

School Profile

Created Monday, October 28, 2013
Updated Monday, December 02, 2013

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School Information

School Information District Name:	Thomaston-Upson School System
School Information School or Center Name:	Upson-Lee Pre-K

Level of School

Early Learning (Birth to Five)

Principal

Principal Name:	Julie English
Principal Position:	Director of Pre-K, Student Services & Assessment
Principal Phone:	706-646-4729
Principal Email:	jenglish@upson.k12.ga.us

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

School contact information Name:	Julie English
School contact information Position:	Director of Pre-K, Student Services & Assessment
School contact information Phone:	706-646-4729
School contact information Email:	jenglish@upson.k12.ga.us

Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

Pre-K

Number of Teachers in School

19

FTE Enrollment

160

Fiscal Agent Memo of Understanding

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

Fiscal Agent/Applicant Required Signatures:

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

Please sign in blue ink.

Name of **Fiscal Agent's** Contact Person: Kathy Matthews

Position/Title of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: Director of Finance

Address: 205 Civic Center Drive

City: Thomaston Zip: 30286

Telephone: (706) 647-9319 Fax: (706) 646-4865

E-mail: kmatthews@upson.k12.ga.us

Marguerite V. Shook
Signature of Fiscal Agency Head (District Superintendent or Executive Director)

Dr. Marguerite V. Shook
Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head (District Superintendent or Executive Director)

12/10/13
Date (required)

Preliminary Application Requirements

Created Monday, December 09, 2013

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

SRCL General Information Packet-Cohort 3

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

-
- Yes
-

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

SRCL Scoring Rubric-Cohort 3

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

-
- Yes
-

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

SRCL Required Assessments Chart

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

-
- Yes
-

Assessments

I understand that implementing the assessments mentioned on page 6 in the General Information Packet is a necessary part of receiving SRCL funding.

-
- I Agree
-

Unallowable Expenditures

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

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

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

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

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

Advertisements, Promotional or Marketing Items

Decorative Items

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

Land acquisition

Capital Improvements, Permanent Renovations

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

Dues to organizations, federations or societies for personal benefits

Any costs not allowed for Federal projects per EDGAR, which may be accessed at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>.

NOTE: This is NOT an all-inclusive list of unallowable expenses. If you have questions about unallowable expenses please e-mail your questions to jmorrill@doe.k12.ga.us

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

• I Agree

Grant Assurances

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

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

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

- Yes
-

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

- Yes
-

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

- Yes
-

Georgia Department of Education Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy

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

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

I. Conflicts of Interest

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

a. Organizational Conflicts of Interest.

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

- any person owning more than 20% interest in the Applicant
 - the Applicant's corporate officers
 - board members
 - senior managers
 - any employee who is responsible for making a decision or taking an action on this grant application or any resulting Agreement where the decision or action can have an economic or other impact on the interests of a regulated or affected organization.
- i. The Applicant shall describe in detail why it believes, in light of the interest(s) identified in (a) above, that performance of the proposed Agreement can be accomplished in an impartial and objective manner.
 - ii. In the absence of any relevant interest identified in (a) above, the Applicant shall submit in its grant application a statement certifying that to the best of its knowledge and belief no affiliation exists relevant to possible conflicts of interest. The Applicant must obtain the same information from potential subcontractors prior to award of a subcontract.

Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

- iii. GaDOE will review the statement submitted and may require additional relevant information from the Applicant. All such information, and any other relevant information known to GaDOE, will be used to determine whether an award to the Applicant may create a conflict of interest. If any such conflict of interest is found to exist, GaDOE may:
 1. Disqualify the Applicant, or
 2. Determine that it is otherwise in the best interest of GaDOE to make an award to the Applicant and include appropriate provisions to mitigate or avoid such conflict in the grant awarded.
- iv. The refusal to provide the disclosure or representation, or any additional information required, may result in disqualification of the Applicant for an award. If nondisclosure or misrepresentation is discovered after award, the resulting grant Agreement may be terminated. If after award the Applicant discovers a conflict of interest with respect to the grant awarded as a result of this solicitation, which could not reasonably have been known prior to award, an immediate and full disclosure shall be made in writing to GaDOE. The disclosure shall include a full description of the conflict, a description of the action the Applicant has taken, or proposes to take, to avoid or mitigate such conflict. GaDOE may, however, terminate the Agreement for convenience if GaDOE deems that termination is in the best interest of the GaDOE.

b. Employee Relationships

- i. The Applicant must provide the following information with its application and must provide an information update within 30 days of the award of a contract, any subcontract, or any consultant agreement, or within 30 days of the retention of a Subject Individual or former GaDOE employee subject to this clause:
 1. The names of all Subject Individuals who:
 - a. Participated in preparation of proposals for award; or
 - b. Are planned to be used during performance; or
 - c. Are used during performance; and
- ii. The names of all former GaDOE employees, retained by the Applicant who were employed by GaDOE during the two year period immediately prior to the date of:
 1. The award; or
 2. Their retention by the Applicant; and
 3. The date on which the initial expression of interest in a future financial arrangement was discussed with the Applicant by any former GaDOE employee whose name is required to be provided by the contractor pursuant to subparagraph (ii); and
 4. The location where any Subject Individual or former GaDOE employee whose name is required to be provided by the Applicant pursuant to subparagraphs (i) and (ii), are expected to be assigned.
- iii. "Subject Individual" means a current GaDOE employee or a current GaDOE employee's father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, spouse of an in-law, or a member of his/her household.

Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

- iv. The Applicant must incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements awarded under this Agreement and must further require that each such subcontractor or consultant incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements at any tier awarded under this Agreement unless GaDOE determines otherwise.
- v. The information as it is submitted must be certified as being true and correct. If there is no such information, the certification must so state.

c. **Remedies for Nondisclosure**

The following are possible remedies available to the GaDOE should an Applicant misrepresent or refuse to disclose or misrepresent any information required by this clause:

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

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

ANNUAL CERTIFICATION OF DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

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

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

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

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

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

III. Incorporation of Clauses

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



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

Kathy Matthews/Director of Finance

Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head and Position Title

12/10/13

Date



Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

Dr. Marguerite V. Shook, Superintendent

Typed Name of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head and Position Title

12/10/13

Date

N/A

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

N/A

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

Date (if applicable)

Thomaston-Upson School System

District Narrative

Brief History

Thomaston City and Upson County School Systems were consolidated into a single school district in 1990 by community vote. The new district, Thomaston-Upson School System, opened during the 1992-1993 school year. The system now serves 4,347 students and consists of one pre-kindergarten center, and schools at grades K-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Our system's size allows us to maintain a friendly, safe environment while offering an array of resources and opportunities to support teaching and learning.

System Demographics

We have a diverse student population as shown in the table below. Nearly 70% of our students participate in the federal free and reduced meals programs. All schools operate a School-wide Title I Program. Approximately 69% of our students receive compensatory services across grades K-12. The district employs 383 certified and 255 classified staff.

Student & Program Demographics	Percentage
White	59%
Black	35%
Hispanic	2%
Multi-Racial	4%
Asian-Pacific Islander	<1%
Am. Indian/Alaskan	<1%
Economically-Disadvantaged	68%
Early Intervention Program	18%
English Learners	<1%
Students with Disabilities	13%
Gifted	6%
CTAE	76%
Remedial Education	31%

Current Priorities-

Our current, system-wide priorities include:

- **Implementation of CCGPS** –All teachers and staff are expected to implement Common Core Georgia Performance Standards in Reading, ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies. Teaching teams collaborate in designing units and lesson plans around CCGPS and receive professional learning through district and RESA offerings.
- **Differentiation of Instruction** –Professional learning is on-going to ensure that teachers and staff master the principles of differentiation of instruction.

Thomaston-Upson School System

- **RTI revamp** –To provide stronger tiered interventions across all schools, the district has created an RTI Committee to lead the revamp of our pyramid of interventions and RTI process.
- **BYOT** –Students are encouraged to bring their own personal technology to school for use during selected segments of instruction. The Bring Your Own Technology initiative engages students in learning through use of technology.
- **Community Engagement** – The district office is assisting schools in involving the community, business, and parents by promoting the agenda of the Upson Education Alliance. The new Fine Arts Center is being used for public presentations of student work.

Strategic Planning

The district has a five-year strategic plan that was developed with all stakeholders' input. Our plan is undergirded by the vision and mission statements shown below.

Our Vision: *Thomaston-Upson Schools will be a model system of effective teaching and learning in preparing students who are personally, academically, and socially successful both in school and in life.*

Our Mission is *Excellence in education...every individual, every day.*

Our 2013-2014 district-wide school improvement goals include:

- Goal Area I: Increasing Achievement;
- Goal Area II: Promoting Stakeholder Involvement; and
- Goal Area III: Creating Organizational Effectiveness

Each school develops a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) that links its initiatives to the district's three goal areas. During annual planning retreats with Central Office staff and invited stakeholders, including parents, school teams review and update their CIPs. The district's CIP is updated to reflect changes included in schools' CIPs. Additionally, schools incorporate strategies and interventions identified in their Title I Schoolwide Plans.

Current Management Structure

The district is governed by a seven member Board of Education that employs a Superintendent to lead and manage the education of its student. The Superintendent has assembled a Central Office Team that assists in managing educational programs, personnel, services, and practices. The Central Office Leadership Team consists of a Deputy Superintendent and Directors of Curriculum, Federal Programs, Pre-K, and Special Education. The District Leadership Team, all Principals, and Instructional Coaches form the Curriculum Advisory Board and meets monthly.

Past Instructional Initiatives

Thomaston-Upson School System

In the past, the district initiated the following programs to support instruction. All continue to be place.

- Cultural Diversity Training
- Differentiation
- Thinking Maps
- Student Longitudinal Data System.
- Love and Logic -discipline program.
- Data Director –System wide data warehouse; schools use it to access data and to scan benchmark data in order to create a student profile. Due to funding limitations, this data system will be dropped at the end of the 2013-1014 school year.
- Use of Technology to Support Instruction and Data Analysis-Most classrooms are equipped with Promethean ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom systems that need updating.

Literacy Curriculum and Assessments Used District-wide

The table below highlights the major literacy curricula and assessments that are used in each grade level. The CCGPS framework is used in grades 1-12.

Thomaston-Upson’s District-wide Literacy Curriculums and Assessments Used

School/Center	Literacy Curriculum	Literacy Assessments
Pre-K Center	-High Scope -Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards	-Work Sampling System
ULSE (K-3)	-Guided Reading Leveled Instruction with Fountas & Pinnell and Scott Foresman leveled readers) -Fountas & Pinnell Phonics and Word Study Program -CCGPS State Frameworks and supporting literature -Scott Foresman Basal Reading Program -Lexia Software (for EIP students) -Wilson Reading System (Resource Students with	-Star Early Literacy -Star Reading -AR Test -GKIDS -CRCT (Reading & ELA) -CRCT-M -3 rd Grade Writing Test -ACCESS

Thomaston-Upson School System

School/Center	Literacy Curriculum	Literacy Assessments
	Disabilities) -Wilson Foundations (Students with Disabilities in Co-teach Classrooms)	-Lexia -GAA -OAS
ULNE (4-5)	-Open Court Reading Series -Lexia Software (for EIP students) -Wilson Reading System (Resource Students with Disabilities) -Wilson Foundations (Students with Disabilities in Co-teach Classrooms)	-Star Reading -AR Test -CRCT (Reading & ELA) -CRCT-M -5 th Grade Writing Test -ACCESS -Lexia -GAA -OAS
ULMS	-Holt Mifflin (supplement for literary works) -CCGPS -Classworks -System 44 and READ 180	-CRCT (Reading & ELA) -CRCT-M -Read 180 (struggling readers) -8 th Grade Writing Test -ACCESS -COACH workbooks for CRCT-like questions -GAA -OAS

Thomaston-Upson School System

School/Center	Literacy Curriculum	Literacy Assessments
ULHS	-Novels as a supplement along with CCGPS -Read 180	-EOCTs (Ninth Grade Literature and American Literature) -Read 180 (SWD & struggling readers) -ACCESS -GHSWT -End of Pathway Assessments (CTAE)

Need for Striving Reader Project

As of 2003, 20% of adults in Upson County are illiterate. Over 70% of our students are from impoverished backgrounds. In spite our teachers’ best efforts, we have increasingly more students who are not able to read by the end of third grade, thus carrying gaps into subsequent grades where the demands for reading are even higher.

In today’s economy, an employee’s independent knowledge and abilities will define them as necessary or expendable. “People who cannot write and communicate clearly will not be hired, and if already working, are unlikely to last long enough to be considered for promotion (The Why, p. 28).” Effective literacy instruction does not simply take place in a single classroom for a portion of the day. Instead, literacy instruction should be implemented and reinforced throughout all classes daily. It is important to make good reading skills a habit rather than a lesson (The Why, p. 32).

The district-wide literacy needs assessment conducted in conjunction with this grant application reveals that, while there is much to applaud in the literacy instruction underway in the system, there is far more that can be done. Teachers at every level, across all subjects, need extensive professional learning on how to provide evidence-based literacy instruction that is engaging and motivating for 21st century learners. There is also a need to better align literacy expectations, goals, and practices within schools and across schools to more effectively prevent and close literacy gaps. There is a glaring need to institute more appropriate tiered literacy instruction and revamp our RTI process system-wide. Our teachers are willing to take literacy to a gold standard level. The SRCL grant will assist our district in implementing a unified literacy plan, that incorporates evidence based practices and resources in every classroom, beginning with Pre-K.

Thomaston-Upson School System

District Management Plan and Key Personnel

In order to ensure effective coordination and implementation of SCRL grants across all center and school levels, our Curriculum Director will be designated to serve as the primary liaison between the schools, district office and GADOE. The table below provides an overview of the individuals, by position, who will be responsible for various aspects of the grants.

Management Plan and Key Personnel

Day to Day Grant Operations-Tasks	Person Responsible/Position	Responsibilities	Supervisor
System-wide Grant Coordination	Dr. Larry Derico, Curriculum Director and Instruction	Ensures implementation of approved grants; monitors literacy instruction at each school; troubleshoots problems that arise about the grant; compiles and submits grant reports and paperwork	Dr. Maggie Shook, Superintendent
Purchasing	Kathy Matthews Finance Director	Receive and process schools' literacy purchase orders, based on approved budgets; maintain up-to-date ledger on expenditure of all grant funds	Dr. Maggie Shook, Superintendent
Site-Level Coordination	-Mrs. Julie English, Director, Pre-K Center and Student	Serves as liaison to the Curriculum	District Leadership Team

Thomaston-Upson School System

Day to Day Grant Operations-Tasks	Person Responsible/Position	Responsibilities	Supervisor
	Services; Assessment Specialist -Dr. Sharon McLain, Principal, Primary School (K-3) -Mr. Shad Seymour, Principal, Elementary School (4-5) -Mrs. Ronda Gulley, Principal, Middle School (6-8) -Mr. Tracy Caldwell, Principal, High School (9-12; Learning Academy)	Director/Project Director on all matters pertaining to the grant; convenes School Literacy Team to discuss and evaluate grant implementation; supervises and monitors implementation of evidenced-based literacy instruction in classrooms.	
Professional Learning Coordination	Dr. Larry Derico, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Jana Marks, Special Education Director; Betty Thurman; CTAE Director	Under Dr, Derico's guidance, PL Team will coordinate and schedule all PL relating to literacy grant and track PLUs for all instructional program staff.	
Technology Coordination	Dr. David Beeland, Director Federal Programs, Technology, & ESOL	District-wide director will oversee technology services and	Dr. Maggie Shook, Superintendent

Thomaston-Upson School System

Day to Day Grant Operations-Tasks	Person Responsible/Position	Responsibilities	Supervisor
		related professional development and purchases required in the grant.	
Assessment Coordination	Mrs. Julie English, Director, Pre-K Center and Student Services; Assessment Specialist	Works with schools to identify, purchase, and implement formative assessments approved in the grant; monitors implementation of assessment and testing schedule	Dr. Maggie Shook, Superintendent

Understanding of Grant Personnel Regarding Goals, Objectives and Implementation Plan

All individuals listed above have participated in planning and developing the grant from its inception. Working with the district and school-based literacy teams, the development of goals and objectives has been an on-going, collaborative process.

Methods for Involving Grant Recipients in Development of Budgets and Performance Plans

Each school’s literacy team will be used to develop a budget and a performance plan to support the implementation of their literacy plan. The district literacy team will provide technical support to the schools, including reviewing budgets and plans for horizontal and vertical connections.

On-going Meetings to be Held with Grant Recipients

The Curriculum Director will convene meetings of the district literacy team, which includes representatives of each school’s literacy team, at least monthly for progress and troubleshooting meetings. The Curriculum Director and Central Office Leadership Team will hold meetings with each literacy team at the school bi-monthly, or more frequently as needed.

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Principals will convene their literacy teams for meetings monthly in conjunction with school improvement meetings.

Thomaston-Upson School System

Experience of the Applicant

Thomaston-Upson County has been awarded numerous federal and state grants that have led to a proven track record for successfully handling funding for projects and initiatives. As can be seen in the table below, we have had no audit findings in the last three years of funding.

Experience of District and Schools in Successfully Handling Funding for Projects and Initiatives, Including Audit Results for 3 Years

FY11	Title of Projects/ Initiatives	Funded Amount	Is there an audit?	Audit results For 3 years
LEA –Thomaston-Upson County School District	-Title I -Title VI-B -Title II-A - High School Student Re-engagement Grant (GEAR)- Federal	\$1,637,498.00 \$130,991.00 \$312,183.00 \$430,247.00	Yes	There have been no federal award findings or questioned cost
Schools/Center				
UL Prekindergarten Center	-GA Pre-K Program	\$445,719.00	Yes	
ULSE (K-3)	-Title I (regular) -Title I (Focus School)	\$515,679.00	Yes	
ULNE (4-5)	-Title I	\$269,937.00	Yes	
ULMS (6-8)	-Title I	\$416,807.00	Yes	
ULHS (9-12)	-Title I (regular) -Title I (Focus School Grant)	\$101,471.00 \$79,483.00	Yes	

Thomaston-Upson School System

FY12	Title of Projects/ Initiatives	Funded Amount	Is there an audit?	Audit results For 3 years
LEA –Thomaston-Upson County School District	-Title I	\$1,726,265.00	No	N/A
	-Title VI-B	\$107,286.00		
	-Title II-A	\$283,901.00		
	- High School Student Re-engagement Grant (GEAR)- Federal	\$723,263.00		
Schools/Center				
UL Prekindergarten Center	-GA Pre-K Program	\$533,003.00	No	N/A
ULSE (K-3)	-Title I (regular) -Title I (Focus School)	\$468,657.00	No	N/A
ULNE (4-5)	-Title I	\$264,560.00	No	N/A
ULMS (6-8)	-Title I	\$382,750.00	No	N/A
ULHS (9-12)	-Title I (regular) -Title I (Focus School Grant)	\$246,222.00 \$74,471.00	No	N/A

FY13	Title of Projects/ Initiatives	Funded Amount	Is there an audit?	Audit results For 3 years
LEA –Thomaston-Upson County School District	-Title I	\$1,695,102.00	No	N/A
	-Title VI-B	\$92,413.00		
	-Title II-A	\$293,007.00		
	- High School Student Re-engagement Grant (GEAR)- Federal	\$639,401.75		

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Schools/Center				
UL Prekindergarten Center	-GA Pre-K Program	\$426,089.00	No	N/A
ULSE (K-3)	-Title I (regular)	\$461,000.00	No	N/A
	-Title I (Focus School)	\$55,200.00		
ULNE (4-5)	-Title I	\$273,480.00	No	N/A
ULMS (6-8)	-Title I	\$367,292.00	No	N/A
ULHS (9-12)	-Title I (regular)	\$247,722.00	No	N/A
	-Title I (Focus School Grant)	\$50,800.00		

Description of LEA’s Capacity to Coordinate Resources and Control for Spending in the Past

Our effective and efficient coordination of the above annual grant awards has allowed us to remain within all budget allocations. A 2011 federal budget audit did not result in any findings or questions about resource management. There have been no audits since 2011. Our Director of Finance tracks all school budget expenditures and provides monthly updates on remaining funds. Purchase orders using federal, state, or local funds must be accompanied by a justification statement that can be tracked to approved budget categories.

Description of Sustainability of Past Initiatives Implemented by the LEA

Thomaston-Upson School System was the first in the nation to equip all classrooms with Promethean’s ACTIVboard Collaborative Classroom systems using Title I and the local SPLOST fund to sustain technology upgrades.

Description of Initiatives the LEA Implemented Internally with No Outside Funding Support

Some of the past initiatives that the district has implemented internally with no outside funding support include: purchase of technology for classrooms, Data Director, STAR Reader, STAR Early Literacy, STAR Math, Accelerated Reader Program, Oddeyseyware, Study Island, Lexia, Go My Access, Fast Math, Brainpop. All of these were covered by local SPLOST funding over nine years.

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School History

Thomaston-Upson County School System implemented the Georgia Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Program in 1996. It began in a renovated school with six pre-k classrooms. In 2004, the program moved to its current location, another renovated school building, which functions as the school district's Pre-K Center. Each classroom currently has 22 students with a certified teacher and assistant teacher. In 2011, enrollment in the program changed from first come, first served, to the lottery format. Parents are given two weeks for enrollment in the lottery.

Upson-Lee Pre-K functions as a type of early childhood center, housing all six pre-k classrooms and the Special Education Preschool Program. The Director of Pre-K, Student Services, and Assessment serves as the project and site director for Thomaston-Upson School System and Upson-Lee Pre-K. Although our FTE reports indicate a total population of 161 students, the actual full capacity for pre-k is 132 students. The Special Education Preschool Program, as indicated by their Individualized Education Program (IEP), serves the additional 29, three and four year olds. Students served in the Special Education Preschool Program are referred to the program by Babies Can't Wait, Head Start, Department of Family and Children Services, daycare centers, private preschools, the Upson County Health Department, parents or local doctors. Demographics of the Pre-K population consists of 60% white, 34% Black, >1%Hispanic, 58% Male, and 42% Female. The percentage of children that are economically disadvantaged is currently 79% for Upson-Lee Pre-K.

In the community at large, children from birth-to-five are also served by two private Georgia Prekindergarten Programs —Lu's Learning Center and AJ's Mini School; two faith based centers—First Methodist Church and Westwood Christian Academy; Head Start; and three day care facilities—Small World, Childcare Network, and Noah's Ark.

According to the U.S. Census Data for 2011, Upson County's Birth-to-Five population consists of 1,629 children. The *Georgia Kids Count* Profile for Upson County states that 248 children were enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program in 2012, for a rate of 75.2%. While the poverty rate for Upson County is 22%, according to the 2011 Census, 79% of students at Upson-Lee Pre-K receive free or reduced price meals.

Administrative and Teacher Leadership Team

Upson-Lee Pre-K (ULPK) has a Leadership Team that consists of the director, pre-k teachers, and special education teachers. The team meets monthly to identify ways to increase student development and achievement. The Director participates on the Leadership Team for Upson-Lee South Elementary School as well as the District Curriculum Advisory Council (CAC). These monthly meetings include discussions about curriculum and assessment. Although, ULPK and ULSE have leadership teams in place, there is a definite lack of understanding of how the pre-k assessments are used to guide instruction in kindergarten.

Members of the ULPK Leadership Team meet monthly to discuss Work Sampling Online, Curriculum, and increasing stakeholder engagement. The Leadership Team consists of the following faculty:

Julie English, Director of Pre-K, Student Services, and Assessment

Jennifer Risinger, Pre-K Teacher

Ashley Perrine, Pre-K Teacher

Sarah Pasley, Pre-K Teacher

Brittani Moore, Pre-K Teacher

Beth Kelly, Pre-K Teacher

Lauren Gaskins, Pre-K Teacher

Annic Smith, Preschool Special Education Coordinator

Ashley Bostwick, Special Education Pre-K Teacher

Rachel Piland, Special Education Pre-K Teacher

Beth Whitmire, Speech and Language Pathologist

Past Instructional Initiatives

The Pre-K and Special Education Programs have had past initiatives related to implementation of: the Love and Logic discipline program, integration of technology and assistive technologies into classroom instruction; and developmentally appropriate practices.

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Current Instructional Initiatives

In order to ensure that more young children are coming to school with readiness skills that assist them in being successful in school, the district has established a community engagement goal. Through the community engagement goal, the district is supporting the agenda of the Upson Education Alliance. In recent months, the Education Alliance has committed to forming an Early Childhood Coalition. Once it is launched, the Coalition will develop a comprehensive, community-based early literacy action agenda in collaboration with early learning programs, day care programs, Babies Can't Wait, DFCS, Upson County Health Department, and Thomaston-Upson County Schools. Since no timetable has been set for the initiation of the Early Childhood Coalition, Thomaston-Upson County Pre-K and Special Education Programs will continue to enhance their curricula to provide developmentally appropriate practices and expand initiatives to include parent education and professional learning for teachers and assistants.

Professional Learning Needs

The results of the Needs Assessment provided limited data due to the small numbers of responders and their current experience level. Most of the teachers were located within the school system pre-k program and have only been teaching one or two years. Therefore, the results of the Needs Assessment were used but took into consideration the knowledge and experience of the participants. Although small, the Needs Assessment was also completed by some community birth-to-five providers and parents, giving us a glimpse into needed professional learning. Professional learning opportunities for all birth-to-five providers should include:

- Grade and school transitions
- Home based literacy skills for parents and caregivers
- Assessment planning, implementation, and interpretation
- Use of early screenings and making appropriate referrals
- Early literacy resource and referrals
- Professional learning for Kindergarten teachers to understand Pre-K assessments

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- Expectations for school readiness for birth to three providers, parents, and caregivers
- Aligning early literacy curricula
- Differentiated instruction
- New teacher trainings
- RTI
- Appropriate, developmental age-level standards (GELDS)
- Research based instruction
- Work Sampling Assessment online
- Phonological awareness, Lexile interpretations, and group activities for early literacy

Need for a Striving Readers Project

The goals of the Thomaston-Upson School System include increasing academic achievement and increasing stakeholder involvement. These goals must not just include the K-12 community, but Pre-K and other early childhood programs. Due in part to the impact of high levels of poverty on the quality of life of young children and their families, many of our children are not attaining the literacy readiness skills needed by the time they reach kindergarten. Our pursuit of a Striving Reader grant is rooted in our awareness that approximately 10% of our economically disadvantaged students did not have grade level reading and ELA skills at the end of third grade in 2012-2013. Of the 10%, most were black or Hispanic. Children who are not reading on grade level by the end of third grade are more likely to fail and drop-out of school. The National Governor's Association indicates in their recent publication, *A Governor's Guide to Early Literacy: Getting All Students Reading By Third Grade* (October 2013) that starting to focus on language and literacy development at kindergarten is too late (p. 3). Research shows that children's language and literacy skills can be increased through participation in high-quality early care and education (*A Governor's Guide to Early Literacy*, p. 5). With the impending formation of an Early Childhood Collaborative in Thomaston-Upson County, we believe that our existing school/center based Pre-K Program is positioned to help lead the way in increasing readiness skills among young

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children. A Striving Reader grant will give us access to needed literacy training and classroom resources not currently available from DECAL. Through professional learning activities alone, we will be able to involve other community-based early childhood program directors, teachers and assistants, as well as parents, in learning about evidence-based literacy practices, strategies and expectations for all children, birth-to-five.

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Thomaston-Upson County Schools – Birth-to-Five - Literacy Plan

Building Block 1. Engaged Leadership

A. Leaders create a plan for shared leadership and a plan for organizing, implementing, and sustaining an effective approach to literacy.

Currently in place:

The Director of Pre-K has a Leadership Team in place that is responsible for meeting to review and discuss curriculum, best practices, and assessment. The current Leadership Team will also serve as the Literacy Team. Members of the Pre-K Leadership Team include:

- Julie English, Director of Pre-K, Student Services, and Assessment
- Jennifer Risinger, Pre-K Teacher
- Ashley Perrine, Pre-K Teacher
- Sarah Pasley, Pre-K Teacher
- Brittani Moore, Pre-K Teacher
- Beth Kelly, Pre-K Teacher
- Lauren Gaskins, Pre-K Teacher
- Annicc Smith, Preschool Special Education Coordinator
- Ashley Bostwick, Special Education Pre-K Teacher
- Rachel Piland, Special Education Pre-K Teacher
- Beth Whitmire, Speech and Language Pathologist

Involving a variety of community stakeholders in creating a shared vision for early literacy for the zero through 5 population, and in determining what strategies should be implemented is an important first step in formulating an effective approach to literacy in our community (The How, p. 1). This mission will be accomplished when the existing Upson Education Alliance (UEA) launches an Early Childhood Literacy Coalition to begin functioning as a “subcommittee” of the UEA sometime in the future. The Upson Education Alliance consists of the following representatives from the district and community at large:

- Julie English, Director of Pre-K, Student Services, and Assessment
- Larry Derico, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- DeAnn Hopkins, Title I Parent Involvement Coordinator
- Jana Marks, Director of Special Education
- David Beeland, Director of Federal Programs and Technology
- Karen Truesdale, Director of Public Relations
- Shelley Daniel, Director of School Nutrition
- Taimie Hoffman, Special Education Parent Mentor
- Steve Daniel – Southern Crescent Technical College
- George Flowers, Director of Technology
- Sallie Barker – Upson Regional Medical Center
- Jeff Stribling – Quad Graphics
- LaResa Price - DFCS
- Marc Pritchett - RUSH Ministries
- Lori Showalter Smith - Chamber of Commerce
- Julie Love - Small World Child Care

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Rev. James McGill
Sheriff Dan Kilgore
Billy Preston - McIntosh Trail
Chris Biggs - Lincoln Park Citizens Coalition
Pam McCollum - McIntosh Trail
Vanessa Wilkins - Promise Place
Daphne Dumas – Family, Youth and Children’s Alliance
Ryan Griffin - Winshape

Plan to do:

- The ULPK Leadership Team will create a vision for implementing evidenced-based literacy practices across its Pre-K and Special Education Preschool Programs. The vision will be aligned with the literacy focus of the elementary schools’ and district’s literacy plans (The How, p.1).
- Once the Upson Education Alliance launches its Early Childhood Coalition, a teacher member of the ULPK Leadership Team will serve as a member of the Coalition, in addition to the Director of the Pre-K Program (The How, p. 1)

The ULPK Leadership Team will work collaboratively with the Upson Early Childhood Coalition to collect and analyze data and determine to what extent birth-to-five service providers within the community support development of early literacy. The information collected will include but will not be limited to the following information:

- Ages and total number of students enrolled in each age group served
- Enrollment eligibility requirements (e.g. based on income, first come, first served, lottery, etc.)
- Teacher qualifications
- Licensing agency professional learning requirements
- Daily routine/lesson plans
 - a. Name of literacy activities/frequency
- Name of assessment and frequency administered, if applicable
 - a. Purpose of assessment
 - b. Areas/domains assessed
 - c. Are results shared and with whom?

Results of the Literacy Needs Assessments conducted by Thomaston-Upson Schools, including the Pre-K Center, will be shared with the Early Childhood Coalition as background information.

- The Pre-K Center Literacy Team will plan targeted, sustained professional development on age-appropriate language and literacy practices for its staff and invite community caregivers, teachers, assistants, principals, directors, and others to participate (The How, pp. 1-2).
- We will consider the options available through technology to provide job-embedded professional development, e.g., online professional development, use of videotaping with feedback, webinars, etc. (The How, p. 2).
- Efforts will be made to build relationships with all providers of early childhood care and services through the planned Early Childhood Collaborative. (The How,

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- p. 1). Should the Collaborative not be launched, another mechanism will be identified for this purpose.
- Pre-K teachers, assistants, program managers and community early childhood stakeholders will study research-based guidelines, strategies, and resources for early learning set forth in the Why document in the Georgia State Literacy Plan (The How, p. 1).
 - The Pre-K Literacy Team will analyze child performance and observation data to refine literacy goals and plans aligned to Georgia Early Literacy Standards and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre-Kindergarten (The How, p. 1).
 - Through collaboration with Head Start, community-based Pre-K Programs, childcare centers, etc., program assessment results and data will be shared to ensure that the needs of children transitioning into kindergarten are known, while honoring confidentiality.

Building Block 2. Continuity of Care and Instruction

A. An early childhood coalition for literacy through which professionals from many organizations affecting young children and other stakeholders may meet to learn from and support one another is active.

Currently:

The formation of an Early Childhood and Literacy Coalition (ECLC) as a subcommittee of the newly formed Upson Education Alliance is underway. A launch date for the Coalition had not been set at the time this plan was developed. Therefore, the Thomaston-Upson School System did not enter into a formal agreement to submit a literacy grant application with the Upson Education Alliance. Instead, the school-based Pre-K Center was chosen to initiate an early language and literacy plan that anticipates the future involvement of community early childhood educators in professional development and resource-sharing activities.

Plan to do:

The Pre-K Center Literacy Team will establish a system of communication for sharing language and literacy project information with other community-based Pre-K and early childhood programs (e.g., e-mails, newsletter, updates at Education Alliance and/or Coalition’s meetings, etc.) –The How, p. 3.

The Upson Education Alliance will issue invitations to participate in the Early Childhood and Literacy Coalition to representatives from local community agencies and/or organizations (The How, p. 3).

Representatives from child care, Georgia Pre-K centers and other stakeholders will be invited to participate in the Coalition, including:

- Childcare Network – Child Care and GA Pre-K
- McIntosh Trail Head Start and GA Pre-K
- Small World Child Care Center – Child Care and GA Pre-K
- Thomaston-Upson School System – GA Pre-K
- Noah’s Ark – Child Care Center

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Crescent Tender Tech Child Care Center
Southern Crescent Technical College Early Childhood Care and Education
Department
Lu's Learning Center
First United Methodist Church Preschool
AJ's Mini School
Westwood Christian Academy
Civic Organization – Rotary Club
Upson-Lee Special Education Preschool
A Pre-K Teacher from Upson-Lee Pre-K
A Kindergarten Teacher from Upson-Lee South Elementary
A Local Pediatrician
A Ferst Foundation Representative
Babies Can't Wait
Hightower Memorial Library

Schedule a regular bi-monthly meeting schedule for the Early Learning and Literacy Coalition (The What, p. 5)

The Coalition will establish a regular bi-monthly meeting schedule. The calendar will be distributed at the second meeting with reminders sent via email 24 hours prior to the next meeting date. The committee chair will set and publish the meeting dates.

The Pre-K Center Literacy Team will work to overcome existing barriers to the effective function of a previously attempted Preschool Coalition. This may be accomplished by inviting all EC program personnel in the community to participate in planned professional development on evidence-based language and literacy practices.

Identify areas of need in the development of early literacy (The How, p. 4).

The existing UEA website holds a list of community resources that are currently available. The ECLC intends to develop a literacy component to the website that will include resources, parent information, and activities (The How, p. 3). The Thomaston-Upson School System Director of Technology will enhance and maintain the presence of the literacy link on the UEA website. The Coalition intends to establish goals relating to parent outreach, professional learning, language development, and inter and/or intra agency communication.

Identify/develop funding resources (The How, p. 4)

To ensure sustainability of the goals and initiatives of the Coalition, possible resources may be leveraged through IDEA Flowthrough, Preschool Special Needs (Child Find); Title I, Part A (parent outreach/transition); Title I, Part C (homevisits for preschool services).

B. A plan is in place to ensure smooth transitions from one school or agency to another

Currently in place:

Transition from Babies Can't Wait to Thomaston-Upson School System Preschool Special Needs (The What, p. 5)

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Written protocols exist in the Babies Can't Wait Implementation Manual for the transition of children in Babies Can't Wait to the next learning environment. Prior to student's third birthday, the regional representative contacts the Thomaston-Upson County Preschool Special Education Coordinator. The Coordinator schedules a meeting with the parents and completes a referral. After the appropriate assessments are administered, an IEP meeting is held and eligibility for services is determined. The Coordinator is available to describe the expectations for the upcoming year as well as provide a tour of the school.

Transition from home, childcare, Pre-K to Kindergarten

The transition from GA Pre-K and other existing preschool programs in the community to Kindergarten at Upson-Lee South Elementary School has proven to be an important element in determining a student's future social adjustment and academic success. Therefore, the faculty and staff work diligently to support young students and their parents during this transitional period.

The Title I Parent Coordinator, Upson-Lee Pre-K Director, and Upson-Lee South Elementary kindergarten teachers host a kindergarten readiness workshop each February at Upson-Lee Pre-K. The purpose of the workshop is to inform parents of the readiness skills needed for kindergarten, provide suggestions for age appropriate readiness activities, and answer parent questions about kindergarten curriculum. The workshop is open to all parents of upcoming kindergarten students.

The Preschool Special Education Coordinator works with the Principal and staff at Upson-Lee South Elementary to organize transition activities for the community. This team invites Georgia Pre-K classes, childcare centers with four year-olds, private preschools, and Head Start Programs to visit the school and tour the facility. These upcoming kindergarten students visit ULSE in the spring with their day care/ pre-k center or Head Start Program to tour the school. Parents are welcomed to attend this event. During the visit, pre-k students complete a make and take project with a kindergarten class.

The Preschool Special Education Coordinator gives copies of the ULSE Student Handbook, Kindergarten report card, Royal Behavior Rules, and the Kindergarten list of sight words to the directors of all day care centers.

During Pre-Kindergarten registration, Kindergarten teachers screen upcoming students for readiness skills. At risk students or students with no prior Pre-K experience are flagged so the school can begin making scheduling and intervention accommodations for them.

In addition to transitioning preschool children into the school from early childhood programs, every grade level has an Orientation the week before school begins so students can meet their new teachers. The administration holds assembly sessions to discuss various school procedures (e.g., parking, pick-up/drop-off, lunch, schedules, and CRCT).

Plan to do:

Plan joint professional development for Pre-K and K teachers on transition (The How, p. 5)

Thomaston-Upson County Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers will meet to discuss and vertically align language and literacy standards and expectations from preschool to kindergarten (The What, p. 4). To assist with transitioning from prekindergarten to kindergarten, kindergarten teachers need professional learning on the Work Sampling System. The means by which valuable information about students' literacy development is contained within the system and will provide insight to the kindergarten teacher on how to begin differentiation for the young learner. Likewise, Pre-K and preschool teachers need to know what the expectations for Kindergarten readiness include. The county's GA Pre-K consultant will be invited to provide input as to how GA Pre-K standards and Kindergarten standards align. Copies of the GELDS for Pre-K will be provided for Kindergarten teachers. To enhance communication on transition, it will be important to further develop the UEA website to include early care providers and school information, registration information, availability and developmental information for literacy development. Community-based Pre-K and Head Start program staff will be invited to attend vertical alignment meetings scheduled by the school district.

The ECLC intends to enhance existing opportunities for children and their families to visit the next learning environment and develop new ones (The How, p. 5).

Transition from home, childcare, private preschool, or Head Start to Pre-K

The Coalition intends to work with existing Georgia Pre-K providers to communicate and educate stakeholders on the availability of and eligibility for GA Pre-K in the community.

Identify points of contact within the community for distributing materials to families (The How, p. 3)

We will develop a parent resource computer station that allows parents to access information and materials contained on the UEA website at the school system's GA Pre-K Center site. Other EC providers will be encouraged to do the same.

The Coalition intends to provide information about the UEA website for distribution to parents in centers where computer access cannot be provided.

To ensure each EC site develops, implements and monitors its transition plan, the Coalition intends to review annually and investigate ways to strengthen and enhance EC transitions.

C. A plan is in place to connect families to schools and childcare entities.

See Building Block 2.B for related transition plans already in place to connect families to schools and childcare entities.

Currently in place:

Thomaston-Upson County School System has made community engagement one of its

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top three goals. Each school includes community and parent involvement activities in its Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The Kindergarten Program sponsors a Parent Curriculum Night to review major expectations of children and their families. Reading daily to children is mentioned as a key expectation (The What, p. 6).

The Thomaston-Upson County Pre-K Program provides parents with the following literacy resources:

- Book Fair
- Literacy at-home Packs
- Read It Once Again – Special Education Pre-School

Plan to do:

The Pre-K Literacy Team will develop brochures, and other educational tools to provide families with guidance in supporting their child's early literacy development (The How, p. 6).

Pre-K Center staff will identify and disseminate to parents a language and literacy development milestones reference guide to acquaint them with developmental norms during workshops and parent teacher conferences.

The Pre-K Literacy Team will provide children with the opportunity to receive and own a book collection through participation in the Ferst Foundation Book Program. The Coalition will be encouraged to provide the same book ownership opportunity to every child, birth-to-five years old, in the county. This will help to foster early, continuous interest in books and an eventual love for reading.

The Coalition intends to identify and disseminate evidence-based language and literacy materials to parents in community-based early childhood settings to offer guidance on supporting their child's early language and literacy development (The How, p. 6).

D. A plan is in place to connect communities to schools.

Currently in place:

Upson-Lee South Elementary School (K-3), currently has a VIP Readers' Program which extends to the Kindergarten level.

Central Office staff, including the Superintendent, attends meetings of civic and business organizations to provide updates on major initiatives and to solicit volunteers to participate as readers and mentors for classrooms at every level, including Pre-K.

The Upson Education Alliance (UEA) has formed for the explicit purpose of increasing student achievement through community and business connections with the school. It has created a highly regarded website of existing community resources that is constantly updated.

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Plan to do:

Kindergarten teachers will develop a survey to determine the needs of students entering the school system and identify strengths and areas of growth. From this survey, school staff will utilize the information in the annual revision of their Continuous Improvement Plans to strengthen the relationships between birth-to-five service providers.

In order to strengthen relationships between early childhood providers and the receiving Pre-K programs and kindergartens, workshops will be provided for staff on interpretation of assessment data and consistency of goals, as well as alignment of Pre-K and Kindergarten content standards with CCGPS (The How, pp. 6-7). Community early childhood educators will be invited to participate in workshops.

Identify parents and/or families to serve as advocates (The How, p. 6)

Research in “The Why” document as well as the six components for building capacity for parents addresses the need to move from parent involvement to parent engagement. In order to be engaged parents must become well-informed advocates in their child’s educational career and provide support in the early stages of literacy development. The Coalition intends to assist in identifying parents and/or families to serve as advocates for early literacy development. The Pre-K Literacy Team will also identify several parents to “champion” the message of early language and literacy development.

Community strengths and needs will be mapped in order to identify early literacy assets (The How, p. 6).

Identify community leaders and organizations to become involved in ensuring coordinated services for the early childhood population

The UEA Early Childhood Coalition intends to establish a comprehensive early literacy plan to ensure that coordinated services are available and accessible within the community. Regularly scheduled meetings of the Coalition are planned.

E. A plan is in place to improve access for families to resources for developing early literacy in their homes.

Currently:

The Pre-K Center Program provides a literacy at-home pack initiative that sends books home for families to read with their children.

Plan to do:

The Thomaston-Upson County School System, in collaboration with the UEA, will implement the following:

Distribute materials and enhance materials by sending home information to new parents, WIC, pediatricians, and existing EC providers.

Host several events for families with a literacy focus. Give out information and read books to introduce the importance of early literacy and resources in the community. One will be a public early literacy event and will be hosted at the Fine Arts Center. Another,

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will be a reading night for ULPK families and will be hosted at the local public library (The How, p. 7)

Create a home/school/library connection using our local early childhood providers and health providers distributing information about literacy, resources, and developmentally appropriate milestones and activities so parents can help their child (The How, p. 7).

Host literacy awareness trainings for teachers, caregivers, and parents. Ideally, this training will be provided on Saturdays by DECAL-approved trainers. (The What, p. 6)

UEA will work with the school district to enroll all of the ULPK students in the Ferst Foundation's book ownership program. UEA will then work to extend enrollment to all children birth-to-five children in the community. This will help to foster children's early, continuous interest in books and an eventual love for reading across all homes and early childhood sites in the community (The How, p. 7)

Thomaston-Upson School System continually seeks to engage parents in literacy development opportunities. Title I surveys are distributed to all parents within the system and potential barriers to participation have been found to include communication, transportation, childcare time offered, and locations (The How. 7).

UEA will seek to engage all parents in the community.

- a. Thomaston-Upson School System has a systemic process for notifying parents of upcoming school sponsored events. School Reach is used to communicate events to parents.
- b. This system will be used to announce time and place of special literacy events as they take place.
- c. In the instance that families whose first language is not English choose to participate, the school system will provide an ESOL teacher to translate for those families.

Building Block 3. Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments

A. The infrastructure is in place for full implementation of screening and diagnostic assessments.

Ongoing formative and summative assessment serves as the foundation for Pre-Kindergarten-12 literacy as mentioned in "The Why" (p. 105) document. The early detection of problems allows teachers to design and implement specific instruction for students. Assessment is ongoing, frequent, and provides multiple measures that will be used as diagnostic and monitoring tools to plan for instruction. It is necessary to examine both summative and formative assessment results to determine how that data positively affects instruction and to see how formative assessments enhance the overall implementation ("The Why", p. 96). See detailed listing of current assessments in the Assessment /Data Analysis Plan.

Currently in place:

Diagnostic Assessments: Ongoing diagnostic assessment is an integral component in

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literacy development for children enrolled in Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Program and Head Start. Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Teachers utilize Work Sampling System Online. Teachers input data based on observed behavior and authentic work samples completed by students. Head Start teachers utilize the Teaching Strategies GOLD Online System. Evidence is collected on a daily basis. Results are used to guide instruction and evidence of instructional changes are found in the teacher's daily plans (The How, p. 9).

Screening: A goal of early learning programs is to identify physical barriers to learning and provide means for the barriers to be corrected prior to formal instruction in the K-5 setting. Children enrolled in the Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Program and Head Start are required to have an eye, ear, and dental screening within thirty (30) days of the start of school. Students in Head Start are also administered the DIAL 4 which assesses the literacy component of language development. If a student falls into an area of concern, he/she is screened again prior to continuing the referral process for additional intervention services. As a part of the Child Find process, students registered for prekindergarten at both public and private sites are administered the Speed DIAL. This screener also assessed the literacy component of oral language (The How, p. 9).

Protocols are in place for staff and caregivers in determining when specific screening is needed in the Pre-K and Special Preschool Programs in the school district (The What, p. 6).

Screenings occur regularly to monitor progress and - are in compliance with programmatic regulations. Parents and caregivers are involved in the screening process and the analysis of the screening and diagnostic assessments are shared with them to inform decisions about instruction and interventions. Data is used to set learning goals and monitor progress and adjust the delivery of services of all children. Incremental progress towards goals are recognized and celebrated.

Procedures are in place for ensuring that parents are connected to appropriate resources as a result of screenings (The What, p. 6).

To ensure young learners receive the necessary interventions in a timely manner, a Preschool Special Education Coordinator serves as the liaison for Babies Can't Wait within the school system. The Pre-K Project Director serves as the liaison for all others not enrolled or connected to the school system. Procedures are outlined in the Upson County Special Education Manual.

The Upson County School System ensures that preschool children failing screenings are connected to appropriate services through use of the district's Social Worker, Special Education Director, and Parent Involvement Coordinator (The How, p. 9).

Plan to do:

There is not an established, countywide protocol for screening the birth-to-five population that is not associated with the Georgia Prekindergarten Program or Head Start (The How, p. 10).

There, is no formal screener in place to identify the needs of children served in daycare

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settings and in homes, but that is not the focus of our SRCL grant-funding request.

The district's Pre-K Center programs will add the following formative and summative assessments as required by the SRCL grant: DP-3 (3 year olds with special needs); PALS-Pre-k, PPVT4 Form A/B, and CLASS (4 year-olds). Our K-3 elementary school has addressed the assessment needs of kindergarteners in its Striving Reader grant application. The DIBELS Next is included for kindergartners.

The Coalition intends to develop guidelines to assist community EC programs in collaborating with health care and other professionals in order to ensure that children suspected of delays, which may affect learning, are referred to the appropriate resources.

Since non-school based Pre-K and early childhood program staff may not have access to developmentally appropriate assessment resources, or the knowledge base for their implementation, the Coalition intends to identify appropriate tools, which can be loaned through an EC community resources lending library. These may include, but are not limited to, the ITERS and ECERS tools. The district's Pre-K Literacy Team will plan professional development on assessments and community EC providers will be invited to participate.

B. The results of formative assessments are used to adjust intervention to meet the needs of children and students.

Use formative assessment to inform instruction to meet the needs of children and students (The What, p. 7)

Class-based assessments are utilized to document student progress in Georgia Prekindergarten Programs and Head Start. Prior to the implementation of the online assessment systems, teachers received formal training from governing agency representatives both face-to-face and online. The first phase of implementation was the paper and pencil version of the systems in orders for teachers to grasp an understanding of how the information gained could be reported to shows strengths and areas of need in instruction and student learning. Both the Work Sampling System and the Teaching Standards GOLD are now online. Utilizing technology provides a systemic and consistent measure for teachers to evaluate student learning while individualizing the learning experience. Teachers have the opportunity to upload authentic work samples in which students demonstrate the learning standards outlines by their respective early learning programs. These assessments are administered according to a timeline outlined by the governing agencies of the programs. To ensure the timeline is adhered to in prekindergarten classrooms checklists are used and signed off on by the teachers and the site director. The checklist also requires the site director to visit the online database and screen classes for inconsistencies in student progress and the input of data. In the event that a lack of progress is detected during the intervention in order to determine its efficacy.

Prekindergarten programs issue formal Progress Reports to families twice annually – Fall and Spring. Parent conferences are required. In the event that a parent is unable to attend, teachers are required to have a telephone conference to discuss the report.

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The following formative/progress monitoring/outcome based assessments will be added to the current protocol: PALS-Pre-k (3x per year) and PPVT 4 Form A/B (2 x per year). See detailed listing of current assessments in the Assessment /Data Analysis Plan.

C. Summative assessments are used to determine effectiveness of interventions or instructional programs.

Select an assessment tool or a curriculum “fidelity-of-implementation” checklist aligned to program goals to measure the quality of the early literacy environment and classroom interactions (The How, p. 11).

Thomaston-Upson County School System adheres to the Pre-K Operating Guidelines issued by Georgia’s Bright from the Start: Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) in determining program effectiveness. The guidelines are issued each July and serve as a point of reference on how to ensure efficacy of the program and ensure effectiveness. The governing agency mandates the use of the following tools:

- a. Instructional Quality Guides – Guides used as onsite monitoring tools for project/site directors, program monitoring tools for Bright from the Start Prek Consultants, and a method to compile data for state reporting of overall program effectiveness. Each guide addresses a different component of the program and includes benchmarks during the year for completing specific components. Pre-K consultants randomly selected a percentage of programs to participate in a full monitoring cycle whereby all documentation is checked.
 1. Grant Requirement Checklist – checklist designed to monitor the Pre-K grant requirements and is utilized throughout the school year.
 2. Instructional Guide for the Learning Environment – utilized by both teachers and directors to ensure classrooms have quality instructional supplies and materials
 3. Instructional Guide for Daily Schedule – Utilized by both teachers and directors to ensure that classroom schedule.
 4. Instructional Guide for Planning Instruction – Checklist utilized by both teachers and directors to ensure that lesson plans are planned to address the content standards of the prekindergarten program. Teachers must choose from a set of templates that include the learning opportunities pertaining to the content standards.
 5. Instructional Guide for Assessment – Checklist utilized by both teachers and directors to ensure that assessment guidelines are adhered to at specific time during the fall and winter reporting windows.
- b. Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Visits – The CLASS is utilized by Bright from the Start to obtain data on classroom quality data. To ensure fidelity, Pre-K consultants do not score their own sites. The CLASS measures quality teacher/student interactions and are conducted once annually. The observer inputs the data into the PANDO, the Pre-K portal.
 1. This information is shared with the site director and discussed with the teacher.
 2. Bright from the Start plans professional learning opportunities based on the compilation of results in the state.

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- c. Thomaston-Upson County Evaluation Instrument – Professional personnel shall be evaluated within the guidelines of the Georgia Evaluation Program for professional personnel. The Superintendent must approve any exceptions to the state evaluation process.

Add the CLASS as a summative teacher-student interaction assessment (1 x per year) to the Pre-K Center program assessment protocol. This tool is currently only administered in randomized classrooms as decided by DECAL on an annual basis.

Use approved trainers to provide professional development for all staff, including principals, and /or directors, on the program evaluation tools and methods of administration, and interpretation of results (The How, p. 12). Include community-based Pre-K and Head Start program staff in professional development sessions.

See detailed listing of current assessments in the Assessment /Data Analysis Plan.

D. Literacy screenings are used to assess readiness of individual children for reading and writing.

See detailed listing of current assessments in the Assessment /Data Analysis Plan.

Identify appropriate screening instruments

The following screeners are administered to students enrolled in Georgia Prekindergarten Program and Head Start: Eye, Ear and Dental; DIAL 4 (Head Start); Speed DIAL3 (Prekindergarten); Teacher Strategies GOLD Online (Head Start); and Work Sampling System (Georgia Prekindergarten Program) – (The How, p. 12).

Pre-K teachers of the Thomaston-Upson County School System and Georgia Pre-Ks employ the Work Sampling Online system to collect data and monitor the progress of students within the Pre-K setting (The What, p. 7). Instruction is planned based on students' needs. The ongoing assessment measures students' progress in the following domains: language and literacy development, mathematical development, science development, social studies development and health. Data is gathered and entered into the Work Sampling Online program daily. WSO performance indicator checklists are updated weekly to be used for the planning of and implementation of flexible grouping and differentiated instruction. Parents and teachers have a minimum of two required conferences to discuss their child's progress within this setting. The Language and Literacy domain is broken down into four (4) components – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each component is divided into multiple performance indicators as follows: listening (3), speaking (2), reading (4), and writing (3). Teachers were trained in utilizing the accompanying resource Omnibus Guidelines: Preschool through Third Grade to find examples of age appropriate examples of grade specific performance indicators.

Data is used to determine strengths and weaknesses not only of students but for instructional purposes as well. Trend data is reviewed to determine if there is a need for professional learning.

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Progress reports from the Work Sampling System are transferred to the public school system. To ensure kindergarten teachers can effectively interpret the information found in the reports, professional learning will be offered.

Assessment resources for other EC providers will be made available through the UEA Coalition.

The following SRCL required literacy screening assessments will be added to the Pre-K Center staff's protocol: DP-3 (three year olds in preschool special education) -2 x per year; PALS-Pre-k (3x per year) and PPVT 4 Form A/B (2 x per year).

Building Block 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

A. Instruction is clearly and consistently aligned with GELDS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre-Kindergarten.

Provide professional learning for all faculty/staff in age-level standards (The How, p. 13).

In order to ensure that instruction is clearly and consistently aligned with Georgia Pre-K

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Program Content Standards, teachers must have a clear understanding of age level standards and benchmarks in child development. Annual professional learning is required each year with emphasis on preparing instructional activities. New teachers must complete New Teacher Training where they are familiarized with the GELDS, age appropriate practices and the assessment components of the program. Due to limited space in PL offerings provided by GADOE, our new teachers have not received training in a timely manner on topics that impact effectiveness in instruction and assessment.

Provide professional learning for all faculty/staff in age-level appropriate practices for differentiation based on assessment (The What, p. 7)

To ensure sustainability and buy in for the new online assessment systems, the Work Sampling System was implemented systematically. Teachers received training in collecting and analyzing authentic work samples, which indicate a child's knowledge of literacy skills. From this information, teachers were provided information on how to create small flexible learning groups based on their area of needs. When teachers gradually moved from paper and pencil to the online system, they were able to sort spreadsheets and create similar groups. Resources for differentiation strategies include the Pre-K Consultant, the Preschool Special Education Coordinator and the Best Practices website.

Provide exemplar lesson plans that reflect the Georgia Pre-K GELDS (The How, p. 13)

The Standards are divided into seven domains with language and literacy being one. Early literacy experiences are incorporated through the instructional day in prekindergarten classrooms. Daily requirements include large group literacy activity, phonological awareness, and a minimum of three books read aloud by an adult with a follow-up activity for each. To ensure alignment, teachers must utilize one of the five instructional planning (lesson plan) templates designed by Bright from the Start. The weekly lesson plan templates require teachers to align all planned activities to the standards. Georgia Pre-K standards were revised in 2012.

The UEA Coalition intends to encourage all member EC providers to familiarize themselves with and implement the GELDS for the birth-to-five age group.

The UEA Coalition intends to establish and operate an Early Childhood Literacy Resource Library for EC providers who participate in the coalition. This resource library will contain, but will not be limited to, the following: Early childhood literacy curriculum materials, assessment tools, children's books, take-home literacy packs, etc.

B. Evidence-based instruction is standard practice in the development of phonological awareness, concepts of print (print awareness), alphabet knowledge, writing, and oral language.

GA Pre-K teachers receive extensive training on best practices for the development of phonological awareness, concepts to print (print awareness), alphabet knowledge, writing, and oral language (The How, p. 13).

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The district's Pre-K Program will review its current professional learning to ensure that it embeds the evidence-based practices relating to language and literacy that are discussed in the *Why* document. Where gaps are found, additional PL will be offered in those specific areas. Community-based EC providers will be invited to participate.

We will develop and provide workshops for parents on how to support program staff in developing their child's language and pre-literacy skills. Workshop materials will be shared with other EC programs.

DECAL-approved training offered to all providers in the community will help ensure that other stakeholders also implement developmentally appropriate practices in this area.

C. High expectations, grounded in developmentally appropriate practice with a focus on student interest for all learners, are consistently evident.

Providers must first have an understanding of the developmental milestones of young learners. High expectations will be grounded in providers having an understanding and access to the learning standards pertinent to the age group(s) they serve. With the implementation of the new learning standard for Pre-K in 2014, birth-to-five providers will have the opportunity to participate in webinars and training when made available by DECAL.

The Pre-K Literacy Team will review current curricular resources to ensure that they align to all standards and developmentally appropriate practice, including pacing (The What, p. 8).

The Pre-K Literacy Team will review and modify the current focus walk tool to include items relating to the implementation of evidence-based, developmentally- appropriate, high interest language and literacy practices and strategies.

The Pre-K Center book collections in classrooms and the resource/media room will be expanded to include more developmentally- appropriate, high interest, culturally relevant books. The inventory will include technology applications that feature developmentally appropriate, high interest children's books and print-related games. The book pack program will be evaluated to ensure it includes developmentally-appropriate, high interest children's books. Adapted books will be included for children with special needs. Spanish-English combination books will be included for English Learners.

Building Block 5. System of Tiered Intervention

A. Infrastructure for a system of tiered-intervention based on screening and guided by progress monitoring is in place

Pre-K is currently in the not evident range on the RTI process. Bright from the Start has not supported a tiered intervention system for Pre-K; however, the Special Needs Preschool documents interventions for students with IEPs. "ALL students flourish when educated in a language-rich environment designed to meet their communication, language, and academic needs", as stated by the Georgia Pre-K Literacy Task Force (The Why, page 31). With this in mind, the District is going through the RTI process to

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revamp and strengthen strategies and interventions to meet the needs of all students. Response to Intervention will be researched for the ULPK to align with the district initiatives.

The infrastructure for a system of tiered-intervention based on screening and guided by progress monitoring is partially in place and will be strengthened for our school-based Pre-K program (The What, p. 8). Actions include:

- Enhance current screening and progress monitoring assessment protocol by incorporating required SCRL summative and formative tools, and administering them at the frequency required.
- Include all domains (e.g., physical, social & emotional, language, and literacy, cognitive) in the tiered intervention process (The What, p. 8).
- Ensure that all classrooms are literacy-rich by including high interest, developmentally appropriate language and literacy materials, such as regular and adapted books, bilingual books, digital literacy applications (interactive language and literacy stories, games, etc.)
- Monitor the implementation of evidence-based early literacy practices and strategies in all Pre-K classrooms using a tool adapted for this purpose.
- Provide all staff with professional learning in all the elements of tiered language and literacy instruction (The What, p. 8)
- Develop protocols for tiered intervention and for referrals to the process (The How, p. 15)
- Add texts to the Pre-K Center's Resource Library for parent check-out, and provide them with guidance on how to use them to stimulate language and literacy development (The How, p. 15), .

The UEA Coalition intends to work to identify and provide resources needed to bolster the classrooms in community-based programs to ensure that all young children have access to literacy rich environments in early childhood settings.

Building Block 6. Professional Learning and Resources

A. Community partners receive professional learning in the development of early literacy

The Thomaston-Upson School System wants to ensure that the necessary communication regarding literacy instruction, with regard to a preservice teacher, is consistent and deliberate. The Thomaston-Upson School System's Human Resources' Department will share with college and universities our intense focus on literacy instruction and the importance of a literacy focus in their preservice education programs. They will understand how literacy instruction is integrated into content specific classes and the impact that it has on student success. Our school superintendent will also share the district's focus and expectations about literacy instruction with the local RESA's during their quarterly Board of Control Committee meetings.

The district will make copies of all applicable early childhood standards available to all educators, interested community members, early childhood providers, parents, etc. at the Pre-K Center site. Standards to be made available include: GELDS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre-K (The What, p. 9).

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B. In-service personnel receive professional learning in the development of early literacy

A variety of data is gathered to determine needs for professional development (The What, p. 9).

Currently, a variety of data (e.g. student assessment, teacher needs assessment, teacher observations, professional training, walkthrough data) is gathered each year by the district and Pre-K Center programs and analyzed to determine needs for professional development for the coming year. Moving forward, the district will invite all local EC providers to participate in any planned professional learning for our preschool staff (The How, p. 17).

The teachers at the Pre-K Center are new to our school and the profession of teaching. Two teachers are currently in their second year as certified teachers and four are currently in their first year. The turnover is due to the changes made by the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) that resulted in step pay increases not being available for Pre-K teachers. Therefore, teachers move out of Pre-K into our Elementary schools when openings are available. The training for new teachers from DECAL is mandated, but it is difficult to enroll teachers for training on Work Sampling Online and Pre-K best practices. The trainings fill up instantly upon the postings and there are not enough available spaces for all who are required to train. Therefore, the timeliness of vital training for new Pre-K teachers has not been available. Professional learning needs include:

- All Pre-K teachers will need to be trained in the administration of new assessments to be given.
- DECAL approved training for birth to three providers
- All Pre-K teachers are receiving ongoing training in Work Sampling Online
- Additional training for integrating technology into the classroom instruction
- Training will be needed for implementation of the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) (2014-2015)
- Staff will participate in additional professional learning activities related to literacy instruction as needed based on assessment data
- Grade and school transitions
- Home based literacy skills for parents and caregivers
- Assessment planning, implementation and interpretation
- Early literacy resources and referrals
- Interpreting assessments from prior grades and care settings
- Expectations for school readiness for birth to five providers, parents, and caregivers

The content of training is aligned to early learning standards to prepare teachers and staff for implementation (The What, p. 9).

The content of all trainings will be aligned to early learning standards to prepare teachers and staff for implementation.

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Teachers will be given increased opportunities to practice techniques and work collaboratively with other teachers to plan, model, practice, and provide feedback (The How, p. 17).

A professional library will be built to include research-based books, journals, magazines, and videos for on-going professional growth (The How, p. 18).

We will provide parents with resources and tools to support their child's language and literacy development, including modeling book share strategies (The How, p. 18).

The UEA Coalition intends to coordinate cross-site observations in community EC programs to promote shared knowledge of best practices in language and literacy practices. **Protected time is provided for teachers and caregivers to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on practice (The What, p. 9)**

Upson-Lee Pre-K teachers collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan units, and reflect on practice during scheduled planning and PL meetings.

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Needs Assessment, Concerns, and Root Cause Analysis

We recently administered the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment for Birth-to-Five to our teachers. Parents were given the opportunity to complete a literacy needs assessment created by the district. The surveys were designed to determine how teachers and parents view the current literacy instruction at our school and to determine needs of students and parents.

Faculty Survey

The faculty literacy needs assessment for Birth-to-Five was disseminated to all certified and non-classified faculty and staff via a link to surveymonkey.com. All teachers, assistant teachers, special education teachers, and other early childhood providers within the community were asked to participate. Out of the 19 faculty members at Upson-Lee Pre-K and 10 community providers (i.e., centers/programs) receiving the survey, only ten (10) responded. The majority of the responses were staff members of Upson-Lee Pre-K.

Parent Survey

A parent survey was sent home with each student in the weekly folders along with a letter explaining the purpose. The survey contained seven questions about parent's knowledge related to literacy. The survey also asked the parent how often they read to their child and how many books were in the home. Finally, the survey asked the parent what they needed in order to support their child in developing literacy skills (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, and writing). A school reach call was sent to all Upson-Lee Pre-K parents to inform them of the survey and to return the paper copy. With 132 students enrolled, sixty-three parents (63) completed the needs assessment survey. The results show a need for increased parent involvement so parents can become more informed about developmentally appropriate activities. The response showed that about 50% of the responders had 30 or more books in the home. This also means that 50% do not have many books in the home.

In order to determine next steps and the focus of the Birth-to-Five Literacy Plan, data from the needs assessment was analyzed and disaggregated around the six literacy building blocks.

Results of Georgia Literacy Plan Birth-to-Five Needs Assessment

Concerns relating to each building block are also addressed in the corresponding section in the Literacy Plan, including action steps taken/not taken.

Building Block 1. Engaged Leadership

40% of the participants in the survey scored the Engaged Leadership component as "Emergent", with 10% scoring the component as "Not Addressed", indicating over half of those participating in the survey perceive a need for administrators to create a plan for shared leadership and a plan for organizing, implementing, and sustaining an effective approach to literacy.

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Root Cause Analysis

The Leadership Team at Upson-Lee Pre-K meets according to a predetermined schedule to review units, assessment, technology, and best practices. When the information above was analyzed, participants noted that, although the leadership team is established, a concentrated focus on literacy, especially as Pre-K continues to have teacher turnover, is needed.

Building Block 2. Continuity of Care and Instruction

The Title I schools within the district outline their protocol for transitions within their Title I Plans and Continuous Improvement Plans. Clear expectations are communicated annually to parents, families, and all early childhood providers. Items A (community early childhood coalition has convened) and E (access for families to literacy resources in their homes) received the lowest rating of this building block. 30% of responders rated A as “Not Addressed”, while only 50% of responders rated E as “Operational”. Plans to connect families to schools and childcare entities and to connect communities to schools was rated as higher; however, the responders from ULPK stated they were responding based on our school’s plan.

Root Cause Analysis

The Preschool Special Education Coordinator works with the Principal and staff at Upson-Lee South Elementary to organize transition activities for the community. This team invites children enrolled in Georgia Pre-K classes, childcare centers with four year-olds, private preschools, and Head Start Programs to visit the school and tour the facility in the spring. Parents are invited to attend this event. A common vision about the development of early literacy across community settings is needed.

Building Block 3. Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments

Participants scored all parts of Building Block 3 as “Fully Operational”; however, this is one area in which the Literacy Team did not feel that the results of the responders represented the true status of the community in relation to other early childhood centers.

Root Cause Analysis

Infrastructure is in place for full implementation of screening and diagnostic assessment within the Georgia Pre-K Program and Head Start. A formalized process does not exist for those children in daycare centers or at home. It is vital that the UAE Early Childhood Literacy Coalition research ways to seek out those children not attending Pre-K. The Coalition needs to also seek ways to educate families and the community on literacy initiatives and activities.

Building Block 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

50% of participants scored A (instructional design is aligned with early learning standards) and C (high expectations and developmentally appropriate practice focus on student interest) as “Operational/Emergent” with 60% as “Operational/Emergent” in Item B (research-based instructional practice in literacy elements). Since four teachers at

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Upson-Lee Pre-K are new teachers and two have two years of experience, it is important to note that additional professional learning is needed and ongoing.

Root Cause Analysis

Children in the Preschool Special Needs program receive instruction based on their IEP goals and the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). Instructional design and implementation are aligned with GELDS during this pilot year; however, the Department of Early Care and Learning are providing teachers little or no training until the next school year. Teachers must complete Instructional Quality Guides and attend annual trainings to ensure the instructional design is aligned to the learning standards. The training is difficult to register for and does not provide timely professional learning; although, the participants do learn about literacy best practices during the training. A perceived gap exists with children not enrolled in an early childhood setting that uses the State's quality learning standards. Some providers in daycare settings participate in training that is based on the health and safety needs and well being of the child, instead of developmentally appropriate literacy skills.

Building Block 5. System of Tiered Intervention

This Building Block was scored as "Operational" (30%) and "Emergent" (20%).

Root Cause Analysis

Thomaston-Upson County School System has implemented a Response to Intervention (RTI) process; however, the Pre-K population was not included in this process due to this not being a requirement of DECAL. A tiered instruction infrastructure clearly exists in the Special Needs Preschool. The consistent practice of assessing children in the Pre-K program using Work Sampling System can become the basis of establishing an infrastructure for screening, progress monitoring, and tiered instruction.

Building Block 6. Professional Learning and Resources

This Building Block scored higher on Item B (professional learning for in-service personnel) and lower on Item A (professional learning on early literacy for community partners). Participants scored community partners receiving professional learning in early literacy as Emergent and in-service personnel as Fully Operational.

Root Cause Analysis

The teachers within Upson-Lee Pre-K have received professional learning from the Department of Early Care and Learning. However, there is a need for more professional development for all providers as well as the community. Providers with varying levels of expertise in early literacy development serve children in the birth-to-five community.

Summary

The results of the needs assessment were analyzed by the literacy team and revealed several areas of improvement to be addressed to increase opportunities for early literacy development:

- Increase parents' knowledge of developmentally appropriate language and literacy practices.

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- Increase the number of literacy resources available to parents to support their child's language and literacy development.
- Create and implement a plan for shared leadership that supports an effective approach to literacy across all early childhood settings.
- Engage in knowledge and practice exchanges among all early childhood providers.
- Implement literacy screeners within the infrastructure of tiered instruction and monitoring.
- Provide professional learning opportunities on early literacy development for all birth to five providers and stakeholders.

The majority of these goals overlap with the goals set based on an analysis of student and teacher data (See Project Plan).

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Analysis of Student/Teacher Data

The data reported in this section is only for the Thomaston-Upson School System Pre-K. The Early Childhood Literacy Coalition will be tasked with the job of collecting and analyzing data for a countywide view of the birth-to-five providers as described in the Literacy Plan. However, by looking at Upson County demographics and public school system enrollment demographics, several things can be inferred. One-third of the students entering Kindergarten at Upson-Lee South Elementary were enrolled in the public school system pre-k program. The public system is disproportionately poor compared to the county's poverty rate. The percentage of families living below the poverty level from 2006-2010, according to the U.S. Census Report, is only 20.1%. While the 79% of the students enrolled at Upson-Lee Pre-K receive free or reduced lunch price meals. This is higher than any other school in our system or our district, which is currently at 71%. Child nutrition is a known factor in early literacy and childhood development in general.

We currently serve 2 EL students. In the past our number has been higher, with 7 students last year. These students are assessed with Work Sampling Online.

The total population of Upson County was 27,153 in 2010. The percent of persons under 5 years old was 6.2% or 1,683. The county also has a higher rate of low birth weight babies and high teen pregnancy rate of 38.2%, which is higher than the state average of 31.3%. The percent of high school graduates age 25+ was 76.1% in 2010.

Due to the age of the population, other formative and summative data is not available. While the data is not available disaggregated, the numbers are significant enough to demonstrate a need for increased early literacy across all groups. ULPK has analyzed the following data to determine how students progress once they enter ULSE. Upson-Lee Pre-K has on average one-third of the district's upcoming kindergarteners enrolled in our program. Therefore, the GKIDS data below gives a starting point for strategies to strengthen and improve literacy in the birth-to-five population.

GKIDS

The percentage of ELA standards passed by ULSE's kindergartners over three school years has decreased (see chart below). The greatest area of concern is writing with students passing approximately half of the ELA standards in 2013. Although not the greatest weakness within the ELA content domains, students have passed fewer items in reading each of the last three years. The language domain was added to GKIDS in 2013. Students' initial performance shows a potential weakness in language, which is the basis of developing literacy skills. Our students have consistently passed most standards related to curiosity/initiative, but have not done well on those related to creativity/problem-solving.

GKIDS ELA

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GPS	2010-2011	2011-2012	CCGPS	2012-2013
Reading	84.7	84.6	Reading	79.2
Writing	61.6	71.7	Writing	53.3
Listening/Speaking/Viewing	89.2	89.6	Speaking/Listening	87.8
			Language	77.2
ELA Total	81.5	83.4	Total	75.6
Approaches to Learning				
Curiosity/Initiative	88.6	90.5	Curiosity/Initiative	92.2
Creativity/Problem Solving	75.7	73.6	Creativity/Problem Solving	75.3
Attention/Engagement	72.0	75.4	Attention/Engagement	81.0
Approaches Total	78.1	79.4	Total	82.6

Deeper analysis of GKIDS data (2012/2013) indicates that SWD and students in early intervention programs met fewer standards than students in other subgroups. Overall, all student subgroups met the fewest standards in writing.

Assessment of Students with Special Needs

There are 41 students in our special needs preschool program. Of this number, 10 are 3 year olds, 25 are 4 year olds, and 6 are five year olds. They have been assessed with a number of developmental tools to determine deficits and eligibility for services, based on state and federal regulations. Aggregate assessment results for our special needs students indicate that they have developmental problems in the areas of speech and language, cognitive, and social-emotional. The majority are receiving services for language delays. There are 4 who are served only under Speech Impaired. Of the total, 15 also participate in the ULPK Pre-K program. In examining the literacy performance of students with disabilities at ULSE on benchmark assessments relating to first grade CCGPS, we found that they are the lowest performing subgroup (See Table below).

Table: Benchmark Performance of 1st Graders at ULSE, 2011-2013

Grade 1 Reading	2010/2011			2011/2012			2012/2013		
	DNM	M	E	DNM	M	E	DNM	M	E

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All Students	10	49	41	12	49	39	15	45	41
SWD	27	58	15	47	42	11	35	52	13
ED	12	51	37	15	54	31	17	46	36
Black	10	61	30	19	50	31	16	50	35
White	11	44	44	9	47	44	13	43	44
Hispanic	13	50	38	18	64	18	0	17	83

Grade 1 ELA	2010/2011			2011/2012			2012/2013		
	DNM	M	E	DNM	M	E	DNM	M	E
All Students	14	65	21	16	60	24	16	51	33
SWD	37	48	15	64	31	6	45	49	6
ED	16	66	18	20	61	19	18	51	31
Black	16	73	11	18	63	19	14	59	26
White	14	62	23	15	58	26	17	48	35
Hispanic	0	88	13	27	64	9	0	17	83

TEACHER RETENTION DATA

School Year	Teacher Retention
Upson-Lee Pre-K	
2011	100%
2012	50%
2013	33%

Upson-Lee Special Needs Pre-K employs two certified teachers, one certified teacher who serves as the Special Needs Preschool Coordinator, one speech pathologist and three paraprofessionals who are all licensed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC).

Upson-Lee Pre-K employs one Project and Site Director, six certified teachers and 6 assistant teachers who are licensed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). Other staff members include one cafeteria worker and one custodian.

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional learning is the means by which teachers, administrators, and other staff acquire, enhance, and refine the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions necessary to create and support high levels of learning for all students as stated in the School Keys document from the Georgia Department of Education. All certified and support staff at ULPK participate in the required training from the Department of Early Care and Learning as well as any district level training. The Pre-K certified teachers complete peer observations each year by visiting pre-k and kindergarten classrooms. According to the National Staff Development Council (NSDC, 2001), substantiated academic growth will occur only when professionals receive ongoing, targeted professional learning (“The Why, page 142-146).

Job-embedded professional learning takes place during the Leadership Meetings that involve all certified teachers. Sharing of best practices or strategies for assessment takes place by collaboration with other Pre-K teachers during the school day. “The goal of professional learning is to support viable, sustainable professional learning, improve teacher instruction, and ultimately promote student achievement” (“The Why”, page 141). Upon receiving the literacy grant, we will enhance our professional learning format to create a professional learning community (PLC) and invite community early childhood educators to participate in our professional learning activities on literacy.

Goals and Objectives Based on Student and Teacher Data

Goal	Objective
Increase students’ readiness for kindergarten by improving language and pre-literacy skills.	Ensure that Pre-K teachers understand and implement evidence-based literacy practices in language and literacy-rich classrooms.
Ensure that all Pre-K teachers have knowledge of how to implement evidence-based literacy practices and strategies in Pre-K classrooms.	Provide on-going, job-embedded professional learning for all teachers, assistants and staff on how to implement developmentally-appropriate, high interest literacy and language activities.
Increase parents’ access to resources to assist in increasing their child’s language and pre-literacy skills.	Develop and implement needs-based parent education workshops using hands-on high interest language and literacy materials, including books.

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Project Plan, Procedures, Goals, Objectives, and Support

Project Goals and Objectives directly related to the identified needs

Based on the results of the Birth to Five Needs Assessment and analysis of student and teacher data, the goals of our project are as follow:

1. Increase students' readiness for kindergarten by improving language and pre-literacy skills.
Objective: Ensure that Pre-K teachers understand and implement evidence-based literacy practices in language and literacy-rich classrooms.
2. Ensure that all Pre-K teachers have knowledge of how to implement evidence-based literacy practices and strategies in Pre-K classrooms.
Objective: Provide on-going, job-embedded professional learning for all teachers, assistants and staff on how to implement developmentally-appropriate, high interest literacy and language activities.
3. Increase parents' access to information and resources to assist in developing their child's language and pre-literacy skills.
Objective: Develop and implement needs-based parent education workshops using hands-on high interest language and literacy materials, including books.
4. Create and implement a plan for shared leadership that supports an effective approach to literacy across all early childhood settings.
Objective: Thomaston-Upson County School System will assist the Upson Education Alliance in creating a comprehensive early literacy plan that integrates standards and practices to be implemented in all community birth to five sites.
5. Develop an infrastructure for tiered instruction that supports monitoring of student performance in language and literacy.
Objective: Screeners will be purchased and used to identify children needing tiered language and literacy instruction.
6. Provide professional learning opportunities on early literacy development for all birth to five stakeholders.
Objective: Create and implement a schedule of professional learning activities on topics relating to early literacy. Invite all birth to five providers to participate.

The goals and objectives are measureable either formatively or summatively

RTI Model

Our plans to establish a robust RTI model are outlined in Building Block V of the Literacy Plan. Currently, our students receive a variety of literacy activities across the school day in small segments of time (see schedule below). Classrooms are literacy-rich, and instruction is designed to meet the needs of all children through individual, small and large group activities. Specialized services are provided to students with IEPs. The schedule below shows the activities that would fall into a four-tier model.

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Considers practices already in place when determining goals and objectives

All six (6) classrooms use the WSO system of assessment. With training and purchase of additional screeners, additional data will be available for monitoring student and program literacy needs. The tiered intervention infrastructure that we build will incorporate additional screeners required under the grant. We will also be able to examine and learn from the infrastructure that is already in place in our special education preschool program.

Goals to be funded by other sources

We expect the Upson Education Alliance to support any funding required to create a plan for shared leadership that supports implementation of an effective approach to literacy across all early childhood programs.

Details a sample schedule by grade level indicating a tiered instructional schedule

Birth-to-five program follows the schedule and learning standards required by Bright from the Start. A sample Pre-K literacy schedule is listed below. The school day runs for 6 hours in Pre-K and 6 hours in preschool special education. Literacy is also incorporated into all other parts of the day, such as small group and center time, which are scheduled for 10-15 minutes each. In our schedule, students receive between 60-90 minutes of language and literacy instruction per day.

10-15 minutes	Story Time (Tier I)	A minimum of two planned opportunities for story time are required daily.
10-15 minutes	Large Group Literacy (Tier I/Tier II)	At least one planned large group literacy activity is required daily. This can include big books, flannel board stories, drama, props, etc..
10-15	Small Group/Centers (Tier 1/Tier 2)	Teacher and Assistant Teacher split students into small groups based on needs and provide direct instruction while some students rotate through planned centers.
15-20 minutes	Phonological Awareness Activity (Tier I)	Phonological awareness consists of skills that develop gradually and sequentially. Individual children’s needs can be identified during a large group activity. Small group time gives an opportunity to adjust instruction to meet the needs.
15-20 minutes	Story Time (Tier I)	A second planned story time is required daily.
Time varies, based on IEPs	Individual Support in Specialized Services Program	Children with IEPs are pulled or remain in classroom for services by a specialist such as a Speech-Language Therapist

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	(Tier IV)	and provided literacy services based on their IEPs.
5-10 minutes	Individual Support in Classroom (Tier II/Tier III)	Teacher or Assistant pulls each student to work on individual skill development.

Reference to “What and Why” document as a guide for establishing goals and objectives

The Literacy Team used the “What and Why” documents as a guide for establishing goals and objectives. The guidelines from the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) were utilized in determining goals for children age birth-to-five.

The early literacy research underscores the importance of providing young children (birth-to-five) with quality early learning experiences, in language and literacy rich schools and homes, orchestrated by providers and parents who understand evidence-based practices (Building Block 4-Continuity of Care and Instruction for All Young Children and Building Block 4-Best Practices for Literacy Instruction in “The Why” document, pp. 3-7 and 13-14, respectively). The same body of research (Building Block 1-Engaged Leadership) underscores the importance of involving stakeholders in setting a vision and establishing a plan for approaching early literacy across the settings in which a community’s children are provided care (The What, p. 5-6). We have especially been guided by the stark, but insightful, findings of an independent statewide evaluation of Georgia preschool programs commissioned by DECAL and conducted by research scientists at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. The study included Georgia Pre-K sites.

The evaluation results found that “preschool classrooms in child care settings uniformly indicated low to moderately low scores on items related to literacy (The Why, p. 62).” The Georgia Literacy Team further notes in “The Why” document that, “Unfortunately, Georgia’s child care currently is not of the quality that it needs to have to support early vocabulary and oral language skills in an optimal fashion (p.62).” Much of the lack of quality in the state’s preschool programs appears to be related to a lack of providers being trained on quality programming and practices that are developmentally appropriate. The National Governors Association (NGA) maintains that states and communities are beginning their efforts to improve early language skills too late –around kindergarten (*The Governor’s Guide to Early Literacy: Getting All Students Reading by Third Grade*, October 2013, p. 3). In addition to focusing on the birth to five continuum, NGA supports 1) engaging and supporting parents as partners in early language and literacy development, 2) adopting comprehensive language and literacy standards and curricula, and 3) equipping professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to support early language and literacy development (pp. 4-5).

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Assessment/Data Analysis Plan

Upson-Lee Pre-K utilizes Work Sampling Online System to gather information to allow for monitoring of the strengths and progress of students (“The Why”, page 100). Funds from the Striving Reader Grant will assist with the purchase of assessments that we are not currently administering to our Pre-K (4 year-olds) and preschool special needs children (3-4 year olds) that will be required by the grant. These include: DP (3’s); PALS, PPVT4 Form A/B, and CLASS (4’s). Our elementary school included the assessment needs of kindergarten in its literacy plan (DIBELS Next). Following is a listing of current assessment protocol. It should be noted that assessments given by community-based programs have been shown for the sake of inclusion.

Detailed listing of current assessment protocol

Assessments for Literacy	Purposes	Properties	Test Frequency
Birth-Three Year Olds			
Eye, Ear, and Dental	Determines health barriers that might impede learning (used by Babies Can’t Wait, local health department, Early Head Start, and Head Start and local school system)	Hearing and Vision	Completed for initial enrollment in school
Assessment Evaluation and Processing System	Summative (used by Babies Can’t Wait)	Communication	Completed one time a year
Battelle Developmental Inventory 2 (BDI2)	Summative (used by Babies Can’t Wait and local school system)	Personal-Social, Adaptive, Communication, Motor and Adaptive	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Receptive-Expressive Emergent Language Test 3 (REEL3)	Summative (used by Babies Can’t Wait)	Language	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Developmental Assessment of Young Children	Summative (used by Babies Can’t Wait and local school system)	Social-Emotional, Adaptive, Communication, Motor and Adaptive	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed

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Preschool Language Scale 5 edition (PLS5)	Summative (used by Babies Can't Wait and local school system)	Language	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Ages and Stages Questionnaire	Summative (used by local health department, Early Head Start, and Head Start)	Communication	Completed one time a year
Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL 4)	Summative (used by Early Head Start, and Head Start)	Language	Completed one time a year
Behavior Assessment Systems for Children 2 – parent and teacher rating forms (BASC2)	Summative (used by local school system)	Social/Emotional	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Child Behavior Checklists – parent and caregiver forms (CBC)	Summative (used by local school system)	Social/Emotional	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation 2 (GFTA2)	Summative (used by local school system)	Articulation	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Receptive One-Word Vocabulary Test (ROWVT)	Summative (used by local school system)	Vocabulary	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Expressive One-Word Vocabulary Test (ROWVT)	Summative (used by local school system)	Vocabulary	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Three Year Olds-Four Year Olds			
Eye, Ear, and Dental	Determines health barriers that might impede learning	Hearing and Vision	Completed for initial enrollment in school

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	(used by Babies Can't Wait, local health department, Early Head Start, and Head Start and local school system)		
Assessment Evaluation and Processing System	Summative (used by Babies Can't Wait)	Communication	Completed one time a year
Battelle Developmental Inventory 2 (BDI2)	Summative (used by Babies Can't Wait and local school system)	Personal-Social, Adaptive, Communication, Motor and Adaptive	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Receptive-Expressive Emergent Language Test 3 (REEL3)	Summative (used by Babies Can't Wait)	Language	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Developmental Assessment of Young Children	Summative (used by Babies Can't Wait and local school system)	Social-Emotional, Adaptive, Communication, Motor and Adaptive	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Preschool Language Scale 5 edition (PLS5)	Summative (used by Babies Can't Wait and local school system)	Language	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Ages and Stages Questionnaire	Summative (used by local health department, Early Head Start, and Head Start)	Communication	Completed one time a year
Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL 4)	Summative (used by Early Head Start, and Head Start)	Language	Completed one time a year
Behavior Assessment Systems for Children 2 –	Summative (used by local school	Social/Emotional	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-

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parent and teacher rating forms (BASC2)	system)		evaluation tool if/when needed
Child Behavior Checklists – parent and caregiver forms (CBC)	Summative (used by local school system)	Social/Emotional	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation 2 (GFTA2)	Summative (used by local school system)	Articulation	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Receptive One-Word Vocabulary Test (ROWVT)	Summative (used by local school system)	Vocabulary	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Expressive One-Word Vocabulary Test (ROWVT)	Summative (used by local school system)	Vocabulary	Completed for initial eligibility and used as a re-evaluation tool if/when needed
Work Sampling System Online	Progress Monitoring and Outcome (used by Pre-K programs, Early Head Start, Head Start,)	Social-Emotional, Adaptive, Communication, Motor and Adaptive	Ongoing
Kindergarten-5 th Grade			
CRCT	Summative	Reading/ELA	1 time per year
ACCESS Test	Summative	English Language Proficiency	1 time per year
GKIDS	Formative Summative	ELA	4 times per year

Comparison between current and SRCL assessment plan

The specialized assessments for enrollment in preschool special education services shown above will continue under the SRCL. The district’s Pre-K Center programs will add the following assessments as required by the SRCL grant: DP-3 (3 year olds with special needs), PALS-Pre-k, PPVT4 Form A/B, and CLASS (4 year-olds).

How new assessment will be incorporated into the current assessment schedule

All new assessments will be incorporated into the Pre-K Center’s assessment schedule and administered as frequently as required. The Pre-K Director will coordinate the new assessments and reflect them in the district’s testing schedule.

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Discontinued Assessments

None

Professional Learning

As noted on page 19 of “The Why”, “Another key issue of concern that emerged throughout the discussions has been the need for professional learning on the assessments used by out-going and receiving teachers from grade to grade and school to school. This is particularly evident in the transition from early childhood programs into local schools.” Professional learning will be provided on the administration, interpretation and application of results for each new assessment for all staff. EC community providers will be invited to participate.

Parent and Stakeholder Data Presentation

Individual student assessment results will continue to be presented to parents through parent meetings, progress reports and conferences. The ULPK Leadership Team will also review the data annually.

Data to Inform Strategies

During weekly planning meetings, teachers and assistants will review formative data and discuss ways to adjust instruction to address identified needs. The Literacy Team will analyze results of summative literacy assessments and discuss program wide strategies and interventions to be provided.

Detail plan who will perform the assessments and how the plan will be accomplished

The Site Director and all Teachers will ensure that the assessment plan is implemented following state and district approved test administration procedures. Teachers will be expected to administer the new tests, once they are trained.

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Resources, Strategies, and Materials (Existing and Proposed) Including Technology to Support the Literacy Plan

ULPK will use funding from the SRCL grant to support and enhance the strategies and resources outlined below. All strategies and resources directly align with the needs assessment results, data, and root cause analyses. They also directly impact literacy, access to print, instructional engagement, and teacher support.

A. Resources Needed:

- Universal screener materials and professional learning
- A resource room/lending library to include Curriculum, Big Books, Literacy Packs, Classic Early Childhood Literature Selections, listening stations, books on CD, etc...
- Home Literacy Materials
- Department of Early Care and Learning approved literacy professional learning to the birth-to-five providers
- Variety of high quality books (including eBooks) on different reading levels including informational and complex text in content areas to add to classroom libraries and the lending library
- Progress monitoring tool (technology to support progress monitoring tool)
- Instructional Technology to support student engagement such as tablets, software, and interactive apps
- Effective screening, progress monitoring and diagnostic tools
- Educational supplies for literacy interventions such as hands on materials and teacher resources
- Literacy consultants' fees for professional learning
- Stipends, travel expenses, fees and materials for professional learning
- High quality, evidence-based intervention materials

B. List of activities that support literacy intervention programs

- Professional learning in Literacy Instruction including large group, modeled writing, and large group and small group literacy activities
- Daily phonological awareness instruction
- Screening for EIP
- Professional learning in administering screeners and using data to address developmental delays
- Professional learning in providing literacy interventions
- Parent Literacy Workshops
- Host a community wide literacy awareness event for families with children ages birth-to-five
- Inclusion of students with IEPs

C. A list of shared resources available at each building

- Books in Resource Room/Lending Library
- 6 interactive technology devices (iPads)
- 6 laptops

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- Wi-Fi Network

We need a large digital screen to share information with parents as they come in and out of the building and student computers in each classroom.

D. A general list of library resources

Upson-Lee Pre-K does not have a library. We have a small lending library with books that can be checked out by parents; however, more books and educational materials are needed to promote parents to check out materials. There is no formally established library of professional books that is available to all teachers and staff. Some teachers maintain personal libraries of professional books, journals, and periodicals for their own reference.

E. A list of activities that support classroom practices

- Use of Georgia Early Learning Standards
- Large group instruction
- Small group instruction
- Professional Learning through DECAL
- Center Time
- Music and Movement
- Story Time
- Individualized/differentiated instruction

F. A list of additional strategies needed to support student success

- Professional learning in developmentally appropriate literacy strategies.
- Professional learning and purchase of diagnostic tools (e.g. PALS-Pre-K, PPVT4 for A/B, Dp-3) to apply appropriate interventions.
- Literacy Team needs to include parent and community stakeholders as members and collaborate with them in setting a vision for making early language and literacy a major priority in the early years.
- Support the Upson Education Alliance's efforts to engage community members to invest in literacy for our schools and community.
- Collaborative planning is needed across birth to five providers, including Pre-K sites.
- Use of additional, high quality, diverse, interactive technology tools, media, and software applications to engage and support all students,
- Use of high quality, high interest developmentally-appropriate English and bilingual children's books in a variety of formats (e.g., adapted books, e-readers, iPads, etc.) to engage and support all students
- Use screeners and diagnostic tools to assess and pinpoint developmental needs
- Demonstrate and model for parents a variety of evidence-based literacy strategies and practices that they can use to promote children's language and literacy skills.
- Provide access to a literacy rich resource lending library for parents.

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- Provide Pre-K teachers, assistants, and other staff access to a professional library on early language and literacy practices, strategies, and research..

G. A general list of current classroom resources for each classroom in the school

- Basic classroom materials needed to implement GELDS
- Basic classroom materials as required by Bright from the Start
- ActivBoard
- Teacher Computer
- Parent Resource Computer
- Student Computer (1 to 3 in each classroom)
- Classroom Library
- iPad
- listening station
- props that promote language and literacy in each of the other learning areas

H. A clear alignment plan for SRCL and all funding

Upson-Lee Pre-K receives funds for classroom resources and partial payment of personnel from Bright from the Start. Local funds supplement Pre-K personnel salaries. Special education Part B funds are used to provide personnel and material resources for children served in the special needs preschool program. We will continue to use Georgia Pre-K Lottery, Part B, and local funds to support personnel and materials already covered by these sources. Funds from the SRCL grant will be used for unfunded items listed below:

- Universal screener materials and training
- Books, subscriptions, etc. for professional library on early literacy resources Developmentally appropriate children’s book collection for the resource library and classrooms
- Subscription for Ferst Foundation monthly book program enrollment fee for all Pre-K children
- Professional training for teachers in all areas of literacy including any new programs Technology and software purchases to support student engagement and motivation in early language and literacy instruction
- Literacy programs and materials for parents to help them understand ways they can help their children at home
- Evidence-based literacy programs and materials to improve classroom instruction and literacy interventions.
- Resources to increase administrators’ and teachers’ expertise in implementing and monitoring classroom literacy practices. **A demonstration of how any proposed technology purchases support RTI, student engagement, instructional practices, writing, etc.**
- Teachers will have access to reports from diagnostic assessments to review and create reports that will assist them in monitoring student progress.
- Students will have more opportunities to use technology during literacy related activities and instruction. Students will be more motivated and engaged as a result of having access to more varied technology tools, media and software

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Professional Learning Strategies

The Thomaston-Upson School System and the ULPK Director are dedicated to providing professional learning opportunities for faculty and staff in order to improve the literacy skills of all learners.

Some of our professional development activities provided over the last several years are as follow:

Professional Learning Activity	Year(s) Offered	% of Required Participants	Location
Staff Meetings for in-house training	10-11 11-12 12-13	100%	ULPK
Activboard- Inspire Software Training	11-12 12-13	100%	ULPK
Regional BFTS Training	Annually	100%	Varies
Online Pre-K Courses from BFTS	Annually	100%	Online
Thinking Maps Training	11-12	100%	ULPK
Work Sampling Online	12-13	100%	ULMS

Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers receive annual professional development via a combination of in person and online provided by Bright from the Start. Additionally, the faculty meets to plan collaboratively, examine student work, and assessment.

The professional learning opportunities listed above have provided great benefits to our students and our teachers. However, in order to sustain the level of implementation needed and to see on-going gains in student achievement, we plan to build on the programs, resources, and trainings listed to receive the greatest value of the resources we currently have.

Professional Learning Needs

- All Pre-K teachers will need to be trained in the administration of any assessment given.
- All Pre-K teachers are receiving ongoing training in Work Sampling Online
- Additional training for integrating technology into classroom instruction
- Training will be needed for implementation of the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) (2014-2015)

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- Staff will participate in additional professional learning activities related to literacy instruction as needed based on assessment data
- Grade and school transitions
- Home based literacy skills for parents and caregivers
- Assessment planning, implementation and interpretation
- Early literacy resources and referrals
- Interpreting assessments from prior grades and care settings
- Expectations for school readiness for birth-to-five providers, parents, and caregivers

Process to determine if professional development was adequate and effective

The professional learning implemented in the Striving Readers Grant will be monitored, assessed and evaluated by reviewing and analyzing the follow data sources: teacher surveys, walkthroughs, teacher observations, and assessment data.

Professional Learning plan, Targeted Stated Goals and Objectives and Method of Measuring Effectiveness

Goal	Objective	Professional Learning Need	How will effectiveness be measured?
Increase students' readiness for kindergarten by improving language and pre-literacy skills.	Ensure that Pre-K teachers understand and implement evidence-based literacy practices in language and literacy-rich classrooms.	On-going training with DECAL approved trainers for evidenced-based literacy practices	<p>Classroom focus walks and observations will be conducted</p> <p>ULPK teachers will debrief after any training or observations</p> <p>Student work will be analyzed by the collaborative effort of Pre-K teachers</p> <p>Review of lesson plans to ensure evidence of best practices</p> <p>WSO Data</p>
Ensure that all Pre-K teachers	Provide on-going, job-embedded	On-going training with DECAL approved	ULPK Leadership Team will collaborate

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<p>have knowledge of how to implement evidence-based literacy practices and strategies in Pre-K classrooms.</p>	<p>professional learning for all teachers, assistants and staff on how to implement developmentally appropriate, high interest literacy and language activities.</p>	<p>trainers for evidenced-based literacy practices</p> <p>Collaboration among ULPK teachers to ensure planning of literacy instruction is developmentally appropriate</p>	<p>on evidenced-based literacy practices</p> <p>Classroom focus walks and observations will be conducted</p> <p>ULPK teachers will debrief after any training or observations</p> <p>Student work will be analyzed by the collaborative effort of Pre-K teachers</p>
<p>Increase parents' access to information and resources to assist in developing their child's language and pre-literacy skills.</p>	<p>Develop and implement needs-based parent education workshops using hands-on high interest language and literacy materials, including books.</p>	<p>Research and develop resources and information for parents</p> <p>Develop a Literacy section of the UEA website to share developmentally appropriate literacy resources and information</p>	<p>Distribute information out into the community for all stakeholders</p>
<p>Create and implement a plan for shared leadership that supports an effective approach to literacy across all early childhood settings.</p>	<p>Thomaston-Upson County School System will assist the Upson Education Alliance in creating a comprehensive early literacy plan that integrates standards and practices to be implemented in all community birth to five sites.</p>	<p>Professional learning and modeling on collaboration, data analysis, evidenced-based literacy instruction, and interventions</p>	<p>Meeting agendas and minutes that reflect literacy planning and discussions</p>
<p>Develop an infrastructure for tiered instruction that</p>	<p>Screeners will be purchased and used to identify children needing</p>	<p>Professional learning with approved trainers for purchased screeners</p>	<p>Analysis of screener data</p> <p>RTI infrastructure,</p>

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supports monitoring of student performance in language and literacy.	tiered language and literacy instruction.	Professional learning to increase teacher understanding of how to select and implement interventions	data sheets, and progress monitoring data
Provide professional learning opportunities on early literacy development for all birth-to-five stakeholders.	Create and implement a schedule of professional learning activities on topics relating to early literacy. Invite all birth-to-five providers to participate.	Collaborative meetings scheduled to focus on professional learning for all birth-to-five providers with DECAL approved trainers	Meeting agendas and minutes that reflect literacy planning and discussions

In-classroom observations will be conducted to determine the level of proficient use of current and new technology.

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Sustainability

ULPK and our system will continue to have a shared commitment for implementing a gold standard literacy program after the project funding concludes. We will continue to use state and local budgets, as appropriate and permissible under program guidelines, to sustain our literacy activities and implement the following plans.

Plan for Sustainability of Literacy Goals

- Success stories will be shared on the school web page.
- Student work will be displayed through various media (radio, local newspaper, school newsletter, web page, etc.).
- Literacy successes of students will be celebrated in a timely manner.
- Parents will continue to be invited to workshops and schools.
- Literacy goals will be placed on the school's web page and will be shared with parents and stakeholders.
- Community volunteers will continue to be utilized.
- ULPK will plan to host a Family Reading/Literacy Night with a focus on literacy awareness.

Plan for Extending Professional Learning, Including New Teachers and Staff, and Lessons Learned

- Master teachers will serve as literacy coaches to facilitate job embedded professional learning. Over the five-year period of the grant, we will assist a number of teachers in getting reading endorsements so that we will have a pipeline of master literacy teachers on staff. All teachers will have the opportunity to receive job embedded professional learning throughout the school year using GADOE modules, Webinars and online resources.
- Teachers and administrators will attend sessions sponsored by GADOE Striving Reader project staff to participate in discussions on lessons learned. Lessons learned will be included in project updates and used to improve literacy implementation, when appropriate.
- Teachers new to ULPK and to the profession will be assigned a master teacher mentor to assist with on-going literacy training on topics previously covered.
- Teachers will continue to meet monthly to collaborate on unit planning throughout the school year to revise units based on the GELDS.
- Collaborative teams will function as professional learning communities and support teachers in using literacy strategies effectively.
- Peer observations will be conducted in model literacy classrooms for ongoing modeling and support of evidence-based literacy practices.
- Leadership/Literacy Team will continuously analyze student data to evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning. Topics for on-going literacy PL will be selected based on student and teacher identified needs.

Plan for Extending Assessment Protocols, Replacing Print Materials, Sustaining Technology

- Purchase assessment protocols and replacement materials as part of the annual budgets.

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- Use faculty members with technology expertise and system technology staff to train new personnel and update current staff on use of technology.
- Continue to use SPLOST funds (if applicable) to update technology.
- Use system technology staff to troubleshoot technology, as needed.
- Continue to seek technology grants to update devices for students to use as part of the system's "Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT)" initiative.

Plan for Developing Community Partnerships and/or Sources to Assist with Funding

- Continue to use instructional funding provided by Bright from the Start to assist in funding literacy resources.
- Foster relationships with and seek help from community partners to heighten awareness about reading and literacy.
- Continue to share student successes in the local newspaper, school newsletters, and via social networks.
- Continue to communicate through the Upson Education Alliance webpage to stakeholders on the importance of early literacy and developmentally appropriate activities.

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Budget Summary

All stakeholders at ULPK understand the importance of having a high quality and highly effective literacy program. In order to assure quality learning for our students, we are hoping to secure the SRCL grant so that we can be in a position to achieve a higher level of success for our community with the birth-to-five population. We plan to utilize the funds from this grant to further develop goals identified in our project plan.

The SRLC grant will fund items that our school system cannot otherwise afford and make it possible for us to strengthen and enrich our students’ abilities “to access, use, and produce multiple forms of media information and knowledge in all content areas at all grade levels” (Why, p. 31). Thus, we will equip our students to begin to meet Georgia’s goal for all students to “become self-sustaining, lifelong learners and contributors to their communities” (Why, p. 31). By accomplishing this we will create a continuous cycle of literacy in our community. A large portion of the funds will be allocated to professional development, age-appropriate technology applications, and high quality, high interest resource materials for teachers and families.

Budget Items	
Item	Quantity
21 st Century Technology (software and hardware)	TBD
e-book library	TBD
Digital book publishing software	TBD
High quality, classic early childhood literature sets	TBD
Screening/Progress Monitoring/Diagnostic Tools	TBD
RTI (intervention programs/materials)	TBD
Materials and supplies to support literacy instruction	TBD
Home Support Literacy Materials	TBD
Planning/Professional learning days for teachers and special education teachers to collaborate and align instruction	TBD
Literacy materials for homes of ULPK students	TBD
Professional Learning	
Item	Quantity
Research Based Strategies/Best Practices in Literacy Instruction	TBD

Thomaston-Upson County School System

Work Sampling System Online	TBD
Formative, summative, and diagnostic assessment training	TBD
Professional learning communities	TBD
Use of classroom technologies	TBD
How to analyze data and use it to inform instruction	TBD
Stipends and/or substitute pay for professional learning	TBD
RTI process and protocol	TBD