

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy
Program
LEA Grant Application
System Cover Sheet.

Please return to: Georgia Dept. of Education Attn: 205 Jessie Hill Jr. Dr 1758 Twin Towers East Atlanta, GA 30344		DOE Use Only Date and Time Received:	DOE Use Only: Received By:
Name of Applicant: Cartersville City Schools		Project Number: (DOE Assigned)	
Total Grant Request: \$2,500,000		System Contact Information:	
		Name: J. Howard Hinesley, Ed.D	Position: Superintendent
Number of schools		Phone:	Fax:
in system: 5	applying: 5	770-382-5880	770-387-7476
Congressional District: 7th		Email: hhinesley@cartersville.k12.ga.us	

Sub-grant Status

Large District (45,000 or more students)


Mid-Sized District (10,000 to 44,999 students)

Small District (0-9,999 students)

Check the one category that best describes your official fiscal agency:

**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grant**

School and Center Cover Sheet

DOE Use Only Date and Time Received:		DOE Use Only: Received By:	DOE Use Only: Project Number
School Name: Cartersville Elementary School			Total Grant Request: \$500,000
System: Cartersville City Schools		School Contact Information:	
		Name: Ken MacKenzie	Position: Principal
Number of Students		Phone Number: 770-382-0983	Fax Number: 770-387-7497
	995	Email Address: kmackenzie@cartersville.k12.ga.us	
Number of Teachers			
	63		
Free/Reduced Lunch %	60.40%		
Principal's Name: Ken MacKenzie		Other Reform Efforts in School: System Charter awarded by the State Board of Education	
		Principal's Signature: 	

Introduction and History of Cartersville City Schools

The Cartersville City School System has a 120-year-old tradition of excellence in education. Our rich heritage is founded upon our open relationship with the community that has provided a strong framework of support for continued success and improvement. High expectations, strong community support, and a genuine commitment to educate each and every student have been trademarks of this highly respected school system.

As a charter school system, Cartersville prides itself on being a recognized leader in education. Four of our schools have been recognized as a Georgia School of Excellence. This is made possible by our devoted staff that is dedicated to providing a sound and enriching curriculum, challenging and engaging content, and a support system of success for young people.

“**A Tradition of Excellence—Making It Personal**” is not just a theme for the school system; it is a commitment to ensure the success of all students. From academic performance, to athletic pursuits, to exemplary programs in art and music, Cartersville seeks to provide a well-rounded, well-balanced educational experience for all students. Therefore it is only natural that we would adopt the theme *Making It Personal* for this grant.

Our results indicate that our students perform well on all measures of accountability and achievement, but a closer examination shows some areas of concern.

I. Eligibility of Schools

Each Cartersville school is eligible to participate in this grant based on the following:

Table 1 Eligibility of Schools

	% F/R	AYP Status	N DNM CRCT Grade 3	% DNM CRCT Grade 3	N DNM CRCT Grade 5	% DNM CRCT Grade 5	N DNM CRCT Grade 8	% DNM CRCT Grade 8	Grad. Rate
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2011	60	Made	9	2.6%	9	2.9%	6	2.2%	85.6%
2010	59	Did Not Make	12	4%	23	8%	17	6%	78.7%
2009	57	Made	18	5.3%	32	10.7%	10	3.5%	84.3%

Note: Cartersville has only one school serving each of the student levels: Pre-K, Primary, Elementary, Middle, and High school.

II. Assurances

Please see the signed Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Specific Program Assurance For Sub-Grantees form and the Georgia Department of Education Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy located at the front of the application.

Prior to writing the SRCL grant, Cartersville City School System did not have an existing Literacy Plan at the district or building levels. The work within our application will become our literacy plan.

III. Project Design

Cartersville Elementary School is a child-centered school serving approximately 997 children in grades 3-5. Our mission is to educate students to become knowledgeable, emotionally stable, responsible children who are prepared to meet life's challenges. Cartersville Elementary School is committed to raising academic standards and educating students to become knowledgeable lifelong learners in an engaging academic environment.

With a long history of excellence, Cartersville Elementary School has been recognized as a Georgia School of Excellence and a Title I School of Distinction. Student learning is the focus and pride of the school's staff. At Cartersville Elementary School we believe that strong parental and community partnerships are critical components for having an effective school. Parents have many and varied opportunities for input into their child's education and are invited to play an active role in their child's

learning. Community stakeholders and parents are invited to serve on our Advisory Council to support us in *Making It Personal*.

A. Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

The following table shows data sources used in our needs assessment.

Table 2 School Information

Demographic Information	Pre-K and three-year-olds	Primary	Elementary	Middle	High	District Average
Free/ Reduced Lunch						
2011–2012	68%	63%	60%	55%	44%	55%
2010–2011	63%	62%	59%	55%	44%	55%
2009–2010	57%	59%	57%	51%	42%	52%
Ethnicity						
Black						
2011–2012	22%	22%	23%	22%	23%	23%
2010–2011	20%	22%	24%	22%	24%	22%
2009–2010	17%	22%	24%	23%	24%	23%
Hispanic						
2011–2012	35%	20%	18%	14%	13%	16%
2010–2011	26%	20%	18%	14%	13%	16%
2009–2010	24%	19%	17%	14%	12%	16%
Multi-Racial						
2011–2012	8%	6%	6%	4%	3%	5%
2010–2011	5%	6%	4%	4%	3%	4%
2009–2010	5%	7%	4%	4%	4%	5%
White						
2011–2012	35%	52%	53%	59%	61%	55%
2010–2011	49%	52%	54%	60%	60%	56%
2009–2010	54%	52%	55%	59%	60%	56%
Students with Disabilities						
2011–2012	16%	11%	12%	11%	8%	11%

2010–2011	15.4%	11%	12%	10%	7%	10%
2009–2010	9.5%	12%	12%	9%	7%	11%
English Language Learners (ELL)						
2011–2012	n/a	22%	15%	5%	4%	12%
2010–2011	n/a	21%	15%	5%	5%	12%
2009–2010	n/a	19%	14%	6%	4%	11%
AYP Status						
2010–2011	n/a	Made	Made	Made	Made	Made
2009–2010	n/a	Made	Did not Make	Made	Did not Make	Made
2008–2009	n/a	Made	Made	Made	Did not Make	Did not Make
Teacher Data						
Retention Rate						
2010–2011	81%	96%	98%	97%	97%	97%
2009–2010	81%	96%	98%	95%	98%	94%
2008–2009	81%	96%	95%	95%	95%	94%
Participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)						
2011–2012	100%	100%	95%	50%	90%	87%
2010–2011	100%	100%	95%	50%	80%	85%
2009–2010	0%	50%	95%	50%	70%	53%

Table 3 Student Achievement for CRCT Reading and ELA Combined Score

	2011			2010			2009		
	DNM	M	EXC	DNM	M	EXC	DNM	M	EXC
All Students	3.1%	56.5%	40.4%	6.5%	56.9%	36.6%	7.6%	63.1%	29.3%
Black	7.1%	70.5%	22.4%	10%	69.7%	20.3%	12.5%	73.3%	14.2%

Hispanic	3.7%	78.2%	18%	9%	68.4%	22.6%	6.2%	77%	16.8%
Multi-Racial	4.9%	53.7%	41.5%	10.3%	56.4%	33.3%	10%	65.7%	24.3%
White	1.2%	44.6%	54.2%	4.1%	48.4%	47.5%	6%	55.7%	38.3%
Students with Disabilities	10.6%	64.4%	25%	33.5%	55%	11.5%	32.1%	58.2%	9.7%
ELL	3.9%	83.3%	12.8%	11.4%	73.6%	15%	8.9%	78.7%	12.4%
Economically Disadvantaged	4.8%	67%	28.2%	9.6%	68.4	21.9%	10%	72.5%	17.4%

DNM = Did Not Meet; M = Meet; EXC = Exceed

B. Needs Assessment

When looking at historical performance data and other indicators, there is no question that Cartersville City School System is recognized as a very good school system. The school system enjoys a history steeped in tradition and excellence, and endeavors to focus on the needs of each student.

However, the rigor of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) will necessitate a change in our instruction for children. Our current Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) curriculum and subsequent measures of mastery (Criterion Referenced Competency Test—CRCT, Georgia High School Graduation Test—GHS GT, and End of Course Test—EOCT) require students to recall bits of knowledge and information in isolated disciplines. Tests consist of multiple-choice questions, and literacy is only measured in the English language arts assessment. With the implementation of the CCGPS, our students will be challenged to develop cognitive skills through reflective thought, analysis, problem solving, evaluation, and creativity. Students will need to apply core knowledge, concepts, or skills in real-world problems. This rigorous learning will occur at every grade level and in all subjects. Interwoven in this new framework of learning is the emphasis of literacy components that cross all content areas. Without careful planning and changes in the “way we do business,” our students will experience a drop in achievement. We need to revamp our teacher training to

include using data to inform rigorous instruction, evaluate effectiveness of instruction, identify ways to motivate the reluctant learner, and integrate literacy across the curriculum.

At the end of October 2011, Cartersville City Schools went through the district accreditation process of the AdvancED and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation (SACS) process. Additionally, in the fall of 2011, the system conducted an extensive needs assessment to continue our System Charter Status. Both of these processes involved intensive internal and external self-evaluations and reflection. Teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students, and community stakeholders were all involved in these reviews. The information gleaned from these internal and external reviews includes the following: teacher apprehension about CCGPS, lack of a universal screener to identify learning needs, the need for up-to-date digital platforms, and the need to develop tighter linkages and articulation between teachers, administrators, and the district in their efforts to focus on academic goals and improve student achievement

Materials Used. Our Literacy Committee looked at a wide variety of data, including the following:

- Demographic data, especially enrollment by sub group
- Student achievement scores on state tests over the past three years
- AYP results
- Graduation rates for the last three years
- Comparison of dropout rates over the last three years
- School Readiness data, benchmark assessment data, and RtI records
- Parent, teacher, and student input from AdvancED Stakeholder surveys
- Burruss Institute of Public Service—Perceptions of Quality in the Cartersville City School System Survey of Public Opinion
- Anecdotal records of parent and community concerns over the last two years
- Collegial discussions of building leaders and building representatives

- Examination of building budgets and needs

Needs assessment process. Our **Literacy Committee** noted that the district average for students qualifying for free or reduced lunch is 55%, which means we qualify for this grant. A closer look, however, revealed that our feeder schools had a greater percentage of students living at the poverty level (60-68%) than the middle school (51%) and high school (44%). Could it be that our students were not just slipping through the cracks, but were actually dropping out of school altogether? Kindergarten school readiness data showed that 90% of students identified as most at-risk come from families of poverty. Alarming, our at-risk subgroups have the highest dropout rate among all our students.

This was a wake-up call to our Literacy Committee to determine a plan to reverse this process. While an initial look at CRCT Reading/ English language arts (ELA) scores shows a high level of achievement, we noticed that the percentage of students in almost all sub groups who did not meet proficiency dropped over the last three years. It is clear our at-risk subgroups require differentiated literacy strategies. In addition, the team considered the impact the new CCGPS would make on student scores and we began to question how we could prepare our students—**all of our students**—to meet these higher standards.

In order to reach our at-risk subgroups while still maintaining high achievement levels despite high levels of poverty, we will strive to become a model for all Georgia schools through the following:

- Continued and expanded professional learning for our teachers and leaders
- Engaging instruction that motivates students to achieve their personal best
- Implementing research-based instructional strategies informed by data
- Community and family engagement that supports and celebrates student achievement
- Integrating technology that includes evidence-based tools that motivate and encourage our digital-savvy students to accelerate and take responsibility for their learning

The System Literacy Committee consists of 24 members.

Table 4 Needs Assessment and System Literacy Committee

Name	Title	Role/ Responsibility
District Level		
Peggy Cowan	Director of Curriculum & Accountability	Project Manager for Striving Reader Grant, Data Manager, Assessment Coordinator, and Purchasing Manager
Sheryl McDonald	Director of Technology	Coordinate acquisition, installation, training, and utilization of technology
Paula Camp	ELL Coordinator	Represents English Language Learners
Susan Tolbert	Director of Special Programs	Represents students with disabilities
Gina Bishop	Instructional Lead Teacher	Represent core academic teachers
Birth to 3		
Cindy Smith	Youth Educator and Program Director for Teen Center and Woman’s Resource Center	Represent community agencies serving at-risk pre-school aged children
Pre K		
Wesley Cupp	Assistant Principal for Pre-Kindergarten Program	Site-level coordinator, Data and Assessment Coordinator
Primary (K–2)		
Jennifer Rives	Math Coach	Represent core academic teachers
Bertha Nelson	Assistant Principal	Site-level coordinator
Denise Osborn	Literacy Coach	Leads PLC
Walter Gordon	Principal	Grant Manager for School
Elementary (3-5)		
Heather Hayes	Math Coach	Represent core academic teachers
Eppie Nelson	Assistant Principal	Site-level coordinator
Beth Weathersby	Literacy Coach	Leads PLC
Ken MacKenzie	Principal	Grant Manager for School

Middle (6-8)		
Michelle Gambill	Instructional Lead Teacher	Represent core academic teachers
Brenda Campbell	Assistant Principal	Site-level coordinator
Randi Sonenshine	Literacy Coach	Leads PLC
Jeff Hogan	Principal	Grant Manager for School
High (9-12)		
Bryan Edwards	Assistant Principal	Site-level coordinator
Bobby Timms	Science Department Chair	Represent core academic teachers
Linda Templeton	ELA Department Chair	Lead PLC
Jay Floyd	Principal	Grant Manager for School

C. Areas of Concern

Meeting the needs of a continuously changing and diverse student population is the greatest challenge facing the school system. Over the past ten years the percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch has increased nearly 18% system-wide (from 37.4% to 55.0%), and has increased 9% in the past five years alone. In this period the number of students in our English language learner (ELL) program has more than doubled, from 157 to 359. The number of students with disabilities continues to climb steadily, with more acute needs having to be addressed more frequently. More students are qualifying for multiple services simultaneously (ELL, special education, homeless education services), causing increased demand on limited resources and scheduling issues. The growth in the number of homeless students in Cartersville has increased by 77 students in the past two years alone.

Making It Personal becomes more challenging and problematic as staff and resource allocation are limited and we strive to meet all needs. Acknowledging that literacy is the foundational block to

learning and college and career readiness, we need to **provide our staff with the resources and skills** so they can help students establish these critical skills. Associated with this challenge is the need to be able to effectively **communicate** with less-involved parents.

The growing demand to keep up with ever-changing **instructional technology** in the classroom also presents a major challenge for the district. With limited budgets, a relatively small technology staff, and the advancement of new technologies, the school system continually lags behind the curve in the area of technology. Hardware, software, and infrastructure updates and improvements are significant hurdles in meeting the demand of today's modern classroom.

Closing the achievement gap between various population subgroups, particularly between our blacks, economically disadvantaged (ED), ELL, students with disabilities (SWD), and white students is a challenge. Closing this gap is a goal of our system strategic plan and Charter status with the State Board of Education. We anticipate that the Striving Readers Grant will enable us to eliminate this gap.

The following chart more specifically details how we have addressed research-based best practices in the past at Cartersville Elementary School and what we plan to do with the support of the Georgia Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Project:

Table 5 Areas of Concern

Content Area	Research-based Practice	Steps Taken	Steps to be Implemented through Striving Readers Funding
Curriculum Needs			

<p style="text-align: center;">Vocabulary</p>	<p>Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking and listening at the college and career readiness level</p> <p>Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term to comprehension or expression.</p>	<p>Implementing the Georgia Performance Literacy Standards in all ELA classrooms</p> <p>Creating a Resource Center for parents to checkout educational materials to use with children at home.</p> <p>Annual Title I Parent Nights</p> <p>Annual Curriculum Nights</p> <p>Implementing reading and writing instructional framework</p> <p>Content area instruction sometimes includes specific vocabulary development</p>	<p>Develop a variety of research-based strategies for teaching vocabulary to support understanding of more complex text</p> <p>Consistent use of formative data to identify complex vocabulary deficits</p> <p>Analyze data and student work to determine student needs, plan for instruction, and evaluate instructional effectiveness in collaborative PLC</p> <p>Focus on basic literacy skills during Parent Nights</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Phonics and Spelling</p>	<p>Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words</p> <p>Determine or clarify meaning of unknown words by using context clues, analyzing word parts, and consulting reference materials.</p> <p>Demonstrates a command of spelling and phonemic awareness</p>	<p>Implementing the GPS in all ELA classrooms</p> <p>Daily differentiated instruction of basic reading skills with a focus on individual spelling and decoding gaps</p> <p>Professional Learning for differentiated spelling instruction</p> <p>Implementing reading and writing instructional framework</p> <p>Use student writing to determine individual spelling needs</p>	<p>Consistent use of formative data to identify complex phonics and decoding deficits</p> <p>Analyze data and student work to determine student needs, plan for instruction, and evaluate instructional effectiveness in collaborative PLC</p> <p>Provide explicit instruction in decoding, spelling, and phonics based on individual student need</p> <p>Closer articulation with K- 5th to support phonics instruction</p>

Fluency	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension	Instructional emphasis on reading speed and accuracy Fluency monitored twice a year for all students and more frequently for struggling students	Review fluency assessment data to identify and plan for increased fluency and comprehension for all students in PLC
Text Complexity and Comprehension	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts Read to determine explicit information from text Cite specific evidence to support inference Effective instructional principles embedded in content instruction	Beginning to explore increasing rigor relative to lexile levels and text complexity Implementing of reading instructional framework including specific comprehension strategies Data collected but lacking universal application and usage	Support and train all content area teachers in the use of screening tools, text complexity, and lexile levels Expand use of researched based comprehension strategies Integrate comprehension strategies in all content areas Universal use of common formative and summative assessments Analyze data and student work to determine student needs, plan for instruction, and evaluate instructional effectiveness in collaborative PLC Determine the rigor required by CCGPS standards as related to the goals for College and Career Readiness and implement through engaging instruction Support complex text and comprehension instruction through K-5 articulation and planning
Writing	Produce clear and coherent writing in which development organization and style are	Explicit writing instruction around specific topic studies. Implementing writing	Analyze and support student writing in all content areas Provide authentic, intensive reasons for writing in

	<p>appropriate to task purpose and audience</p> <p>Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach</p> <p>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>	<p>instructional framework in ELA Classrooms</p> <p>Initial work in integrating grammar and conventions within writing</p>	<p>all contents area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varied writing tasks with specific purposes - Time for research, reflection, and revision - Grammar and conventions embedded in writing tasks <p>Support improved writing through K-5 articulation and planning</p>
Technology Needs			

<p>Increased Student Engagement</p>	<p>Utilize strategic tutoring for intense, individualized reading, writing, and content instruction as needed.</p> <p>Access to diverse texts with a variety of difficulty levels and on a variety of topics.</p> <p>Leverage the creative use of technology within the learning process to promote engagement and relevance</p> <p>Use technology as a tool for and a topic of literacy instruction.</p>	<p>Use on-line instructional programs for some content areas</p> <p>One computer lab– 32 student computers</p> <p>3 mobile carts with 30 computers each</p> <p>Classroom computer – 2 per classroom</p> <p>Document cameras – 34</p> <p>SMART Boards – 50</p> <p>8 iPads</p> <p>iPod cart with 30 MP3 players</p> <p>Available Literacy software includes:</p> <p>Study Island</p>	<p>Engage, motivate, and foster self direction through the use of interactive white boards, document cameras, E Readers, tablets, and computers in instructional settings</p> <p>Offer enrichment and intervention through expanded use of technology to meet individual student needs</p> <p>Use web based software to support learning in all elements of literacy - fluency, comprehension, phonics, spelling, vocabulary, and writing</p> <p>Expand media resources to include digital texts</p> <p>Use online applications for universal screening, progress monitoring, and benchmarking to analyze, and use data to promote student growth and achievement</p>
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Professional Learning Needs

<p>Professional Learning</p>	<p>Faculty groups focused on studying and analyzing student work and data to plan for instruction and intervention on a</p>	<p>Training on reading instructional framework</p> <p>Training on writing</p>	<p>Establish SLC and PLC to provide a sustainable framework of continuous improvement of the literacy initiative through distributed leadership and</p>
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	<p>individual student level</p> <p>Professional learning opportunities provided to build teacher knowledge of key literacy components, technology, and best practices in instruction</p>	<p>instructional framework</p> <p>Implementing Standards Based Classrooms</p> <p>Introduction to Common Core Georgia Performance Standards</p>	<p>collaborative planning</p> <p>Build knowledge regarding the rigor and relevance of the CCGPS and expectations of college and career readiness in all content areas</p> <p>Provide training in collection, analysis and use of formative and summative assessment data to inform instructional delivery, plan interventions, and evaluate effectiveness of instruction</p> <p>Train teachers to effectively integrate digital technology to motivate and engage of all learners</p> <p>Use web based system to provide personalized professional learning to support individual needs of teachers by gathering teacher effectiveness data, conducting reflective discussions about feedback, and directing them to online professional learning resources</p>
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D. Root Cause Analysis

Developmental Reading Assessments for incoming grade 3 students for 2011 indicated that 45% of the students were below the expected reading level. The mobility rate at Cartersville Elementary School is 31%. Sixty percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch, a steady increase from 57% in 2009. Transition and change is difficult for all children, but students who have to change schools because of family struggles bring with them added anxiety that can impede learning. In addition, our ELL population has grown to 15%, and 12% of our students have special needs. We struggle to support the individual needs of all students.

Our teacher retention rate of 95–98% over the last three years indicates that our teachers are experienced, but they need to learn to move from scripted lessons to more engaging instruction that crosses the curriculum. Our CRCT scores indicate that we have made progress in closing the achievement gap, but work remains to be done. We also realize that we must increase rigor as we transition to the CCGPS and become proficient at **differentiating instruction** to meet the needs of our students. We look forward to developing collaborative teacher teams that regularly **use data** to monitor the effectiveness of our instruction to ensure that all students are learning. Our experienced faculty would benefit from regular feedback as they apply professional learning to their classrooms. Given these root causes, we plan to do the following:

- Create collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) so that teachers can become users of data to plan instruction and then assess their effectiveness to continuously improve instruction.
- Provide professional learning supporting the CCGPS, integration of technology, and collaborative, data-based decision making.
- Provide a digital intervention tool to support individualized instruction and track progress to allow students to accelerate their learning.
- Expand technology to include presentation systems that engage students.
- Provide ongoing feedback to teachers through a web-based tool that will support personalized professional development and continuous learning for all faculty.

E. System Literacy Team

Cartersville City School System, a small system consisting of five schools, believes in a seamless educational process for each and every student. Therefore we have developed three tiers of governance to ensure consistency and continuity of instruction throughout the system.

Members. What began as our Needs Assessment Team (NAT) has grown into the Cartersville School System Literacy Committee (CSSLC). There are 24 members on the CSSLC. Administrators and academic coaches represent each school. Table 4 lists all the district personnel serving on this committee. Initially, the NAT consisted of an administrator from each school and a district administrator. As we transitioned into the CSSLC, it has become apparent we will need to add parent and community representatives to participate in decision making and help remove obstacles as they occur.

Function. This literacy committee has examined data described previously in this application, reviewed school-developed literacy plans, and collaborated to ensure clear articulation and alignment of all literacy plans for birth through grade 12. The CSSLC will meet monthly to oversee the implementation of *Making It Personal*, ensuring that benchmarks are reached and obstacles removed so that all Cartersville students are learning. Members from each of the schools will report on their school's progress and bring concerns to this group for collaborative problem solving. All progress will be supported by data.

Minutes. Minutes from NAT/CSSLC meetings are evolving. We recognize the need to summarize our meetings and track the progress of each of our schools, but we do not want this to become cumbersome. This will also be important for each of the school's literacy teams and the job-alike teacher teams that will become PLC. We decided to use a simple agenda record that will model what is expected at both the school and classroom level. This chart will be used as evidence as we track progress.

Table 6 Meeting Minutes

11/15/11: Literacy Plans for K–12	12/8/11: Literacy Plans for K–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed literacy components • Developed timeline for completion of literacy plan draft (due 11/30/11) • Reviewed GA Birth–Grade 12 Necessary Building Blocks • Outlined duties and timeline for completion of literacy plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed literacy plans from each of the five schools • Checked alignment with GA Birth–Grade 12 Necessary Building Blocks • Corrected vertical alignment • Edited plans collaboratively • Revised plan to be distributed by email • Corrections to be reported • Analyzed budget needs <p>Called meeting to review final grant (12/13)</p>

School Literacy Team. Each of our schools has a School Literacy Team (SLT) that will become the second tier of governance at the building level. The SLT is composed of the principal, academic coaches, content/grade level chairs in all content areas, and support staff from fine arts, physical education, and career pathways. Members of this team will serve as teacher leaders in PLC and are responsible for seeking input from the teacher they represent and communicating the actions of the team.

Table 7 Members of the School Literacy Team

Name	Title	Role/ Responsibility
Heather Hayes	Math Coach	Represent core academic teachers
Eppie Nelson	Assistant Principal	Site level coordinator
Beth Weathersby	Literacy Coach	Leads PLC
Ken MacKenzie	Principal	Grant Manager for School
Heather Hayes	Math Coach	Represent teachers/Lead PLC
Eppie Nelson	Assistant Principal	Site-level coordinator
Gina Bishop	Instructional Lead Teacher	Represent teachers/Lead PLC
Suzanne Hite and Tiffany Holland	Grade 3 Teachers	Represent teachers/Lead PLC
Angie Roper and Emma James	Grade 4 Teachers	Represent teachers/Lead PLC
AJ Wilson and Lisa Ledford	Grade 5 Teachers	Represent teachers/Lead PLC

Rachel Phillips	SPED teacher	Represent teachers/Lead PLC
Gayle Beck	Intervention teacher	Represent teachers/Lead PLC

This function of this team is to continuously examine the data, implement the school literacy plan, and collaborate to ensure the academic success of each child. The team will meet monthly to oversee the implementation of *Making It Personal*, ensuring that benchmarks are reached and obstacles removed so that all students are learning. At district CSSLC meetings, members from the SLT will report on progress in their content area and bring concerns to this group for collaborative problem solving.

Professional Learning Communities. The third tier in this governance structure will be the PLC. Faculty in all PLCs will be provided common planning time for their important work. Each PLC will meet three times per month to define and then address specific student needs through collaborative planning, systematic classroom implementation, and analysis of effectiveness using data and examination of student work. These teacher workgroups will provide a practical and effective form of professional development, one that engages teachers in the process of studying and improving their teaching and its observable and measurable effects on student learning.

The PLC framework provides structure and continuity for recursive teacher inquiry and fosters the development of fundamental pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary for sustaining continuous improvement and evidenced-based decision making.

Using this structured collaboration framework leads to improvements in general school culture and functioning. A review of research indicated those implementing this framework exhibited distinct improvements, including the following:

1. Tighter linkages and articulation between teachers, administrators, and the district in their efforts to focus on academic goals and improve student achievement
2. Increased administrator participation in meetings focused on improving instruction

3. More use of published agendas and prior awareness of meeting topics
4. More tightly coupled meetings that are less frequently cancelled or re-purposed to a non-instructional focus
5. Greater teacher understanding of and more positive expectations for assessment data
6. An “improvement over time” versus a “one-shot” orientation for collecting, analyzing and using data
7. Attributions for student achievement more focused on teachers’ planning and instruction, rather than teacher and student traits, and other non-instructional explanations

(McDougall, et al., 2007ⁱ; Saunders et al., 2009ⁱⁱ)

F. Project Goals and Objectives

Based upon our needs assessment, three goals have been identified in Table 9 to improve the literacy outcomes for all children in the participating centers and schools. While each school’s literacy plan is predicated on receiving the Striving Readers Grant, the specialized staff and Cartersville City School System or the Georgia Department of Education will provide parts of the professional development. The table below identifies these sources:

Table 8 Professional Development

Other Support for Goals	Funding Source
Goal 1: Improve literacy outcomes.	
Literacy Coaches, Instructional Lead Teacher, and Parent Involvement Coordinator	Title I
ELL Coordinator	Title III
Goal 2: Increase student engagement.	
Director of Technology	Local funds
Educational Technology Center’s support	GADOE
Goal 3: Institute collaborative data-based practices.	
Professional Learning—standards-based classroom	Title I and Title II
CCGPS training	GADOE Webinars

Table 9 Goals and Objectives

Goal and Objective	Indicator
Goal 1: Improve literacy outcomes.	
Student proficiency for all sub groups will improve 5% each year until all meet or exceed state standards in all content areas.	CRCT scores
Goal 2: Increase student engagement.	
All students will use computer-assisted UDL technology to	Purchasing records, observation during

support literacy for 15 minutes each day.	classroom walk-throughs
All participating teachers will demonstrate gains in instructional planning and delivery based on principal assessment.	Teacher effectiveness data analysis comparisons: Beginning, Middle, and End of year
Goal 3: Institute Collaborative data-based practices.	
100% of teachers will participate in PLC at least twice a month.	Record of Focus and Content Charts for PLC
Cartersville Elementary School Literacy Community (SLC) will meet monthly and collaboratively lead the literacy initiative using collaborative and data-based practices.	Record of Focus and Content Charts for SLC

G. Scientific, Evidence-Based Literacy Plan

The following action steps outline how we will implement our plan to improve literacy at Cartersville Elementary School.

Goal 1: Improve literacy outcomes

1. All students receive literacy instruction that is developmentally appropriate.
 - a. The **principal** ensures that universal screening in reading takes place no later than the fourth week of school. (Evidence: screening results reviewed by SLT, PLC)
 - b. **Students** in flexible groups work on specific skills and concepts identified through screening (Evidence: literacy coach reviews lesson plans; principal observation during classroom walk-throughs)
 - c. **Teachers** integrate reading and writing across the curriculum. (Evidence: monthly review of lesson plans by principal or literacy coach)
2. **Teachers and leaders** participate in customized training for transitioning to the CCGPS and the increasing rigor necessary for assuring students are ready for college and careers: Reading and Writing Standards, Speaking and Listening Standards, Language Standards, Expanding Academic

Vocabulary, and using author and topic studies. (Evidence: training evaluations and attendance records)

3. **Teachers and leaders** participate in training accompanied by job-embedded coaching to implement the following instructional structures with fidelity: well functioning SLT and PLC. Reading and writing instructional framework, Expanding Academic Vocabulary, and using author and topic studies. (Evidence: training evaluations and attendance records)
4. **Teachers** differentiate instruction.
 - a. Readers and writers instructional foundation allows teachers time to meet with individual and small groups of students for targeted instruction based on specific needs identified from data on a daily basis. (Evidence: observation during classroom walk-throughs by principal and/or literacy coach)
 - b. Teacher effectiveness data is gathered during monthly classroom walk-throughs. (Evidence: teacher effectiveness data reports compiled by principal)
5. Digital tools and interventions provide support for differentiated learning.
 - a. Students are motivated and encouraged to become responsible for their own learning. (Evidence: literacy coach reviews aggregate class reports from digital tool on a bi-weekly basis)
 - b. Teachers use timely individualized student achievement data to plan instruction. (Evidence: reports from digital tool)

Goal 2: Increase student engagement

1. **Administration** provides digital technology and training to engage students at appropriate developmental levels, deliver strategic literacy intervention, and provide real-time tracking of student progress. (Evidence: purchase orders, training evaluations)
2. **Administrators** provide additional technology so that students may access digital tools, and **teachers** provide regular time for students to work with digital solutions. (Evidence: teacher lesson plans

reviewed by literacy coach, observation during classroom walk-throughs by principal and/or literacy coach)

3. **Teachers and leaders** participate in training on using interactive platforms to promote student engagement and learning, and apply what they learn in their classrooms. (Evidence: teacher effectiveness data)
4. **Teachers** screen students and place them in flexible groups for explicit, targeted instruction. (Evidence: results from screening instrument, observation during classroom walk-throughs by principal and/or literacy coach)
 - a. **Teachers** create classroom centers for flexible groups of students that include direct instruction that is informed by formative assessment and ongoing progress monitoring, engagement with print materials that cross topics, and computer-assisted learning with ongoing progress monitoring. (Evidence: observation during classroom walk-throughs by principal and/or literacy coach)
5. **Administrators** conduct monthly classroom walk-throughs using a web-based tool to capture and share teacher effectiveness data, share data with the teacher, and encourage professional reflection in order to support personalized professional development and continuous professional growth. (Evidence: teacher effectiveness data)
6. **The principal or SLT** instills a culture of learning that is based on literacy by selecting monthly titles to be read aloud in classrooms, stimulating discussion, and prompting students to respond to literature. (Evidence: calendar of selected titles, hallway displays of students' response to literature)

Goal 3: Institute collaborative, data-based practices

1. The **principal** provides and protects common weekly planning times for job-alike teacher teams. (Evidence: master schedule)

2. **Administrators and teacher-leaders** are trained to effectively lead collaborative SLC and PLC to distribute leadership and build a learning culture based on literacy. (Evidence: evaluations from two-day Summer Institute, monthly onsite training/facilitation, one-day follow-up institute)
3. **Teacher-leaders** are identified and receive ongoing training and support so they may effectively facilitate PLC as they serve on the Cartersville Elementary School SLT. (Evidence: SLT roster)
4. **The principal and SLT** are supported by monthly onsite, job-embedded coaching to lead the SLT and facilitate data-based decision making regarding literacy. (Evidence: meeting dates, meeting attendance reports)
5. **Facilitators** institute protocols that direct the work of the PLC and SLT. (Evidence: observation of meetings, record of focus and content charts for PLC and SLT)
6. Monthly reports of progress are shared at all levels. (Evidence: record of focus and content charts for CCSLC, SLT, and PLC)

PLC collaboratively develops instruction as they assess student needs, plan targeted instruction, review and analyze the results of this instruction, and then cycle through the process again as needed to achieve student results. (Evidence: minutes of learning process studies in PLC, lesson planning, lesson implementation, common assessments, collaborative analysis of student work, and adjustment of instruction)

Current Instructional Schedule. Students in grades 3–5 receive two-and-a-half hours of literacy instruction on a daily basis. This instruction includes a 60-minute block for reading, 60-minute block for writing, and a 30-minute block for ELA. A literacy coach and an intervention specialist are available to model and support best practice literacy instruction. The classroom teacher and special education teachers team up to deliver inclusive literacy instruction for students with special needs. Response to Intervention (RtI) Tier III students are supported through a variety of models including remediation by Title I and Early Intervention teachers in inclusion and resource settings. Tier IV students receive additional services

from ELL teachers, teachers of the gifted, and special education teachers in both resource and inclusion settings, and as determined by their individual needs.

Students use emerging literacy skills in science and social studies during 60-minute blocks of time that rotate between these two content areas. Students are encouraged to use their reading and writing skills independently through weekly visits to the school library and homework assignments.

After-school tutorials are provided for RtI Tier II and III students, for 90 minutes, twice a week for 18 weeks. Saturday tutorials are provided for RtI Tier III students, for 120 minutes six times a year. Students from Cartersville High School serve as mentors to our struggling students, serving as positive role models who value and support literacy. In addition, adult volunteers are sought to serve as mentors to some struggling students and grade 5 National Elementary Honor Society students are reading buddies for some grade 3 students.

Materials. Materials used in core classes will continue to include the current adopted textbooks for all core areas. We have one computer lab with 32 computers and three portable carts, each with 30 computers. All classrooms have two computers. Our classrooms have SMART boards (50) and document cameras (34). Struggling students or ELLs traditionally use an iPod cart with 30 MP3 players.

Support for Tiered Instruction. All students will be screened three times a year. Those students who are in RtI Tier II and Tier III will receive further screening to drill down to their specific needs. These data will be shared during RtI meetings and PLC so that appropriate interventions may be provided. Teachers have received training in using instructional frameworks to support differentiated instruction. Continued support and training, accompanied by digital intervention tools and greater access through additional hardware, will provide motivating tools to more students, more often.

To prepare for the increased rigor of the CCGPS and to prepare students for college or careers, teachers in all content areas will be required to have students regularly write across the curriculum. Digital support will encourage teachers to give writing assignments without having to individually correct

each assignment. Students' writing may be analyzed and critiqued by a digital tool that students can access for ideas and immediate developmental feedback for improving their writing. Both students and teachers will create and continually update digital portfolios to chronicle their growth. Teachers will receive training in the CCGPS and instill additional rigor in their course work by promoting literacy through expanded home-school connections and focusing on integrating more complex academic language in all content areas. Teachers will be trained to identify and integrate Tier II vocabulary throughout the school day.

Job-alike teacher teams will be supported to become fully functioning PLCs. In PLC, teachers grouped by grade level work together throughout the year to assess student needs, plan targeted instruction, review and analyze the results of this instruction, and then cycle through the process again as needed to achieve student results.

Teachers will be encouraged to read aloud more complex texts through a program that finds the entire school reading a book selected by the SLC each month and sharing their response to that piece of literature through hallway displays. Posted learning targets and vocabulary will help build academic language.

The wide range of assessments will be supplemented with digital tools that provide on-demand records that track both individual progress of students and aggregate progress of groups of students. Informed by these data, teachers will be able to form flexible student groups and strategically provide quality tiered instruction.

Teacher effectiveness data will be gathered using a web-based tool that is aligned to the SRCL observation checklist, shared with teachers to prompt reflective discussions, and used to proscribe and provide personalized professional development.

Our plan for providing tiered instruction is summarized in the following table.

Table 10 Tiered Instruction

Cartersville Elementary School is <i>Making It Personal</i>			
Literacy Plan for Tiered Intervention			
	Time	Personnel	Strategies
Tier I	<p>2.5 hours daily literacy block for whole group, small group, and individualized instruction.</p> <p>Science and Social Studies 60-minute block, rotating from day to day.</p>	<p>Reading Endorsed Literacy Coach</p> <p>Classroom Teacher, teaming with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Intervention Teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Notebooks • Reading and writing instructional framework • PLC Collaborative Planning in common planning time • CCGPS training to continue standards-based instruction • Word walls/Word sorts • Posted standards and learning targets • Read aloud, think aloud • Student-led closings • Graphic organizers • Small group focused instructions—guided reading • Leveled libraries with progressively more complex text • Digital interventions with individualized, multi-modal appeal and on demand reports • Literature that spans all topic areas available in English and Spanish • Early Intervention Programs • Book of the Month • Word of the week
Tier II	<p>Same as Tier I with further individualized and/or small group instruction as identified by student need. Extended learning time twice a week for 90 minutes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Teachers • Title I Teachers <p>(All personnel will be observed and receive feedback using a web-based system, linked to the SRC teacher effectiveness checklist to foster continuous and personalized growth)</p>	
Tier III	<p>Same as Tier II instruction with an intensive intervention schedule planned to target the unique needs of individual students. Saturday tutorial 50 minutes, six days a year.</p>		
			<p>In addition to Tier I and Tier II instructional practices, research-based interventions as indicated in Cartersville Elementary School RtI Handbook target the unique needs of each student. Tier III instruction is delivered in a ratio of one teacher to one-to-three students. Student progress is monitored weekly.</p> <p>May lead to a referral for testing with system psychologist.</p>

Tier IV	Same as Tier III in addition to individualized scheduling as indicated by an IEP, TPC/ELL, or gifted plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance counselors • Intervention specialist • ELL teacher • School psychologist testing • Special Education teachers • Teachers of the gifted 	Same as Tier III with additional individual strategies and supports as indicated by an IEP, TPC/ELL, or gifted model of instruction.
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H. Strategies and Materials (Existing and Proposed) Including Technology to Support Literacy Plan

Current classroom resources. An audit of system-wide literacy materials was cross-referenced with teacher surveys to inform the following general list of classroom resources.

Table 11 Classroom Resources

Current Classroom Resources					
	Pre-K	Primary	Elementary	Middle	High
Reading Egg		X			
Study Island			X	X	
Brain Pop			X	X	
Student Computers (two per room)	X	X	X	X	
Science Kits		X	X	X	
Teacher-Produced Materials	X	X	X	X	X
Textbooks and all ancillary materials for all content areas		X	X	X	X
Classroom Libraries	X	X	X		

Smart Board			Every classroom (50)	Math and science only	50% of teachers
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Shared resources. Made possible by a generous grant from the community, Cartersville teachers have access to a shared Teacher Resource Center. The center provides resources for area teachers to research lesson plans, create instructional aides for their classrooms, and check out supplemental equipment for specific lessons. Teachers can check out unit kits, DVDs, and VHS on a wide array of topics. This resource is shared with Cartersville City and Bartow County teachers. In addition, the chart below showcases those resources that are shared at each of the school sites.

Table 12 Shared Resources

Shared Resources					
	Birth-5	Primary	Elementary	Middle	High
Math Manipulative	X	X	X	X	X
Guided and Leveled Readers		X	X	X	
Science Kits	X	X	X	X	X
Document Cameras		X	X	X	X
Mobile Computer Labs		X	X	X	
eReaders				X	
MP3 carts			X	X	X
E-Response System Clickers			X	X	X
Plato and GA Virtual School					X
E-Books for Checkout				X	X
Level Book Room		X	X		

Library resources. The Cartersville Elementary School library collection’s average age is 13 years and there are 18.51 items per student. The library features a balanced collection aligned with the

Wilson Library Catalog standards. A wide variety of resources are available for students, including fiction and nonfiction texts and iPods so students can listen to pod casts.

Resources needed to implement the literacy plan, including student engagement. Cartersville Elementary School struggles with identifying and engaging our students who lag behind their peers with specific reading and comprehension strategies. Our School Literacy Committee has identified evidence- and research-based interventions that will motivate our digital learners, provide individualized support for students' literacy skills, and keep teachers informed of their students' progress. Teachers will have on-demand reports that identify individuals and groups of students who need support in specific skills and concepts so that small groups may be formed for direct, strategic instruction. New and expanded site licenses will allow more of our students to benefit from these digital tools. These digital programs will require additional hardware to expand student access. Computers (laptops, notebooks) and eReaders will be provided for classroom and/or shared use. Additionally, ***Making It Personal*** will ensure that all core classrooms are equipped with interactive platforms and document projectors so that instruction engages students with varied learning styles.

Other materials have been identified to boost rigor and promote the higher-level thinking required by the CCGPS to ready our students for success in college and careers. These include author and topic studies, expanded leveled libraries, and student books in both English and Spanish.

Activities that support classroom practices and literacy intervention programs. Teachers in self-contained classrooms employ an instructional framework that allows them to differentiate instruction. This will be expanded and supported with author and topic studies that will raise rigor and support critical and creative thinking as students respond to literature. Students will use new digital tools that provide practice and instruction in an engaging manner. Teachers will receive on-demand reports to easily track student progress and inform instructional planning.

A Book of the Month activity will promote a culture of learning based on literacy as teachers read aloud and discuss the same book in all classrooms. Students' response to this literature will be shared through hallway displays. Academic vocabulary from the text will be posted on word walls. The current PLC will take on a more formalized structure that includes protocol that has brought about marked changes in teacher learning, leadership development, and overall student achievement. A SLC will be formed with the sole responsibility of ensuring that Cartersville Elementary School is ***Making It Personal***.

Additional strategies needed to support student success. Due to the focus on the four-tiered RtI model within ***Making It Personal***, teachers will require additional professional learning as implement new strategies to support student success including the following:

- Employ new technology
- Formalize collaborative practices leading to increased student learning
- Create electronic portfolio
- Use data to inform instruction
- Integrate and effectively support literacy in content areas
- Transition to CCGPS to prepare students for college and careers

I. Project Procedures and Supports

Students in grades 3–5 start their day at 7:55 and end at 3:00. Learning takes place in teaching team classrooms, supported by co-teaching with special education, EIP, and Title I teachers in inclusive classroom.

Teachers employ a daily **two-and-a-half hour literacy block** that uses the instructional framework to support literacy skills acquisition. Tiered needs are identified through screening assessment and met through strategic teacher-led instruction (whole group, flexible small groups, one-on-one) and individualized digital interventions. Tiered learning needs are met through this literacy block and

supported by inclusive teaching, digital tools, collaborative instructional design that is informed by timely student data.

Science and social studies are taught in 60-minute blocks on alternate days. Instruction in these content areas allows students to integrate and practice literacy skills. After-school and Saturday tutorials and mentoring is provided through community partnerships with Cartersville High School, Boys and Girls Club, Hands of Christ, and Etowah Public Housing and Cartersville Elementary School after-school tutorial.

Table 12 Sample Cartersville Elementary School Student Schedule

Time	Subject	Time	Subject	Time	Subject
Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5	
7:55–10:25	Literacy Block	7:55–10:25	Literacy Block	7:55–8:15	Opening Activities
10:30–11:00	Music, PE, media center (alternate)	10:30–10:45	Recess	8:15–8:45	Music, PE, Media Center
11:00–11:30	Lunch	10:45–12:15	Math Block	8:45–11:15	Literacy Block
11:30–1:00	Math Block	12:15–12:45	Lunch	11:15–11:45	Lunch
1:00–1:15	Recess	12:45–1:15	Social Studies/ Science (alternate)	11:45–12:45	Social Studies/ Science
1:30–2:30	Social Studies/Science (alternate)	1:15–2:15	Music, PE, Media Center	12:45–1:00	Recess
				1:00–2:30	Math Block
2:30–3:00	Closing Activities	2:15–3:00	Closing Activities	2:30–3:00	Closing Activities

J. Professional Learning Strategies Identified on the Basis of Documented Needs

Table 13 Professional Learning Activities from the Past Year

2011–2012		
Topic	Number of Hours	% of Staff

		Attending
Foundational Overview of CCGPS Literacy/ Performance-Based Assessments (K–8)	21 hours + 9 onsite job-embedded coaching	20%
Foundational Overview of CCGPS Math (K–8)	7 hours + 9 days onsite job-embedded coaching	20%
Foundational Overview of CCGPS Math/ Performance-Based Assessments (K–8)	3 days	20%
Math job-embedded coaching (K–8)	9 days	65%
ELA job-embedded coaching (K–8)	9 days	65%
Leading the Way CCGPS—ELL and SWD (K–12)	7 hours	15%
Overview of Literacy for Social Studies (K–8)	7 hours	25%
Overview of Literacy for Science and Technical Courses (K–8)	7 hours	25%
Introduction to CCGPS for Administrators	7 hours	100%
CCGPS Speaking and Listening (K–8)	1 day	100%

Ongoing professional learning. Over the last four years, Cartersville City School System has made a concerted effort to provide training and support in the following areas to all staff members.

Standards Based Instruction. The district has provided training and support opportunities to all schools regarding Standards Based Instruction (SBI). The most observable evidence of SBI in classrooms K–12 is the incorporation of an instructional framework, most frequently seen as the workshop model, in all content areas. Teachers in primary and elementary schools have adapted readily to the workshop model, having been introduced to Writer’s Workshop several years ago. The district provided a year’s worth of training for primary and elementary teachers focusing on readers and writers instructional framework, so these are more prevalent at the K–5 grades. Other evidence of SBI in many classrooms includes the following:

- Posted standards that are discussed and offer a clear learning purpose for students
- Word walls that are interactive and continuously changing
- Student tasks that require thinking, speaking, and writing
- A decrease in the use of worksheets that require low-level thinking
- Teacher modeling that exposes thinking, mostly through read-aloud, think-alouds, student-led closings, small group, focused instruction, opportunities for student discussion, and academic discourse

The district administration is seeking and supporting consistency throughout all schools.

Professional Learning Communities. In 2009, all instructional coaches in the system received training consisting of five days of professional learning, as well as several days of onsite, job-embedded coaching in each school (K–8). This training focused on coaching skills and strategies, with a strong emphasis on PLCs. All schools have provided common planning time for teachers to meet together on a regular basis. Coaches plan and facilitate learning opportunities for teacher teams at these times, as well as supporting teachers who also plan and facilitate learning sessions. The sessions are particularly effective at the elementary schools and middle schools. All schools and teacher teams would benefit by instituting a more formalized framework for collaborative planning that analyzes student achievement data in order to develop instruction that meets common student needs.

Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. GPS have been embedded in training sessions since their adoption in Georgia. The district will provide extensive training for grades K–8 beginning January 2, 2012 and continuing throughout the remainder of the school year. This training, along with onsite, job-embedded coaching will provide teachers with in-depth understanding of the standards, how the standards will affect new assessments, and how teaching techniques and strategies will have to change to meet new expectations. Currently, teachers at all schools and grades are aware of the CCGPS roll out for Georgia and that changes are inevitable. Their future training will provide specific details regarding the changes needed to prepare students effectively.

Rigor. Improving the rigor of student tasks has been a focus in Georgia as well as Cartersville City School System. Much of the training involved a study of Depth of Knowledge Levels and how those levels align with Bloom's Taxonomy and other critical thinking plans. Tasks were studied for rigorous cognitive demand as well as student response demand. Teachers in K–12 are working to increase rigor in daily assignments, projects, and assessments. The elementary and middle schools currently demonstrate a greater number of teachers who are intentionally planning more rigorous assignments for students. The CCGPS training beginning in January 2012 will provide teachers with even more information and practical applications for rigor in all classrooms. Continued support and monitoring of the expectations in all schools is necessary for continued growth and success. A next step for Cartersville City School System may be developing a system to support teachers in meeting district and state expectations.

Preferred method of delivery of professional learning. Based on responses from teacher surveys, staff prefer small amounts of training followed by job-embedded coaching and support. This allows time to internalize new content and begin the process of implementing new strategies and ideas. This method of delivery aligns with the proposed training in the Striving Readers Grant. To better address the constraints of teacher scheduling, webinars in 15-, 30-, and 45-minute windows will also serve as a platform for professional learning. This enables Cartersville City School System to give time-sensitive coaching that best complements teacher planning and needs.

Programmatic professional learning needs. Every spring all Cartersville City School System teachers take a survey to determine the areas of need for additional training to continue professional growth that is meaningful to the staff and students. During the 2011–2012 school year, our K–8 teachers are receiving CCGPS trainings. Overall, survey results support the following professional learning:

- A renewed emphasis on writing at all grades due to the emphasis on writing with CCGPS and the PARCC assessments.

- Instituting a formalized, research-based framework for effective PLC collaboration that has proven experience raising student achievement.
- Digging deeper into the CCGPS and PARCC as they apply to content areas.
- Continued support for effectively implementing technology to support student engagement and facilitate tiered learning.

Table 14 Needs Assessments

Needs Assessments to Determine Professional Learning Needs					
Spring 2011					
% Agreeing this is important or very important	Primary	Elementary	Middle	High	District
Ongoing professional learning activities and programs	86%	82%	68%	83%	81%
Support for new/experienced teachers	91%	85%	89%	81%	87%
Assessing student achievement	89%	88%	73%	87%	85%
Implementation of effective teaching practices	94%	87%	82%	90%	88%
Differentiating instruction for students	95%	86%	75%	73%	86%
Ensuring equal access to quality instruction to all groups of students	88%	93%	84%	75%	85%
Strategies and programs for closing the achievement gap	86%	89%	80%	66%	81%
Use of instructional technology	79%	89%	86%	94%	87%

K. Assessment/ Data Analysis Plan

Cartersville City School System lacks a universal screening plan that provides data needed to communicate and address the unique instructional needs of each child. The following universal assessment plan, clearly providing articulation from grades Pre-K–12, will be implemented.

Table 15 Assessment/ Data Analysis Plan

Assessment	Purposes	Skills Measured	Test Frequency	Application
Birth–age 3				
DP-3	S	Dev. and Function	2 X per year in three-year-old programs	New
Pre-K				
PALS-Pre-K	S, PM, O	AK, PA, CoP, OL	3X per year	New
PPVT4 Form A/B	S, PM, O	V, OL	2 X per year	New
CLASS	T-S Interactions	AK, COP, PA, V, PN, Fine Motor Skills, Counting and Shape Identification	1X per year	Continue
Grades K–2				
Cartersville City School System Readiness Inventory for K	S	AK, COP, PA, V, PN, Fine Motor Skills, Counting and Shape Identification	1 X per year prior to kindergarten entry	Continue
DIBELS Next/ AIMSWEB	S, PM, O	AK, LNF, PA, NWF, OL, RC	3 X per year	New
IPI	D	NWF and Decoding	As needed for RtI	New
G-KIDS	S, PM, O	CCGPS—assessment for grade 1 readiness	Ongoing during kindergarten year	Continue
On the Mark	S	ORL	4 X per year	Will be replaced with DRA 2
Development Reading Assessment (DRA) 2	D	RC and ORL	3 X per year	New
CRCT and CRCT –M	O	ELA, Reading, Math	1 X per year	Continue
Grades 3–5				
Development Reading Assessment (DRA)	D	RC and ORL	3 x per year	Continue—will upgrade to DRA2 for 2012–2013

				school year
CRCT and CRCT –M (for Reading, ELA and Math only)	O	ELA, Reading, Science, Social Studies, Math and CCGPS	1 X per year	Continue
IPI	D	NWF and Decoding	3 X per year	New
Writing Assessment for Grade 3 and 5	O	Informational and Persuasive Writing	1 X per year	Continue
DIBELS Next	S, PM, O	AK, PA, NWF	3 x per year	New
SRI	S, PM, O	RC-Inferential	As needed for RtI	New
Grades 6–8				
SRI	S, PM, O	RC-Inferential	3 X per year	Continue
CRCT and CRCT –M (for Reading, ELA and Math only)	O	ELA, Reading, Science, Social Studies, Math and CCGPS	1 X per year	Continue
DRA 2	D	RC and ORL	As needed for RtI	New
Grade 8 Technology Assessment	O	Technical literacy for the 21st century	1 X per year	Continue
Grade 8 Writing Assessment	O	Expository and Persuasive Writing	1 X per year	Continue
Grades 9–12				
SRI	S, PM, O	RC-Inferential	3 X per year	New
AP Exams	O	Content knowledge in AP course	1 X per year	Continue
Career and Technical Education Assessments	O	Automotive, Business Education, Microsoft Office, Nursing Assistant	1 X per year	Continue
EOCT	O	Grade 9 Literature, American Lit, Biology, Physical Science, Economics, US History,	1 X per year	Continue

		Math I and II		
GHS GT	O	ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies	1 X per year	Continue
GHS WT	O	Persuasive Writing	1 X per year	Continue
PSAT	D	Math and Verbal	2 X during HS	Continue
Grades K–12				
ACCESS for ELLs	S	Language	1 X per year	Continued
WAPT	S	Language acquisition	1X during enrollment	Continue
Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA)	Portfolio of student work samples to capture student learning and IEP progress for students with profound disabilities.	Reading, ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies	Ongoing	Continue
GA Online Assessment	D	G, PA, P, RC, V ELA, Reading, Science, Social Studies, Math and CCGPS	3 X per year	Current
KEY				
LNF = Letter Naming Fluency, AK = Alphabet Knowledge, P = Phonics, PA = Phonological Awareness, CoP = Concepts of Print, OL = Oral Language, PN = Picture Naming, G = grammar, A&R = Alliteration and Rhyming, NWF = Decoding, ORL = Oral Reading Fluency, V = Vocabulary, RC = Reading Comprehension, CCGPS = Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, S = Screening, PM = Progress Monitor, O = Outcome Based, D = Diagnostic, IPI = Informal Phonics Inventory, SRI = Scholastic Reading Inventory				

Current data analysis protocol. Data is made available through multiple resources. Cartersville City School System utilizes Thinkgate, a data warehouse program that stores current and historical state test data. Thinkgate disaggregates data and creates benchmark assessments to monitor student progress. All student record information that is sent to the state is reported on the State Longitudinal Data System

(SLDS). SLDS creates reports and disaggregates information such as enrollment data, attendance data, state test data, and lexile levels. The information is broken down by student, school, and district level. The Office of Curriculum & Assessment maintains the data file and provides analysis, comparison, longitudinal, cohort, and grade-level data to be used. This data is then disseminated from the Office of Curriculum & Assessments for further review at School Board meetings, system administrative meetings, school leadership meetings, parent council meetings, grade level/department meetings, with individual classroom teachers, with parents, and with students.

Comparison to SRCL assessment plan and new assessment schedule. Many of the assessments currently implemented at Cartersville Elementary School will continue under the SRCL assessment plan. We will continue with DRA2, as this assessment provides valuable data on oral fluency and aligns with assessments administered at Cartersville Primary (CPS) and Cartersville Middle Schools (CMS). In addition, we will add IPI as a diagnostic for Decoding. The addition of SRI will enable teachers to have an additional screener for RtI. We will continue to use AIMSweb as it aligns with DIBELS Next. For Cartersville Elementary School, we are continuing with the same cycle of testing with addition of the screeners required by SRCL. All teachers will receive professional development to effectively use the assessment.

Assessments to be discontinued. Cartersville will be continuing the use of all current assessments implemented at Cartersville Elementary School

Training necessary for new assessments. Teachers will receive training to ensure accuracy of test administering. Additionally, training will be provided to support the collection, organization, interpretation, and use of the data to guide instruction and intervention. It is important that our teachers understand how to use the data to *Make it Personal* for their students—ensuring student success.

Sharing data with parents and stakeholders. Parents will receive data about their child's progress on report cards and progress reports. During parent-teacher conferences, teachers will explain

each assessment and interpret results. Student progress data is also available through our student information system’s parent portal on our website. Assessment data is also critical during RtI or due process meetings. The classroom teacher, counselors, administrator, Special Needs Director, and literacy coach use data to determine intervention services. It is critically important that all stakeholders understand the meaning of the data and know how to use it to plan next steps in a child’s education. With the SRCL and assistance from the State, our staff will receive training on how to interpret and use data as they communicate with parents and colleagues for the benefit of students.

L. Experience of the Applicant

CCS has experience operating successful grant projects as indicated below:

Table 16 Other Initiatives

Other Initiatives	Description	Funding Sources
Math and Science Partnership Grant	Cartersville City School System shares a federal grant with Kennesaw State University for our Math and Science teachers to attend training three times during the school year and a two-week Summer Institute on planning instruction and teaching math and science in the standards-based classroom.	\$442,072
Federal Perkins Grant	Provides Industry Certified Career Technical courses to prepare students for the workforce. Students enrolled in career pathway courses (engineers, video production, automotive, business/entrepreneurship, nurse assistant) can receive certification that allows them to go directly from Cartersville High School into their career. Through the program they receive a certificate to immediately enter the workforce with the necessary skills.	\$71,435
GACHE Grant	For the past two years, Cartersville High School has received a grant from the Georgia Appalachian Center for Higher Education (GACHE) to implement strategies that encourage and assist at-risk students to continue their education beyond high school. Students attend a “Reality Store,” a mock job interview fair, college visits, and SAT test prep courses. Parents of our juniors receive detailed information regarding the college admissions process and Dave Ramsey financial materials are available. College acceptance letters are proudly displayed in the high school foyer and seniors posting letters receive a “College Bound Cane” t-shirt. Teachers participate in a poverty workshop: “Welcome to the State of Poverty” simulation.	\$7, 644
Back Pack Buddies	To ensure students receiving free/reduced lunch have food on the weekends, a	\$6,000

Grant	backpack full of food is provided to take home on Friday.	
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Initiatives implemented with no outside funding support. During the summer of 2010, Cartersville City School System was granted a five-year System Charter under provisions of Georgia law and Georgia State Board of Education regulations. Cartersville is the ninth school system in the state to be granted a system charter. The flexibility granted to the system under the charter focuses largely on the scheduling of students, class size initiatives, and funding.

To sustain a high level achievement for all students from birth to grade 12, Cartersville City School System has established community-based partnerships with local churches, Boys and Girls Club, and Etowah Public Housing to support students before school enrollment and after school hours. Cartersville trains volunteers in these programs to provide tutorial services. In addition, the Office of Curriculum & Assessments meets with these groups on a regular basis to help guide the program and offer support and resources.

Our teachers have attended Department of Education training on the system-wide implementation of Georgia Performance Standards, and redelivered the training to fellow teachers in-house. Internally our staff has reviewed every performance standard, identified what students need to know and be able to do, developed curriculum maps/pacing guides, and developed instructional units aligned with the curriculum maps.

Capacity to coordinate resources. Character Education Grant: Over the past nine years we have received a total of \$200,000 in funds used for student incentives, curriculum materials, fliers, student education, and teacher education focused on the topic of Character Education. Working in conjunction with community stakeholders from business, industry, civic organizations, clergy, and parent/student organizations, we have a list of 10 character words we think exemplify the “desired characteristics” of our community. Community-wide, we emphasize one of these words each month during the school year. We

currently fund the program with local funds and funds raised by students (selling magazines, wrapping paper) and schools (picture money) reaching out to the community.

A great example of *Making It Personal* is our **Feed the Children Summer Program**. Many students in the district do not have access to nutritious meals when school is not in session. Cartersville City School System coordinated with local churches and volunteers to deliver food to locations throughout the entire community. Children ages birth to 18 are provide two free meals a day throughout the entire summer and receive food packets to take home during the school year. In the summer of 2010 we served 242,796 meals and in the summer of 2011 we served 211,948 meals. There are currently 68 students receiving weekend food packets.

GateKey Scholars is an initiative supported by the community so that students of poverty can attain a free college education. Georgia Highlands College and Chattahoochee Technical College agreed to charge half of the required tuition if we could fund the remainder. A total of \$696,400 has been raised to support this initiative. We currently have 59 GateKey Scholars. GateKey provides funds for tuition and a book allowance.

Sustainability. Our vision—*Making It Personal*—defines our approach to sustainability. We find a way to fund projects that have a positive impact on student learning and success. Examples of these initiatives include the following:

- Continuing to administer the PSAT and AP exams even after the state cut funding.
Cartersville recognized that our students' families could not afford these tests but felt they were vital instrument to our students' college and career readiness.
- Incorporating the salary for an Intervention Specialist and Adaptive Physical Education specialist for students with profound disabilities into the operating budget. These positions were formally funded by Title I ARRA funds.

Our budget process is based on student outcome data. If we find something that is working for our students, we reorganize our budgets. If that is not possible, we raise funds in our community and reach out for local partners and support.

Since 1997, Cartersville City School System has received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States of America. This award is based on a review of the system's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The CAFR is judged by an impartial panel and is the highest recognition in the areas of governmental accounting and financial reporting. Its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by the school system and its financial management team.

Cartersville City School System has maintained a strong audit history for Pre-K through high school for the past five years. Our Finance Director, Richard Dyke, has been with Cartersville City School System for 14 years. From 1991 to 1997, Mr. Dyke was with the state auditor department. During his tenure, Cartersville City School System has had only one finding in our entire federal, state, or local grant finding. In 2009, an audit by the US Department of Education, IDEA, (CFDA #84.027, #84.173) for \$681,576 was cited. The Audit found the Period Certification Form was not correct, as Management was not aware of the time and effort requirements of the OMB A087, Cost Principles. The finding was corrected immediately and removed in the 2010 audit. Throughout 2009 we continued to maintain CAFR status.

M. Resources

Adequacy and Coordination of State, Federal, Local Resources and Integration with Existing Programs and Family Literacy Services

Alignment plan. SRCL funds will provide supplemental funding that will allow us to build on the professional learning and technology provided through Title I and Title II funds to specifically address literacy issues through additional training (beyond that stated in the following table) in collaborative,

data-based training; integrating technology effectively; extending the school day for Pre-K; and transitioning to CCGPS through literacy integration in the core content areas and digital tools that support intervention and student engagement.

Table 16 Use of Federal Funds

	Title I Funds	Title II Funds
LEA	<p>ARRA funds used for professional development, all other Title I funds used for staffing and Indirect Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% salary for Title I Director • 25% salary for clerical staff • Indirect Costs • 50% salary for Parent Involvement Coordinator • General supplies • System Professional Learning 	<p>Substitutes Teachers and fees for the following Professional Learning activities: Math and ELL Conferences, GPS Alignment, Analyzing Data, and Standards Based Instruction workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Day salary for high school teacher • Teacher Mentor program • Administrator’s Book Study
Primary	<p>Teachers, math, and literacy coaches</p> <p>Expendable Equipment and supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries for two Academic Coaches • 50% salary for Instructional Lead Teacher • Salaries for two intervention teachers • Instructional technology 	<p>Substitutes Teachers and fees for the following Professional Learning activities: Math, ELL, and SWD Conferences, GPS Alignment, Analyzing Data, Workshops</p>
Elementary	<p>Teachers, math, and literacy coaches</p> <p>Expendable Equipment and supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries for two Academic Coaches • 50% salary for Instructional Lead Teacher • Salaries for three intervention teachers • Instructional technology 	<p>Substitutes Teachers and fees for the following Professional Learning activities: Math and ELL Conferences, GPS Alignment, Analyzing Data, and Children of Poverty Instruction workshops</p>
Middle	<p>Math and literacy coaches</p> <p>Expendable Equipment and supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries for two Academic Coaches • Instructional technology 	<p>Substitutes Teachers and fees for the following Professional Learning activities: Math and ELL Conferences, GPS Alignment, Analyzing Data, and Standards Based Instruction workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplement for Special Education teachers getting content area certification

High	Not a Title I school Receives \$7,000 for homeless students	Substitutes Teachers and fees for the following Professional Learning activities: Math Conferences, GPS Alignment, Analyzing Data, and Standards Based Instruction workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplement for Special Education teachers getting content area certification
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Table 17 Resources of Each Building

	Pre-K	Primary	Elementary	Middle	High
Computer Labs		X	X	X	X
Leveled Book Room		X	X		
Media Center	X	X	X	X	X
Science Labs					X
Technology Room		X			
Instructional Resources for Career Pathways				X	X

Supplement, not supplant. *Making It Personal* is designed to complement, promote, and extend a variety of existing literacy and technology initiatives in Cartersville City School System. Our proposal represents taking the next steps in preparing our teachers for the rigor and relevance of the CCGPS and the College and Career Readiness standards. The foundation was laid in customized professional development and onsite job-embedded coaching that was sustained from Federal (Title I ARRA, Title I, and Title II) funds. Next steps will introduce our PLCs as the vehicle for further growth in literacy by allowing teachers to have the time, support, and resources they need to create an environment of personalized success. This process represents a scientific based approach to allow teachers to study their instruction, analyze student work, and identify the necessary steps for further improvement. ***Making It Personal*** represents a new approach to ensuring literacy or supplementing those strategies that federal funds support.

Adding value to existing resources. *Making It Personal* brings added value to existing resources in deep and meaningful ways that include the following:

- **Institutionalizing a framework for collaborative practices** will distribute leadership and empower all educators to effectively use data to analyze needs, plan strategically, measure effectiveness, and then determine next steps while fostering an atmosphere of support and collaboration among teachers. This will inculcate a culture of continuous improvement at the district, school, and classroom level that can be easily sustained and allowed to permeate new hires through modeling and mentorship.
- **Increasing lexile levels of students** by providing individualized interventions, instruction, and more complex text, including more informational text with increasing text complexity will move all students closer to college and career readiness.
- **Integrating literacy instruction**, particularly at the middle and high school with their departmentalized structure, will give purpose and meaning for literacy skill development and prepare students for the rigor of common core. Integrating instruction fosters a culture of learning based on literacy across all content areas and grade levels and increasing the number of students who are college and career ready.
- **Providing training and resources** to teachers to create high-quality lessons and rigorous instructional units closely aligned with literacy standard of the CCGPS; use data to create individualized responses to students' needs; and ensure that teachers in all content areas develop the knowledge and skills to foster a student's ability to read, write, and communicate in the various disciplines. This will allow teachers to incorporate more complex informational text in instructional units preparing students for their next steps—college readiness and career pathways.
- **Adding rigor and improving reading and writing skills** will increase success rate of students enrolling in post-secondary institutions or entering the workforce or military.

N. Management Plan and Key Personnel

Management Plan. *Making It Personal* creates a three-tiered governance structure within Cartersville City School System that distributes leadership to the classroom level. At the classroom level, teachers will participate in PLC to analyze data and determine instructional delivery. At the school level, the teacher-leader for each of the PLC will participate in the school's SLT, which will oversee the implementation of *Making It Personal* at their building with a close eye to the data. At the district level, each facilitator of the school's SLT, joined by representatives for ELL and students with special needs, will participate in the CSSLC to oversee our grant progress and analyze data to inform continuous improvement.

Program Personnel. Peggy Cowan, the Director of Curriculum and Accountability, will serve as the manager for *Making It Personal*. A veteran of 27 years with Cartersville, she has been in her present role 12 years and has two Educational Specialist degrees: one in Leadership and other in Media. Mrs. Cowan leads collaboration with the community through outreach and engagement. Under her direction, Cartersville coordinated and implemented the GA Performance Standards system-wide. Her responsibilities include working with our schools on identified needs and overseeing all testing for the system. As the Director for Title I and III, she is responsible for the budget, funding, implementation, and paperwork, and is primary developer for this proposal. All data management and reporting needed for AYP and verification of status as well as K–12 Curriculum and its implementation is part of her duties. Mrs. Cowan can connect with both teachers and administrators in Cartersville as she has served in their roles. Prior to taking on her current position, she was a building level administrator for eight years (Principal at Cartersville Elementary School for six years and Assistant Principal at CPS for two-and-a-half years) and taught grades 1–5. As principal, Mrs. Cowan led the initiative for Cartersville Elementary School becoming a charter school in the state of Georgia. Mrs. Cowan will facilitate the SRCL and be supported in managing this grant by the committee members (listed below) and the three-tiered governance structure discussed above.

Table 18 Personnel Managing Grant

Title	Individual Responsible	Supervisor	Striving Readers Responsibilities
Curriculum & Assessment Director	Peggy Cowan	Dr. Howard Hinesley, Superintendent	Project Manager and oversee all aspects of the grant including scheduling PD and training
Purchasing			Construct budget and ensure compliance and timeliness of orders and reports.
Financial Director	Richard Dyke		Ensure adherence to budget and plan.
ELL Coordinator	Paula Camp	Peggy Cowan, Director of Curriculum and Accountability	Represent interests and needs of ELL, further communication and support.
Director of Special Programs	Susan Tolbert	Dr. Howard Hinesley, Superintendent	Represent interest and needs of special needs students, further communication and support.
Pre-K Site-Level Coordinator	Wesley Cupp	Walter Gordon, CPS Principal	Leader for each school in regard to dissemination of data, resources, and information, co-facilitator (with principal) of their school's SLT
Primary Site-Level Coordinator	Bertha Nelson		
Elementary Site-Level Coordinator	Eppie Snider	Ken MacKenzie, CES Principal	
Middle School Site-Level Coordinator	Brenda Campbell	Jeff Hogan, CMS Principal	
High School Site-Level Coordinator	Bryan Edwards	Jay Floyd, CHS Principal	
Technology Coordinator	Sheryl McDonald	Ken Clouse, Assistant Superintendent	Ensure digital tools are purchased and installed before beginning of school year, coordinate necessary professional development surrounding technology solutions, serve as a resource for instructors

Commitment to project. In planning *Making It Personal*, district leadership considered the commitment and capacity of each school to implement change. As a prerequisite for participation in *Making It Personal*, 100% of teachers in our schools and district personnel signed a commitment form that indicated their support of the goals of SRCL.

The community plays a large role in supporting the literacy initiative and *Making It Personal*. This is shown through attendance in School Board meetings, survey responses, and community partnership and resources. Taking an active role in their students' success enables Cartersville City School System to create an engaging environment and consistently raise the bar for student achievement in and out of the classroom. In addition, the Mayor of Cartersville and the Bartow County Commissioner jointly signed a letter of commitment supporting the Striving Readers literacy initiative. Our community partners, Hands of Christ Hispanic Center, the Director of Public Housing, and The Teen Center/ Woman's Resource Center, reflected this practice in letters of support.

O. Sustainability Plan

The framework we have chosen to institute for our collaborative decision making includes a step-down approach that will gradually transition the responsibility for school-site services from an onsite consultant to a district or school "in-house" advisor, and in doing so will use existing local knowledge to provide and sustain the model. As part of this model, one or more of our school or district personnel will be selected, trained, and certified to become an "in-house" advisor and replace the site-level support services. An in-house advisor typically devotes approximately 20 percent of his/her time to this role. The in-house advisor ultimately assumes responsibility for most school-site services.

Making It Personal invests heavily in professional learning for our leaders and teachers. Given our 95% teacher retention rate, we believe we are investing in educators who will continue

to serve our students and mentor new faculty members who come on board. They will be on hand to model and coach, and will be more likely to do so given our continued focus on collaborative planning. Most importantly, the collaborative framework inspires a **culture of continuous improvement** that will permeate our district and schools without the need for additional funding.

The three-tiered governance structure (CSSLC, SLT, PLC) can continue to function when funding ends and be the appropriate decision makers for deciding what pieces of this comprehensive endeavor continue through alternative funding. They will also seek out additional funding from local, state, and federal funding based on our success at ***Making It Personal*** for all of our students.

- Plan for sharing lessons within the district
 - Create the capacity for teachers to work collaboratively to improve teaching and learning
 - Sharing of rigorous instructional units integrated with literacy skill development
- Plan for extending assessment practices beyond the funding period
 - The system will use either Title I funds or local assessment funds to continue the assessment practices beyond the funding period.
- Plan for extending professional learning practices beyond the funding period
 - The grant will be used to train teachers to become instructional leaders within their department/grade level. It is anticipated that they will provide support and training for new teachers and colleagues.
 - Model literacy classrooms will be established and will serve to provide training for other professional staff.

IV. Budget Narrative

Striving Readers Grant funds will be used for the following:

1. **Salaries:** Whenever possible, Cartersville City School System will schedule training during in-service days. However, when that is unavoidable, substitute teachers will be provided for teachers receiving training during regular school days.
2. **Stipends and Travel:** Teachers attending system- and GADOE-sponsored summer training will receive a stipend, and travel costs will be reimbursed by the system.
3. **Indirect Costs:** Funds based on the state-approved Indirect Cost rate for our district will be budgeted in the grant.
4. **Appropriate Literacy Instruction:** The grant proposes to purchase universal screeners to measure developmental functions as well as mastery of literacy components needed to inform instruction and individualize interventions for each child. At a minimum, screeners covering all age-appropriate literacy standards will be administered three times per year. Those students experiencing difficulties will be screened more often and in more depth.
5. **Professional Learning:** The rigor of the GPS will necessitate a change in our instruction for children. Our children will be challenged to develop cognitive skills through reflective thought, analysis, problem solving, evaluation, and creativity. Interwoven in this common core curriculum is the emphasis of literacy components that cross all subject areas. Teachers will need training to develop evidence-based instructional frameworks and assess effectiveness of learning through collaboration as they assess student needs, plan targeted instruction, and analyze results of instruction. Teachers will be involved in training; accompanied by job-embedded coaching to expand academic vocabulary, implement literacy across all content areas, integrate technology into instruction, and develop performance-based assessments.
6. **Interactive Web-Based Software:** When students are struggling with content or are at risk of failure, self-paced digital intervention tools are both engaging and prescriptive. The grant would provide comprehensive research-based software designed specifically to deliver instruction addressing the specific learning needs of each child. Students will receive targeted instruction in a non-threatening environment that encourages them to take personal responsibility for their own learning.

7. **Technology:** We are currently using 20th-century tools and resources to teach the 21st-century child.

While these resources may work for some students, the majority of students are engaged in and motivated by the digital world. Effectively teaching the CCGPS and preparing our students for college and careers will necessitate employing different modalities and providing students with real-world experiences integrated with digital components. The grant will provide interactive platforms, electronic tablets, mobile labs, eReaders, and document cameras. Teachers will also be provided electronic tablets to immediately access student data, provide real-time tracking of student progress, maintain portfolios, share instructional strategies with colleagues, provide reflection, and receive individualized professional learning.

8. **Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness:** Software for administrators to use as they conduct walk-throughs will be provided by this grant. A web-based tool will capture and share teacher effectiveness data and encourage personal reflection to ensure continuous professional growth. The tool will also provide a running record of professional growth.

9. **Information and Literary Text:** Each month, the entire school will read a selected text, designed to stimulate discussion and prompt students to respond to the text. The hallways will be lined with student responses and classroom word walls will include academic vocabulary from the text. Grant funds will be used to purchase these texts. The majority of children of poverty do not have access to books needed to enhance the early literacy development necessary for school readiness. Cartersville City School System has a program that feeds needy children on weekends and during the summer. Paperback children's books, along with a pamphlet suggesting ways to use the book, will be included in food packages. Parents receiving these packages will also be invited to attend special programs designed to help them support their child's literacy development. Older siblings or adults in the home will be encouraged to read the books to younger children. Parents receiving support services through our partnering community agencies will be given children's books when receiving literacy development training.

ⁱ McDougall, D. Saunders, W. and Goldenberg, C. (2007). Inside the black box of school reform: Explaining the how and why of change at *Getting Results* schools. *Journal of Disability, Development, and Education*, 54, 1, 51-89.

ⁱⁱ Saunders, W.M., Goldenberg, C.N. , & Gallimore, R. (2009) Increasing achievement by focusing grade level teams on improving classroom learning: A Prospective, Quasi-experimental Study of Title 1 Schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46, 4, 1006-1033.