities. PCMS uses GRASP as the universal screener to monitor student progress and determine interventions needed to improve student learning. Progress monitoring is used as a diagnostic literacy assessment tool to collect data on academic gains of each student. Special education students are also progress monitored with AIMSweb. Classroom teachers pretest students at the beginning of the year and benchmark students at the end of each nine weeks to determine individual progress, strengths, and weaknesses. Teachers then develop a plan to address areas of concern. However, additional support and diagnostic tools are needed for teachers to address literacy concerns.

While student achievement data indicates PCMS is a high performing school, there is a great need to improve literacy instruction to meet rigorous requirements of CCGPS and CCR. Educators at PCMS desire to develop and sustain students who are life-long learners especially in literacy. Data indicates that there are significant achievement gaps between subgroups of students particularly students with disabilities. With quality resources and professional learning for educators, PCMS can be a model school for CCGPS and CCR implementation of literacy standards.

Goals and objectives based on assessment data

Goal 1: Increase the percent of special education students who pass or exceed on CRCT in all areas.

Objectives:

- Use the RTI process and progress monitoring more effectively to target and remediate students.
- Provide professional learning on literacy instruction as outlined in the Georgia Literacy Plan.

Goal 2: Increase the percent of all subgroups who pass or exceed on CRCT in all areas.

Objectives:

- Increase the quality of literacy instruction to allow opportunities for students to engage in rigorous assignments and instruction.
- Provide professional learning on writing instruction and develop a school wide rubric for grading writing in content areas.

Teacher participation in professional learning communities

All teachers participate in professional learning communities to discuss research-based strategies and participate in job-embedded professional learning activities. Our goal continues to be collaborative planning for CCGPS units and literacy standards in content areas. All teachers have received training related to differentiation strategies, including Lexile measures, learning styles, and WIDA standards. These types of professional learning opportunities are on-going throughout the school year.

Project Plan, Procedures, Goals, Objectives, and Support

The overall goal of Pierce County Middle School will be to provide "gold standard" literacy instruction in order to prepare students to become college and career ready when they graduate from the Pierce County school district. By implementing the Striving Readers Literacy Grant, the results of the *Needs Assessment, Concerns, and Root Cause Analysis* will be addressed.

a.	**Goal 1: Students at Pierce County Middle School will receive effective literacy instruction from well-trained teachers using research-based strategies and methods of delivery.**	
b.	**Objectives**	• Strive to implement literacy instruction in all content areas according to the PCMS literacy plan • Train all teachers through professional development to incorporate evidence and research-based literacy practices into CCGPS instruction • Adopt a unified literacy vocabulary among all students, teachers, and administrators throughout the school community • Provide more opportunities for students to write, speak, and collaborate with each other • Diagnose student literacy needs and plan appropriate instruction through Tier 2 and Tier 3 literacy instruction strategies
c.	**Evidence**	• Administrative and peer awareness walks focusing on best practices and use of literacy vocabulary • Qualitative data acquired from student and teacher written reflections on literacy strategies and instructional routines • CCGPS units • Sign-in sheets, agendas, and minutes from collaborative meetings • SRI data

d.
 	
e.
	Instructional Schedule
	
	RTI model (with (i.) tiered instruction by grade level)
		• Instructional Schedule
		  o PCMS students either operate on a five or six block daily schedule including 50 minutes of Extended Learning Time (ELT); 55-85 minutes each for English / language arts, math, social studies, and science; and 85 minutes for two elective courses on alternating days.
		• Tiered Instruction
		  o ELT
		    ▪ Currently, students are assigned ELT classes based on their instructional tier. Students in Tier 1 receive instruction in math and literacy. Tier 2 and 3 students attend an RTI reading class based on the severity of a student's need and availability of seats as PCMS has only one RTI reading teacher. Students in Tier 4 attend SRA classes with special education teachers.
		  o Academic Inclusion Classes
		    ▪ Tier 4 students are served in co-taught academic classes by academic certified teachers and either a

	special education teacher or paraprofessional within a four-block content area rotation.
	○ Electives
	    ■ Tier 2 and Tier 3 students participate in a mandatory reading class for 2 ½ blocks each week (one block equates to 85 minutes; however, seats are currently limited due to lack of personnel. Instruction in this class includes Academy of Reading by Auto-Skill and guided reading instruction.
	    ■ Tier 4 students with a deficiency in written expression attend the Kansas Writing Strategies class during the allotted elective time for 2 ½ blocks each week (one block equals 85 minutes).

f. Support Personnel	• Administrators • Teachers • Media specialist • Paraprofessionals • Guidance Counselors • Technology Support Specialist
g. Current Practices	• Implementing CCGPS and CCR • Developing initiatives for literacy-focused instruction across all curricula • Emerging differentiated instruction through Lexile levels • Emerging focus on acquisition of content and literacy vocabulary • Emerging focus on consistent instructional strategies in writing
h. Funding Sources	• N/A due to a lack of funding sources
j. Research-based practices ("What" and "Why" document)	• Collaborative planning to embed literacy instruction in all areas of a student's education according to the "Why" document • Consistent monitoring of shared literacy strategies and instructional routines by administrators and teachers as set forth in the "Why" document • Professional learning targeted on literacy strategies within the content areas according to the "What" document • Responsibility for teaching literacy owned by all teachers

a. **Goal 2:**	All students at PCMS will perform at a proficient or advanced level of reading fluency and comprehension commensurate with Anchor Standards for College & Career Readiness.
b. **Objectives**	• Provide students with meaningful experiences reading complex content texts • Provide professional development in explicit literacy strategies that supports reading in all classes • Provide classrooms and media with multiple modes of nonfiction texts aligned to CCGPS • Provide access to 21st century technology resources • Improve student reading fluency and comprehension skills so that all students exit their grade level meeting or exceeding requirements on standardized assessments
c. **Evidence**	• SRI data • CRCT scores • GRASP data • AIMSWeb data • Benchmark scores • Written and verbal responses • Administrator and peer awareness walks to monitor reading fluency and comprehension instructional strategies
d. **Instructional Schedule** e. **RTI model (with (i.) tiered instruction by grade level)**	• Refer to goal #1.
f. **Support Personnel**	• Refer to goal #1.
g. **Current Practices**	• Progress monitoring • Disaggregating data • Examining student work • First year implementing CCGPS and CCR • Standards-based planning • Webinars provided by GaDOE
h. **Funding Sources**	• Limited Title 1 funds
j. **Research-based practices ("What" and "Why" document)**	• Coach, model, co-teacher, observe, and provide feedback to fellow teachers on the use of reading fluency and comprehension strategies in the classroom ("Why" document p. 55; "What" document p. 7). • Use technology to supplement skills and reinforce students • Provide time for students to read and to comprehend meaningful, complex literary and informational texts in all classrooms • Structure content area reading assignments • Differentiate fluency and comprehension instruction based on students' needs • Use appropriate assessments *of* and *for* learning

a.	**Goal 3: All students at PCMS will perform at a proficient or advanced level of written expression commensurate with Anchor Standards for College & Career Readiness.**
b. **Objectives**	- Provide consistent, high-quality genre-specific instruction for the writing demands of CCGPS - Provide students with meaningful opportunities for writing in all content areas - Provide professional development in writing instruction to maintain consistency among students across all grade levels and content areas - Provide access to 21st century technology resources for publishing and communicating through written expression - Improve student written expression so that all students exit their grade level meeting or exceeding requirements on standardized assessments
c. **Evidence**	- Written responses embedded in CCGPS Units - English / language arts benchmarks - Georgia Grade 8 Writing Assessment - Grades 6 and 7 Mock Writing Assessments - MyAccess! data (8th and 7th grades) - Student writing portfolios - Administrative and peer awareness walks focused on writing in the content area
d. **Instructional Schedule** e. **RTI model (with (i.) tiered instruction by grade level)**	Refer to goal #1.
f. **Support Personnel**	Refer to goal #1.
g. **Current Practices**	- Disaggregating data (ELA teachers) - Examining student work (ELA teachers) - MyAccess! (8th and 7th grade teachers) - First year implementing CCGPS and CCR - Standards-based planning - LDC module creator (two teachers)
h. **Funding Sources**	Limited Title I funds
j. **Research-based practices ("What" and "Why" document)**	- Coach, model, co-teacher, observe, and provide feedback to fellow teachers on the use of instructional strategies for writing ("Why" document, sections 2c and 2d). - Use technology as an avenue for meaningful writing and publication - Provide students with multiple writing opportunities for genre-specific tasks across the curriculum - Differentiate writing instruction - Use a writing rubric comparable to G8WA scoring rubric - Provide time for meaningful writing opportunities

Assessment/Data Analysis Plan

At Pierce County Middle School, data drives all instructional plans and practices. Teachers utilize formative and summative assessments to monitor student progress and guide instruction. All data is used to determine needs and root causes that drive the school improvement process. Although PCMS teachers administer state-mandated assessments, they also create and administer quarterly benchmark assessments and frequent common assessments in order to make flexible, instructional decisions.

a) PCMS current assessment protocol

Assessment	Purpose	Skills	Time of Administration	Frequency
Benchmark Assessment	Teachers use this data to determine students' prior knowledge and to make instructional decisions for ongoing instruction	Content CCGPS taught each quarter and cumulatively as the year progresses	Each 9 weeks grading period	4 x per year
CRCT	Monitors students' mastery of grade-level content of CCGPS and determines promotion/retention of eighth-grade students	Reading, ELA, Math, Social Studies, Science	Spring of each year	Once per year
GRASP Screeners	Universal screening used to identify students in need of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions	Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency, Math Computational Fluency, Math Concepts and Applications	August, December, and May	3 x per year
Tier 2 GRASP Probes	Progress Monitoring of students receiving intervention in Tier 2	Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency, Math Computational Fluency, Math Concepts and Applications	Every 2 weeks	Every two weeks beginning at the time of placement in Tier 2

Tier 3 GRASP Probes	Progress Monitoring of students receiving intervention in Tier 3	Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency, Math Computational Fluency, Math Concepts and Applications	weekly	Every week
Georgia Grade 8 Writing Assessment	Results are used to determine mastery of writing standards per CCGPS	Argumentative and Informative Writing Skills	January	Once a year
6th and 7th grade Supplemental Writing Test	Used to identify students who need writing interventions prior to the G8WA	Argumentative and Informative Writing Skills	January	Once a year
Writing Benchmarks	Used to identify students who need writing interventions prior to the G8WA	Argumentative and Informative Writing Skills	Quarterly	5 x per year
AIMSWeb	Progress Monitoring for Tier 4 Students	Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency, Computational Fluency, Math Concepts and Applications	Every 2 weeks	Every 2 weeks

b) Comparison of the current assessment protocol with the SRCL assessment plan

The current universal screening for all students does not measure each student individually. All students receive the same questions regardless of ability. The students' fluency is measured, but teachers agree that other necessary literacy skills are not measured by this assessment. With the Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy Grant assessment plan, teachers will be able to monitor fluency, comprehension, and Lexile levels with one comprehensive assessment. Ultimately, the main objective of PCMS is to provide a more accurate and comprehensive means of assessing literacy by implementing the SRCL protocol Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI).

c) Implementation of SRI into the current assessment schedule

The SRI assessment for measuring Lexile levels, reading fluency, and reading comprehension will be given three times a year, from August to May, taking the place of GRASP screening and progress monitoring as the sole means for obtaining outcome-based results. The August testing will give teachers a literacy baseline for the current school year. The mid-year assessment will provide more accurate literacy information to teachers so that instruction may be adjusted, and students in need of intervention will be identified. Furthermore, with SRI, students will receive updated Lexile levels quarterly rather than annually.

d) Possible discontinuation of current assessments as a result of SRCL

GRASP and AIMSWEB screeners and probes could possibly be discontinued as a result of implementation of SRCL. The data obtained through SRI will serve as a more accurate indicator of growth, aligning to CCGPS and CCR. Moreover, no additional assessment time will be required in the schedule as SRI replaces GRASP and AIMSWEB.

e) Professional learning needs for implementation of SRCL

In order to implement SRCL, teachers will need adequate professional learning and support for SRI. Teachers will need to be trained on all aspects of this assessment tool. Furthermore, all faculty will need training on Lexile measures and text selection that meet state guidelines for the rigor of CCGPS.

f) Methods of data presentation to parents and stakeholders

Administrators and teachers present data from student assessments in a variety of ways. All statewide testing results are given to parents in a timely manner upon receipt from the state. Benchmark results are communicated in student agendas. Progress reports/report cards are issued with a required parental signature every 4 ½ weeks along with newsletters and other communication. PCMS also utilizes the Internet-based Power School program where parents may check their students' progress as often as they wish. In addition, all PCMS student achievement data is disaggregated and presented to the school council, the parent involvement committee, the school leadership team, and discussed with all teachers at a monthly focus group meeting. An analysis of statewide testing is also published and sent in the form of a pamphlet to all stakeholders within the county. Results are sent to local newspapers for publication. Furthermore, results are available on the school's website and on the Georgia Department of Education's website.

g) Use of data to develop instructional strategies and determine needed materials

Teachers individually and collaboratively analyze data to drive instruction and determine materials needed based upon each student's individual literacy needs. After each benchmark administration, teachers disaggregate the results of each class and write an analysis, which is submitted to the principal within one week of the testing date. Upon receipt of CRCT data in May, teachers write an individual analysis of results and then meet with grade-level departments to write a collective plan of action for the following year. Results of the new SRI assessment will be used throughout the year to drive scheduling, literacy interventions, and differentiated instruction. Teachers will use common planning time and CCGPS unit planning professional

learning days to analyze data and determine specific materials and technology needed to maximize student achievement. Technology will be an essential component in providing differentiated instruction as determined by assessment results.

h) Assessment performance – "Who" and "How"

The faculty of PCMS will administer assessments taken by students each year. One of the guidance counselors at PCMS coordinates all statewide testing. Grade-level and department leaders coordinate quarterly benchmark testing. The special education lead teacher coordinates AIMSWEB testing. Reading and math intervention specialists, the media specialist, and a guidance counselor currently coordinate GRASP testing. If PCMS is awarded the SRCL grant, the PCMS Literacy Team will follow established protocols required by the SRI program.

**Resources, Strategies, and Materials
Including Technology to Support the Literacy Plan**

a) Resources needed to implement literacy plan and promote student engagement

Resources	How Resources Support Literacy	Funding Alignment
Professional Learning	According to "The Why" document, professional learning is critical and "enhances teacher knowledge and skills, improves classroom teaching, and increases student achievement." Training faculty and staff to use new technology and resources is key in maximizing student achievement and engagement.	SRCL Grant, Title 1, QBE, Fundraisers
Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)	SRI will enable teachers to monitor student progress and match student interest with an appropriate Lexile level, motivating students to become life-long literacy learners as detailed in the CCR.	SRCL Grant, Title 1, Fundraisers
Interactive boards, ALEKS, mobile laptop computer stations, tablet stations, short throw projectors	According to "The Why" document, "to be effective in the 21st century, citizens and workers must be able to exhibit a wide range of functional and critical thinking skills, such as information literacy; media literacy; and information, communications, and technology literacy." This technology will be used to differentiate instruction and engage students in interactive, integrated technology. It will also provide more opportunities for teacher to administer real time assessments.	SRCL Grant, Title 1, QBE
Print and non-print resources	Resources are needed across the curriculum to supplement the CCGPS	SRCL Grant, QBE, local budget, fundraisers
Consumable resources and supplies	Paper, toner, journals, and other supplies will allow students to demonstrate mastery of literacy components. Also, supplies for technology such as bulbs for projectors are necessary to maintain use of equipment.	SRCL Grant, QBE
Full wireless capability	Full operational wireless capability will allow students to access computer resources. The incorporation of mobile classroom tablets/ laptops underscores the need for fast, secure, and reliable wireless Internet access.	SRCL Grant, E-Rate, SPLOST

Additional texts/novels aligned to CCGPS units	Aligned texts will complement units of study in all content areas and enhance disciplinary literacy	SRCL Grant, QBE, Title 1, Literacy Fundraisers
Leveled reading materials for Tiers 2 and 3 reading intervention	High-interest, informational and literary reading sets with links across the curriculum will enhance literacy instruction and motivate struggling readers	SRCL Grant
Digital resources	Digital databases and online textbooks can be purchased for use with tablet/laptop stations, encouraging student engagement and learning	SRCL Grant, QBE, Media Budget

b) Activities to support literacy

All administrators, faculty, and support personnel at PCMS recognize the need to implement learning activities that support literacy. Because funding cuts, PCMS is limited in supporting school-wide literacy instruction. With the implementation of CCGPS, additional funding is imperative. By additional funding through the SRCL Grant, PCMS will provide a "gold standard" literacy education for all students. PCMS is currently utilizing the following resources and activities to provide literacy instruction:

- Writing across the curriculum
- Reading across the curriculum
- Emergent focus on vocabulary acquisition in all content areas/connections
- Technology enhanced lessons (limited in most classrooms to one laptop, document camera, and projector)
- Extended Learning Time (ELT)
- Inclusion/resource models for SPED and ESL
- Differentiated instruction
- ELT Writing "Boot Camp" (designed by PCMS language arts teachers)

c) Shared resources

PCMS has 1 ½ computer labs (50 stations) to be shared daily by teachers/students (914 students) throughout the building. Because of the "half-lab," classes are often divided causing an overflow, and students use available computers elsewhere in the building. However, creative scheduling and a team effort allow teachers to maximize the limited resources available. Shared resources at PCMS include:

- Computer labs
- Copy machines
- Prosper Assessment software
- Novels
- One interactive response system (outdated)
- 2 Interactive boards
- Gallopade books (class set for social studies only)

d) Library resources

The PCMS media center contains approximately 10,000 fiction, non-fiction, and reference books. A special "8th Grade Books Only" section was added last year through a media fundraiser and a small grant applied for by the media specialist. Teachers also have limited resources available for use such as educational videos (VHS) and professional learning books. The media center houses one computer lab with 30 computers. In addition, there are two stations available for use of the Destiny Media Program and two circulation computers. Stickers indicating available Lexile levels have recently been added to each title.

e) Activities to support classroom practices

PCMS provides the following classroom practices to provide support for students in developing and/or improving literacy skills:

- Research-based instructional strategies
- Reading support class – Reading Academy (limited seating)
- Writing in all content areas (early stages of implementation due to CCGPS)
- Reading across the curriculum
- Differentiated instruction
- Progress monitoring (Tiers 2, 3, and 4)
- Literacy instruction (vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and writing)
- Formative and summative assessments
- Benchmark testing
- Data analysis
- Limited professional learning (due to lack of funds)

f) Additional strategies to support student success

PCMS has implemented Learning Focused Schools strategies for ten years as a way to develop a common language around best practices for instruction. In addition, the following strategies have been added to ensure student success:

- Learning Focused Strategies
- Standards-based classroom strategies
- Differentiated instruction
- Limited technology usage (limited computer labs; 4 additional computers in each eighth-grade language arts classroom)

g) Current classroom resources

PCMS has limited classroom resources, but what is available is maximized. The following is a list of resources currently found in some PCMS classrooms:

- Class sets of textbooks in most content areas (mostly QCC aligned)
- Interactive boards (only 2 on campus)
- Teacher computer workstation in all classrooms
- Teacher laptop in all classrooms

- Document camera in most classrooms
- Presentation carts in most classrooms

h) Alignment plan for SRCL and other funding

At PCMS, the SRCL Grant funding will be used along with QBE, Title 1, school budget, and other fundraising monies to implement fully the project plan designed by the PCMS Literacy Team. The Pierce County School System leverages all available funds for instructional purposes; however, budget restraints have limited the acquisition of needed resources. Professional learning monies have not been available to adequately provide teachers with the training to effectively implement programs and technology currently in place. SRCL Grant money will be used to provide the necessary professional learning and additional resources, programs, materials, and technology to all teachers and students.

i) Demonstration of support of RTI, student engagement, instructional practices, writing, etc. through technology purchases

Research shows that the use of technology greatly facilitates collecting, managing, and analyzing data used with RTI and all instructional programs. A technology-based literacy intervention program, such as SRI, would meet the individual needs of students and provide accurate and timely differentiated instruction. Students are highly engaged in the instructional process when technology is used; therefore, in order to compete in the 21st century, teachers and students must have access to immediate, specific feedback, which can be provided with 21st century technology.

Most learners own at least one device and demonstrate advanced knowledge of usage. Providing opportunities to utilize those tools, and introducing them to other possibilities engages students in ways traditional methods have not. In addition, high-stakes testing will soon be

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administered through computers, and students and teachers must have the resources and knowledge to be adequately prepared for these tests.

Technology is an essential tool in enhancing the learning experience. Effective use must support four key components of learning: active engagement; group participation; frequent interaction and feedback; and connection to real-world experts. Students' motivation to learn is increased when using technology. PCMS recognizes the importance of incorporating technology with instruction, and all stakeholders feel that moving in this direction will place students on the cutting-edge of educational trends. Using technology will help students acquire 21st century skills.

Professional Learning Strategies Identified on the Basis of Documented Needs

Past Professional Learning

Below is a list of the limited professional development activities for the 2011-2012 academic school year. Due to lack of funding, the majority of the sessions were at no cost to the Pierce County school system.

Professional Learning from 2011-2012	
PL Activity	% of Staff in Attendance
On-site Georgia DOE CCGPS Webinars	100%
On-site standards-based planning for CCGPS implementation	100%
On-site Focus Group: *Energy Bus* book study	100%
Math in the Fast Lane: Suzie Pepper	28.5%
Kansas Writing Strategies (Tier 4 only)	2%
On-site training: Lexile Framework for Reading	100%
Motivating Unmotivated Students	10%
Promoting Academic Success for English Learners	2%
SuccessMaker Training	10%
Webb Leveling	10%
GA Social Studies Advisory Board	2%

Ongoing Professional Learning for 2012-2013

The following is a detailed list of the available, ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers and staff at PCMS for the current school year. The majority of the sessions are at no cost to the system; however, many of the sessions do not provide a *focus* on literacy instruction.

Ongoing/Current Professional Learning (2012-2013)	
PL Activity	% of Staff in Attendance
LDC Module Creator Planning	3%
On-site Differentiation Strategies (Lexiles, vocabulary, and Galileo)	100%
On-site Website Resource training	Voluntary
John Antonetti Stimulus and Engagement strategies	100%
On-site standards-based planning for CCGPS implementation	100%
Bring Your Own Technology	11%
CCGPS Unit Assessment Writing Grades 3-9	6%
GASIS Fall Conference (based on LDC)	2%
DOE ELA Institute	3%
ELA Precision Review (RESA)	6%
GA College411 Training (tied to CCR)	2%
Kansas Theme Writing Training (Tier 4 only)	2%
LDS Training	3%

On-site PCMS Leadership Team (literacy grant/needs assessment/literacy standards for science and social studies)	25%
SRA Corrective Reading (Tier 4 only)	10%
SRA Reading Success/SRA Read to Achieve (Tier 4 only)	10%
On-site Georgia DOE CCGPS Webinars	100%

Programmatic Professional Learning

Based on the professional learning needs identified in the *Needs Assessment, Concerns, and Root Cause Analysis*, the following professional learning plan is detailed and targeted to Pierce County Middle School's goals and objectives as outlined in PCMS's literacy plan. For each proposed professional learning activity, a method of providing accountability and measuring effectiveness is provided and is aligned to the following goals:

Goal 1: Students at Pierce County Middle School will receive effective literacy instruction from well-trained teachers using research-based strategies and methods of delivery.

Goal 2: All students at PCMS will perform at a proficient or advanced level of reading fluency and comprehension commensurate with Anchor Standards for College & Career Readiness.

Goal 3: All students at PCMS will perform at a proficient or advanced level of written expression commensurate with Anchor Standards for College & Career Readiness.

Proposed Professional Learning as outlined in the PCMS Literacy Plan and Project Plan		
Proposed Professional Learning Activity	**% of Staff in Attendance**	**Measurement to determine effectiveness**
Georgia Educational Technology Conference (GaETC)	10%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
Bring Your Own Device (B.Y.O.D.) Investigative Learning	10%	• Redelivery from committee
Georgia Science Teachers Association (GSTA) Conference	16%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
National Council for Teachers of Math (NCTM) Conference	20%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
Georgia Middle School Association Conference	19%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
National Middle School Conference	19%	• Written reflections turned into administration

		• Student work samples
International Reading Association Conference	5%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) Conference	16%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
Georgia Association for Gifted Education (GAGE)	5%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
On-site standards-based planning for CCGPS implementation	100%	• CCGPS Units
Professional development for implementing new hardware and software programs	100%	• CCGPS Units • Informal Evaluations • Teacher written reflections to be turned in to administration
New Teacher Orientation with a focus on literacy initiatives	Plan for 5% each year	• Mentor informal evaluations • New teacher survey results
SRI Training	10%	• Sign in sheets, agendas, and meetings • Data collected from program use
SRI Webinar Implementation Training	100%	• Sign in sheets, agendas, and meetings • Data collected from program use
Community-wide training for literacy initiatives	10%	• Sign-in sheets • Agendas • Minutes • Emails • Any other form of written communication • Newspaper articles
Professional development for initiating and sustaining partnerships with post-secondary institutions	10%	• Sign-in sheets • Agendas • Minutes • Emails • Any other form of written communication • Newspaper articles
Georgia Reading Association	20%	• Written reflections turned into administration • Student work samples
Model Schools Conference (Washington D.C)	10%	• Written reflections turned in to administration and BOE • PowerPoint/Prezi for redelivery • Redelivery sign-in sheets

Sustainability Plan

Plan for extending professional learning beyond the funding period

Professional development will be essential to successfully maintain the protocol of the Striving Readers grant beyond the funding period. New teachers hired to the system will receive training on assessment protocol and how to use technology to teach literacy. This training will occur during new teacher orientation and preplanning by the literacy team. In addition, each new teacher will have a mentor that will provide ongoing assistance with literacy, technology, and instructional initiatives. The plan for expanding lessons learned through the SRCL project to meet the needs of the LEA will be addressed through new teacher orientation and preplanning. Data obtained throughout the writing of the grant will be used to improve the PCMS Literacy Plan.

Professional learning communities are a major component of our school environment. Staff will receive ongoing professional development through the professional learning communities using system professional development funds. The literacy team will continue receiving current training on the new assessment tool as well as technology to redeliver to teachers and staff. Focus group meetings are held once a month to focus on specific strategies and goals to promote student achievement. Teachers and staff receive training twice a month on how to use technology to integrate literacy. Each content area receives four standards based training days a year to plan vertically and horizontally to share best practices in assessment and instruction as well as align units to the GPS/CCGPS.

Plan for extending funding beyond the grant period

Pierce County Middle School utilizes assessment data to drive and improve student achievement and instructional strategies. PCMS will sustain the Scholastic Reading Inventory program as well as print materials and technology through a variety of resources. PCMS will enlist the help of community partnerships for funding. School faculty and staff will sponsor a 5k and one mile fun run titled "Reading, Writing, and Running." Local businesses will cover any costs incurred from the 5k and one mile fun run. There will also be opportunities for local food businesses to donate a certain percentage of profits earned at their business during a "Literacy Night." In addition, Title I and QBE Media money will be used to extend funding for print

materials. Pierce County School System employs a full time Technology Director and PCMS has a part time Technology Specialist. This specialist will perform all maintenance on equipment and software. Pierce County also has E-SPOLST funds that are used for sustaining technology.

Budget Summary

Item	Description/Use	Quantity	Total Estimated Cost
SRI-Scholastic Reading Inventory	Universal Screener for Reading Lexile Assessment Program	950 licenses	$11,685.00
Professional Learning for SRI	Teachers will need training on the SRI program	3 days	$7,497.00
Interactive Boards	Interactive boards will be used for literacy instruction in all subject areas	41	$98,850.00
Laptop computer	3 mobile laptop stations with cart for teachers to use for literacy instruction	105 (35 per station)	$80,775.00
Tablet station	3 mobile tablet stations with cart for hands on literacy use	105 (35 per station)	$46,845.00
Tablet	Teachers will need the technology for sight words, fluency, comprehension and other literacy apps.	6	$2,394.00
Science, Social Studies and Math Readers & Magazines	Readers and magazines to enrich instruction of the science, social studies, and math curriculum		$29,824.00
Novels	Books to use for CCGPS instruction		$85,050.00
High Wire Complete Classroom Package	High-interest informational reading sets with links across the curriculum for literacy/reading intervention		$2,625.00
Student Treasures publishing	Program that publishes student work and promotes literacy	950 x 5	$4,750.00
Marble Journals	Teachers will use journals to promote writing skills	1100	$2,200.00
Common Core Coach CCGPS materials	Resources to use for CCGPS instruction and to promote literacy across the curriculum		$37,765.27
Aleks	Math-based computer literacy program	50 x 5	$10,625.00
Literacy guest speaker for parents	Promote literacy		$2,000.00
Child author guest speaker for students	Promote literacy		$2,000.00
21st Annual Model Schools Conference, registration, travel	Share ideas on literacy	6	$13,350.00
GAGE Conference, registration and travel	Share ideas on literacy	3	$2,415.00

Georgia Middle School Association Conference, registration, travel	Share ideas on literacy	12	$4,260.00
GaETC Conference, registration, travel	Share ideas on how to use technology to teach and promote literacy	3	$2,775.00
NCTM Conference, registration, travel	Share ideas on literacy	13	$32,597.00
National Middle School Conference, registration, travel	Share ideas on literacy	12	$19,008.00
Consumable Technology Resources and Supplies	Supplies for technology such as bulbs, toner, etc.		
Professional Development Days	Substitute pay for professional development days and leave for conferences		$6,750.00
Summer Stipend	Stipend for professional training days in the summer		$13,400.00
Total			$519,440.27

Summary

Funds from the Striving Readers Grant will allow Pierce County Middle School to purchase a universal screener. Technology will be essential in the implementation of the screener and literacy teaching strategies. Technology such as interactive boards, short throw projectors, tablets, and lap top computers will assist in mastery and retention of literacy skills beyond middle school.

Training teachers in ways to incorporate literacy using technology will also be funded using this grant. Funds will be used for sub pay, stipends, and the necessary training from outside consultants.

Funds from the grant will also be used for print material such as weekly/biweekly readers in specific content areas and novels. These texts will enhance literacy across the curriculum.