

School Profile

Created Tuesday, December 02, 2014

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School Information

System Name:	Pickens County School District
School or Center Name:	Pickens County Middle School
System ID	712
School ID	189

Level of School

Middle (6-8)

Principal

Name:	Pennie Fowler
Position:	Principal
Phone:	706-253-1830
Email:	penniefowler@pickenscountyschool.org

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

Name:	Rosemary Nelson
Position:	Teacher
Phone:	706-253-1830
Email:	rosemarynelson@pickenscountyschool.org

Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

6-8

Number of Teachers in School

36

FTE Enrollment

525

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
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

Preliminary Application Requirements

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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 4](#)

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 4](#)

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

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.

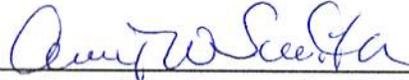
II. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest after Agreement Execution**

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.

Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

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)

Amy W. Smith, CFO

Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head and Position Title

12/1/14

Date



Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

Lula Mae Perry, Superintendent

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

December 1, 2014

Date

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

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

Date (if applicable)

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: Amy W. Smith

Position/Title of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: Chief Financial Officer

Address: 100 D.B. Carroll St.

City: Jasper Zip: 30143

Telephone: (706) 253-1700 Fax: (706) 253-1705

E-mail: amysmith@pickenscountyschools.org


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

Lula Mae Perry, District Superintendent
Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head (District Superintendent or Executive Director)

December 1, 2014
Date (required)

Historical Agency Review of the Department

The Department is the largest federal agency and is a major component of the Executive Branch. It is responsible for the implementation of the President's policies and the execution of the laws of the United States. The Department's activities are carried out through a number of offices and agencies, each with its own specific responsibilities. The Department's budget is the largest of any federal agency, and it is subject to the oversight of the Congress and the courts. The Department's activities are also subject to the oversight of the public through the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act.

Historical Agency Review of the Department

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Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20500

Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip: _____

Telephone: _____
Fax: _____

Typed Name of Special Agency Head (Historical Agency Head or Executive Director)

Special Agency Head

Pickens County School District

Brief History of the District:

Pickens County School District (PCSD) is a small rural community found in the Appalachian foothills of North Georgia. This district represents a close-knit community of approximately 29,400 people and is populated by families with generational roots that extend back to the county origins in 1853. This close relationship with the community has led to the mission statement of “Graduation and Life Preparation for All” as the foundational basis for decision-making in the school district.

System Ethnicities/Demographics:

	Total Students	Black	Hispanic	White	Other
Pickens High School	1265	1%	3%	93%	3%
Jasper Middle School	551	1%	5%	91%	3%
Pickens County Middle	535	2%	5%	91%	2%
Harmony Elementary	528	1%	4%	92%	3%
Hill City Elementary	561	<1%	3%	94%	3%
Jasper Elementary	505	0%	11%	88%	1%
Tate Elementary	324	<1%	4%	92%	3%
System	4331	<1%	5%	92%	3%

Special Populations:

- Special Education – 16%
- Special Education PreK – 50 students (2 schools)
- PreK – 44 students (2 schools)
- Economically Disadvantaged – 40%
- 6-12 Remedial (REP) – 20%
- ESOL - <1%
- Students with SST – 3%
- Gifted – 14%
- Homeless – 4%
- K-5 EIP – 18%

Current System Priorities:

The PCSD is dedicated to high quality educational opportunities for all students. Through our efforts to engage in a continuous improvement process, staff members demonstrate their high level of commitment every day. The following priorities drive the current district curricular focus:

- Deep understanding and implementation of CCGPS
- Utilization of formative/summative assessment data to determine instructional needs
- Systemic implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI) protocols

Pickens County School District

- Closing achievement gaps of subgroups
- Increase in the use of student-focused technology to support curriculum goals
- Increase in the high school graduation rate

Strategic Planning:

The strategic improvement planning process began in 2011 with stakeholder surveys to gather necessary perception data. Early in 2012, action teams were developed to provide a comprehensive review of district data and to develop strategic goal areas in alignment with the beliefs, mission, and vision of the district. A formal plan was adopted by the school board in July, 2012, has been reviewed annually thereafter.

Strategic Planning Goals	
Student Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement state adopted curriculum • Utilize formative and summative data • Implement differentiation of learning strategies • Establish student assessment baseline
Student and Stakeholder Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and utilize community resources • Foster positive relationships among all stakeholders • Provide opportunities for stakeholder education • Increase stakeholder communication opportunities
Organizational Growth and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue providing professional learning opportunities for certified/classified staff • Review and revise the system-wide professional development plan
Internal Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student access to technology • Attract and retain highly qualified staff

Current Management Structure:

The chart below shows the current management structure of the system. Asterisks indicate changes in leadership (principal, assistant, or district) in locations across the district this school year.

PCSD Superintendent (new 13-14)	
Elementary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmony Elementary* • Hill City Elementary* • Jasper Elementary • Tate Elementary* 	Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jasper Middle** • Pickens County Middle** • Pickens High School**
District Administration	
Director of Teaching and Learning, System Test Coordinator, and Director of Professional Learning (new 13-14) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic Coaches ○ Instructional Technology 	Director of Federal Programs (new 13-14) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision of Parent Involvement Coordinator

Pickens County School District

Coordinator	
Director of Special Education*	Director of Finance
Director of Operations	Director of Personnel

Past Instructional initiatives:

PCSD has utilized a vast array of initiatives in order to meet the needs of all student subgroups. The chart below exposes the multitude of initiative efforts.

Initiative	09- 10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15
ELA						
Academic Coaches (# of Coaches)		2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	5
Accelerated Reader						
Adventures in Language						
BrainPop						
Bridges Literature						
CRCT Common Core Coach Books						
CRCT GPS Coach Books						
Decodable Reader sets						
eBook sets						
Education City software						
Graphic Novel sets						
Handwriting without Tears/ Keyboarding without Tears						
Harcourt Story Town						
Holt Elements of Language						
Houghton Mifflin – Collections (6-8)						
Jack and Jilly kits						
Ladders to Success						
Leveled non-fiction readers						
McDougal-Littell Elements of Literature (6-8)						
Novel Sets						
Pearson-Common Core Literature (9-12)						
Reader Rabbit						
Sadlier Vocabulary Workshop (6-12)						
Shurley Grammar						
SRA Direct Instruction						
Standards Based Classrooms/GPS						
Star Reading/Math						
Study Island – ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies						
SuccessMaker – Reading/Math						
USA Test Prep software						
Wordly Wise (6-8)						

Pickens County School District

Writing to Win (6-8)						
Writing to Win (Elementary)						
Assessments	09- 10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15
AIMSweb						
DIBELS						
Implementation of CCGPS						
OAS						
Star/AR						
General	09- 10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15
21 st Century Classrooms						
Academic Coaches		2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	5
Bring Your Own Technology						
CCGPS for ELA/Math						
Common Grading Practices						
Co-Teaching and Inclusion						
Differentiation Strategies						
Formative Instructional Practices						
Gifted Endorsement						
Lesson Planning Template						
PD 360						
Science Unit Development						
SLDS						
TKES/LKES						

Present Literacy Curriculum:

The present literacy curriculum used in the district is driven by the CCGPS. The GaDOE suggested units and frameworks are currently being used in reading and writing. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Story Town has been adopted for elementary grades with Houghton Mifflin Collections Series for middle grades, and the Pearson Common Core Literature for the high school.

Literacy Assessments used District-wide:

2014-15 Required Universal Reading Screenings (AIMSweb – Grades 1-5)			
	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	End of Year
K	GKIDS Baseline	GKIDS (quarterly)	GKIDS, Fry Words, Phonological Awareness
1-2	Letter/Name and Letter/Sound Correspondence, Dolch/Fry Words, Phonological Awareness ORF	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) Dolch/Fry Words	ORF Dolch/Fry Words
3-5	Oral Reading fluency (ORF)	ORF	ORF

Pickens County School District

	Comprehension (MAZE)	MAZE	MAZE
6-8	Oral Reading fluency (ORF)	ORF	ORF
	Comprehension (MAZE)	MAZE	MAZE

Students scoring below benchmark level on universal screeners are placed in response to intervention tiers according to defined skill levels and needs. Instructional plans are then determined based upon those needs. Progress monitoring data is used to move students from tier-to-tier.

Literacy Needs and Objectives	
<p>Needs: Reading/writing instruction in all content areas for each discipline; professional learning on content and pedagogy (e.g. instructional strategies on RTI tiers)</p>	<p>Goals and Objectives: Goal 1: To increase best practices in every content area in direct vocabulary instruction, reading strategies, and writing proficiency. Objective 1.1: All students in Tiers 1-4 will receive explicit vocabulary and reading strategy instruction. Objective 1.2: All students in Tiers 1-4 will receive writing strategies for CCGPS literacy. Objective 1.3: Quarterly research-based writing will be required in all content areas.</p>
<p>Professional learning related to differentiation, formative, summative, and screening processes K-12 for effective RTI monitoring.</p>	<p>Goal 2: To implement frequent screening, diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments for monitoring student progress. Objective 2.1: All students will be assessed 3 times per year for reading comprehension and receive strategic instruction through Tier 1 and interventions in Tiers 2-4. Objective 2.2: Teachers will identify deficits and provide interventions for students in tiers 2-4.</p>
<p>Vertical and horizontal alignment of CCGPS standards and practices; professional learning in text complexity K-12.</p>	<p>Goal 3: To articulate vertically and horizontally K-12 CCGPS strategies and text complexity. Objective 3.1: Teachers will participate in Professional Learning Communities for CCGPS literacy. Objective 3.2: Teachers will participate in professional learning to gain an understanding of text complexity and Lexile bands. Objective 3.3: Years 1-2, curriculum teams will develop vertical and horizontal pacing guides and lesson plans regarding text complexity and CCGPS strategies based on CCRPI indicators.</p>

Need for SR Project:

The need for Striving Reader funding is critical. As stated in the Why document (page 26), “Literacy is paramount in Georgia’s efforts to lead the nation in improving student achievement.” Staff reduction, class size, TKES/LKES, inconsistency of instructional strategies and initiatives, instability of RTI protocols, and diminished test scores indicate that changes in funding are crucial in supporting our mission for

Pickens County School District

Graduation and Life Preparation for All. Instructional staff are anxious for appropriate and continuous professional learning, instructional guidance, horizontal and vertical collaboration, and resources to assist in improving student achievement.

Pickens County School District

District Management Plan and Key Personnel:

Upon notification of the grant award, the district’s Striving Readers Grant Project Director will assemble the district literacy team to review the responsibilities of each team member and to ensure that each understand the grant’s goals and objectives, implement school literacy plans, and coordinate the implementation timeline.

District Literacy Team and Responsibilities

Area of Responsibility	District Team Member
Purchasing – initiate school purchase orders and manage school-level grant activities	Lynda Wallace, Principal, Harmony Elementary School Joeta Youngblood, Principal, Hill City Elementary School Carlton Wilson, Principal, Jasper Elementary School Deborah Longshore, Principal, Tate Elementary School Shane Purdy, Principal, Jasper Middle School Pennie Fowler, Principal, Pickens County Middle School Christopher LeMieux, Principal, Pickens High School
Finances – approve grant budgets and submit completion reports and state-required reports	Amy Smith, Chief Financial Officer
Accounts Payable – match invoices with packing slips, resolve discrepancies, process grant payments, and process grant travel reimbursement	Cindy Little, Accounts Payable Clerk
Payroll – issue stipends for off-contract grant training	Marilyn Childers, Payroll Clerk
Managing school level grant activities with principals and school-level literacy teams	Lisa Hardman, Academic Coach, Harmony Elementary School Christy Kelly, Academic Coach, Hill City Elementary School Stephanie Hall, Academic Coach, Jasper Elementary School Renee Carder, Academic Coach, Tate Elementary School Anita Walker, Academic Coach, Jasper Middle School and Pickens County Middle School Todd Geren, Literacy Team Leader, Pickens High School
Managing system-level grant activities – coordinate professional learning, supervise and direct academic coaches in assisting with implementation of grant activities, approve and process purchase orders, maintain budgets, and ensure assessments are complete. Managing RTI strategies and processes.	Sandy Greene, Director of Teaching and Learning
Technology – organizing technology purchases, installation, maintenance, infrastructure, and technology-related	Patrick Shea, Director of Technology

Pickens County School District

training	
Special Education – coordinating district/state/federal requirements	Shelley Goodman, Director of Special Education

Responsibilities with Grant Implementation Goals/Objectives:

Timeline of Grant Goals and Individuals Responsible									
Grant Activities (Persons Responsible)	Year 1 Quarters				Year 2 Quarters				Yrs. 3-5
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Announce SR Grant to PCSS and Community (Superintendent, Project Director)	X	X			X	X			X
Orientation of SR’s objectives based on DOE’s “What,” “Why,” and “How” of K-12 Literacy Plans (All Striving Readers’ grant recipients and stakeholders)	X				X				X
Convene District Literacy Team for planning (Project Director)	X		X		X		X		X
Convene School Literacy Teams for overview and implementation (Principal, Academic Coaches, School Literacy Team)	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Purchase new assessments (Project Director, Chief Financial Officer)	X				X				X
Purchase and distribute instructional materials and instructional technology (Project Director, Chief Financial Officer)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Plan and Implement professional learning focused on Grant Literacy Objectives (Project Director, Academic Coaches)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Extend literacy time (afterschool, before school) (Project Director, Academic Coaches, School Literacy Team)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Drawdown Funds (Chief Financial Officer)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Meet with School Literacy Teams for monthly review of progress made toward grant objectives and targeting next steps (Principal, Academic Coaches, School Literacy Team)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Submit monthly/quarterly/yearly reports (Principal, Academic Coaches, School Literacy Teams)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Implementation of Goals and Objectives: All administrators, teachers, academic coaches, and instructional technology specialists will be involved in implementing the Striving Readers grant program as described in school plans and the DOE’s “What,” “Why,” and “How” documents. PCSS personnel will sign a commitment statement pledging to meet the project’s objectives and grant activities detailed in each grant.

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Involving Grant Recipients in Budget and Performance Plans: Grant recipients will meet monthly with the Project Director, learning support specialists, and the District Literacy Team to review, revise, and adjust budgets and performance plans. Meetings will be documented with agendas and sign-in sheets.

Evidence of meetings with Grant Recipients: Grant recipients will be part of the District Literacy Team designed to support Striving Readers’ schools with professional development and resources. This team will meet and report monthly on grant implementation and meetings will be documented with agendas and sign in sheets.

Timeline	Purpose of Meeting	Attendees
September 9, 2014	RESA – Grant Awareness Session	All School Literacy Team members, Project Director
September 9, 2014	Review of grant writing process and lessons learned	All School Literacy Team members, Project Director
September 20, 2014	Introductory grant writing workday	All School Literacy Team committee chairs, Project Director
October 21, 2014	Grant writing questions and answer session with Julie Morrill.	All School Literacy Team committee chairs, Project Director
November 18, 2014	Grant writing workday (in schools)	All School Literacy Team members, Project Director
November 24, 2014	Grant writing workday (in schools)	All School Literacy Team members, Project Director
December 2, 2014	Grant final review session	Project Director, Lead Academic Coach, Superintendent

As a result of the literacy needs assessment and subsequent grant writing process, literacy plans throughout the district have been clearly defined. Each school plan is designed to direct the work for the next five years. Teachers and instructional leaders have agreed to participate in ongoing professional learning activities intended to support the goals and objectives of the plans. Administrators are committed to supporting and participating in the professional learning as well as provide subsequent monitoring of professional practice. School and district level literacy meetings will continue on a monthly basis after the grant application is submitted. Community stakeholders will be involved in the process of improving literacy on a semester basis throughout the duration of the grant and beyond. Sustainability is the main goal beyond the scope of the grant.

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Experience of the Applicant:

The Pickens County School District has a strong history of sound fiscal management. The district oversees approximately \$50 million including federal, state, and local funds. Within this budget, the LEA provides a variety of system-wide initiatives that include but are not limited to:

- Maintenance 180 instructional day school year
- No furlough days since FY11
- Hiring of 5 Academic Coaches for elementary and middle schools
- System-wide purchase of ELA textbooks
- System-wide purchase of mathematics textbooks
- Major improvement and upgrade in technology infrastructure
- Purchase of technology for the classroom –
 - LCD projectors for each classroom
 - Laptop computers for each teacher
 - iPad carts for each school

The table below identifies the recent large-scale grant-funded initiatives of the Pickens County School District.

Initiative	School Level(s) Impacted	FY14 Funds
CTAE – Ag Extended Day	Middle, High	19,358
CTAE – Ag Extended Year	Middle, High	17,201
CTAE – Apprenticeship	High	10,106
CTAE – Extended Day	High	14,536
CTAE – Perkins IV	High	12,315
CTAE – Perkins Program Improvement	High	30,730
CTAE – Supervision	High	13,367
IDEA Flowthrough	Elementary, Middle, High	744,044
RT3 – Math and ELA Training	Elementary, Middle, High	9,600
RT3 – SLO	Elementary, Middle, High	4,650
Special Ed – State Program Improvement	Elementary, Middle, High	49,500
State PreSchool	Pre-K	96,074
Technology to Support Digital Learning	Elementary, Middle, High	19,000
Title I-A, Academic Achievement	Elementary, Middle	905,189
Title II-A, Improving Teacher Quality	Elementary, Middle, High	135,455

Internal controls for spending are strictly enforced. All purchases must be pre-approved with a purchase order request prior to any purchases, expenses incurred, or contractual agreements being made. The approval process is multi-dimensional in that the system bookkeeping staff is the only set of employees who issue system-level purchase order numbers and only after the purchase order request has been signed by the requesting party, their supervisor, the grant/program administrator, and the superintendent. Review of such purchase orders is made by the Program Director and the Chief Financial Officer for appropriateness and fidelity to the guidelines of the grant. Approved requests must

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supplement and not supplant, must align with program/grant guidelines, must be expended as budgeted, must address needs as indicated in the district strategic plan and school improvement plans, and must be allowable expenditures for the respective program/grant.

Both system and school level personnel have been involved in the administration and supervision of various state and federal programs as well as grant management. District leaders responsible for supervising state and federal funds received by the PCSD collaborate to coordinate funds and resources to enhance instructional programs and teacher effectiveness which lead to enhanced student achievement. School level leaders have successful experience in overseeing school budgets as well as competitive grants they have received. These same qualified leaders will be involved with overseeing and implementing the SRCL.

State Audit Results:

Fiscal Year	Financial Findings	Audit Results - Findings
FY 2013	Financial Statement Findings and Questioned Costs Federal Award Finds and Questioned Costs	No matters were reported.
FY 2012	Financial Statement Findings and Questioned Costs Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs	No matters were reported.
FY 2011	Financial Statement Findings and Questioned Costs Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs	No matters were reported.
FY 2010	Financial Statement Findings and Questioned Costs Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs	No matters were reported.
FY 2009	Financial Statement Findings and Questioned Costs	FS-7121-08-01; the School District failed to properly include Board members pay as salaried compensation subject to withholdings. Recommendation: The School District should pay Board members through its payroll system, deduct all taxes as appropriate and provide a form W-s, Wage and Tax Statement to each Board member annually.
	Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs	No matters were reported.
FY 2008	Financial Statement Findings and Questioned Costs	FS-7121-08-01; the School District failed to properly include Board members pay as salaried compensation subject to withholdings. Recommendation: The School District should pay Board members through its payroll system, deduct all taxes as

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	Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs	appropriate and provide a form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement to each Board member annually. No matters were reported.
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Through the coordination of efforts and resources, the PCSD has successfully controlled spending by staying within budget, following the protocol for spending, and adhering to the specific guidelines of the program/grant. We have been able to initiate and sustain initiatives by setting priorities, coordinating services and resources, and implementing strategic planning. While PCSD have been very conservative in the past in reaching out to seek grants, new progressive leadership has encouraged the district and individual schools in pursuing innovative grants that support student learning and achievement.

Pickens County School District: Pickens County Middle School

School History:

Nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Pickens County Middle School (PCMS) first opened its doors to students in 1988. Our current student population is approximately 525 students with over 55% of the student population classified as economically disadvantaged and qualify for free and reduced lunch. Even so, walking down the halls of PCMS, one can see that the students, faculty, staff, administration, and parents have a true sense of pride in both the school building and the school culture. A robust student culture permeates the building, creating a family atmosphere where students really matter and are considered our brightest future.

School Demographics:

Total Students	525
Free or Reduced Lunch	55%
English Language Learners	< 1%
Students with Disabilities	26%
Caucasian	92%
African-American	1%
Hispanic	4%

Administrative and Teacher Leadership Team:

PCMS is led by principal, Ms. Pennie Fowler and assistant principal, Mr. Brian Barnhill. Highly qualified and driven for success, our principals have a great leadership style easily received by faculty, staff, and students. Our school leaders are active participants in the daily operations of the school atmosphere and are focused on providing necessary supports for a positive learning environment. They believe that school leadership should extend beyond the principal's office to teachers, staff, students, parents, and community leadership groups and

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implement the following stakeholder leadership groups help school administration supervise the daily operations, long term strategic planning, and school improvement plan:

- School Improvement Leadership Team – Comprised of the school administration, grade-level chairs, curriculum chairs, academic coach, special education and gifted education lead teacher, counselor, and media specialist. Meeting monthly during the school year discussing the school improvement plan
- Grade-level Teams – Lead by grade-level chair who conducts weekly meetings to discuss grade-level concerns and ideas for improvement
- Curriculum Teams – Led by curriculum chair conducting monthly or quarterly meetings to discuss curriculum concerns, student data, and ideas for improvement in a vertical and horizontal format
- School Advisory Council (SAC) – Comprised of two parents, businesses, and teachers, and one administrative representative. Meeting once a month during the school year to discuss school improvement issues and community involvement
- Student-led Clubs and Sports teams – Clubs such as Jr. Beta Club, Future Farmers of America (FFA), Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), Leo Club, 4-H, Youth Action Council, Interact, and the middle school sports teams provide students with great leadership opportunities
- Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) – The executive council is made up of parent and teacher members meeting monthly with school administration discussing ways to support school initiatives
- Optimist Mentors – The director meets each year with the school administration and school counselor to discuss the mentoring program
- Attendance Protocol Support Team – This leadership team is comprised of school administrators, court judges, support agencies, and parents meeting regularly discussing ways to improve student attendance

Literacy Team Structure:

The Literacy Team currently consists of ELA teachers, academic coach, and the media

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specialist. The team does not meet on a regular basis.

Literacy Team Initiatives

- Ensure all teachers are trained and follow vertically aligned concept and curriculum maps based upon grade level CCGPS
- Disaggregate student data from benchmarks and CRCT determining how to plan future instruction
- Discuss Cultural Arts Programs such as: Author's Tea, Reading Bowl, Cultural Arts Fair, Festival of Arts
- Discuss resources and student materials needed for academic success including technology
- Avenues of improving Lexile levels, assessing and maintaining student data to drive further instruction and interventions
- Discuss and analyze the Needs Assessment with classroom teachers based upon Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment

Past Instructional Initiatives

The following initiatives have been put into place:

- County-level vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment
- Professional development in RTI: research based instructional strategies and maintaining/documenting important student data
- Access to AIMSweb measuring reading comprehension and fluency
- Additional support classes/tutoring – before and after school for at risk students
- Cross curricular professional development in a systematic approach to the writing process: Writing to Win
- Annual Writing benchmarks measured against previous data results determining students at risk

Current Instructional Initiatives

- A few classrooms have been updated with projectors that are Apple TV ready
- Teachers have received iPads and are participating in valuable professional training on integrating technology in the classroom
- E-readers have been purchased by the Gifted Program and school library

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- Teachers are utilizing AIMSWeb to assess students three times a year in both reading and math. Data is analyzed and qualifying students are receiving strategy based interventions based on the RTI framework.
- Teachers are providing non-fiction reading instruction in all content areas as aligned with the CCGPS
- Computer labs are available for student use before, during, and after school
- At-risk students are designated for intervention/connection class, skills-based interventions, and the iLearn math intervention program

Professional Learning Needs

- Literacy Leadership Team needs membership expansion beyond the three teachers to include: science, social studies, math, connections, parents, and community members.
- All teachers require training in Writing to Win program providing effective writing instruction across the curriculum to all students
- Appropriate leveled fiction and nonfiction text for students
- Tier I instruction based upon CCGPS provided to all students
- Tier II and Tier III needs-based interventions provided for targeted students
- New teachers and in-service personnel participate in ongoing professional learning in all aspects of literacy instruction in all content areas.
- Integration of literacy into all subject areas by all teachers.

Need for a Striving Reader Grant

The need for this grant is great. Students at PCMS are struggling particularly in the areas of math, science, and social studies, while scoring well on summative assessments in reading and ELA. This indicates a tremendous need for direction and focus in literacy instruction for the content areas. Students appear to struggle with comprehension strategies as well as writing strategies related to real-world and content based topics. This grant will support training, professional learning, resources, and materials to develop research-based programs that address those needs.

With the new Georgia Milestones assessment and the rigor of the CCGPS, students require additional interventions and supports in preparing for college and careers in their futures. The mission of Pickens County School District promotes “Graduation and Life Preparation for All.” It is imperative that PCMS improves and cultivates an environment where students are

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literate and ready for the workplace and college. Furthermore, motivation and engagement for the adolescent learner must include technology and technology components “as a tool for and a topic of literacy instruction.” (Why, p. 67) Students need “to have access to a variety of reading materials, such as books, magazines, the Internet, online databases, and other text sources in their classrooms and library media centers.” (Why, p. 68) A robust collection of media devices, resources, software, and hardware is needed to support these real-world applications and this grant will help PCMS target those specific and unique needs of the adolescent reader.

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Needs Assessment, Concerns, and Root Cause Analysis

Needs Assessment

The Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment for Literacy, Middle School Teachers and Administrator’s Surveys were completed. Participants were asked to agree or disagree with questions and comment with specific weaknesses. These tools identified key elements and concerns in the school’s literacy program. All certified and non-certified staff at PCMS was asked to complete the survey through the Google survey program. The Literacy Grant Team analyzed the results by school and department. Approximately 80% of the staff participated in the survey.

Concerns and Root Cause Analysis

The following table identifies areas of concern as they relate to research-based practices. Each is aligned to root causes and what we have or have not done to address the concerns.

Area of Concern
Engaged Leadership (What, p. 5 & 7) (How, p. 21 & 29)
Root Causes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A literacy team represented by all stakeholders and departments has not been established• Community members have not been asked to support the school in the literacy plan
Actions Taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A shared literacy vision has been agree upon by the current literacy committee and aligned with the state literacy plan• Use of research-based practices are aligned with CCGPS• A system of communication for sharing information through various media has been established• On-going data collection and analysis is used to inform program development and improvement• A network of learning supports has been established within the community that targets student improvement• Academic successes are publically celebrated through traditional and online media

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Needs:

- Additional stakeholders and community partners must be added to the Literacy Team
- Include stakeholder input to develop a combined list of prioritized recommendations and goals for improvement
- Incorporate research-based guidelines, strategies and resources for literacy instruction into all practices and instruction
- Ask community partners to help heighten awareness about reading or literacy topics
- Open school buildings for adult learners from the community in the evenings

Data Analysis Notes:

The first area of concern addresses establishing a literacy team that is organized by the administrator and involves members of the community that support instructional staff in the development of literacy instruction. Currently, all administrators and instructional personnel do not participate in professional learning on all aspects of literacy instruction. The cause for concern involves the fact that our literacy team is represented by the English Language Arts department with no input from outside departments. Invitations to join the Literacy team will be extended.

“The literacy team will create a shared literacy vision for the school and community aligned with the state literacy plan.” (How, p. 21)

Area of Concern

Professional Development in Literacy Instruction

(What, p. 13) (How, p. 29)

Root Causes:

- All students are not receiving direct, explicit instruction in reading
- All students do not receive effective writing instruction across the curriculum
- Most personnel do not participate in on-going professional learning in all aspects of literacy instruction including disciplinary literacy in the content areas

Actions Taken:

- A core program is currently in use that provides continuity based on an articulated scope and sequence of skills and is integrated into a curriculum of literary and informational texts
- Student data is examined regularly to identify areas of greatest need
- Technology is used for production, publishing, and communication across the curriculum
- Teachers’ instruction is monitored through classroom observations/walkthroughs using a variety

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of assessment tools tied to teacher assessment

- A writing program has been initiated into some parts of the curriculum

Needs:

- Administration needs to include a literacy assessment tool when conducting classroom observations to gauge current practice in literacy instruction
- Faculty must participate in professional learning on the following:
 - a. Using of data to inform instructional decisions
 - b. Selection of appropriate text and strategies for instruction
 - c. Providing explicit literacy instruction
 - d. Modeling use of strategies
 - e. Providing guidance and independent practice with effective feedback
- A plan for instruction in writing consistent with CCGPS must be developed that is articulated vertically and horizontally
- Professional learning must be planned for all content teachers to participate in instructional best practices for writing
- In every class at least one day a week, teachers must provide instruction in and opportunities for the following:
 - a. Developing an argument citing relevant and reliable textual evidence
 - b. Writing coherent informational or explanatory texts
 - c. Writing narratives to develop real or imaginary experiences to explore content area topics
- The school calendar must include protected time for teachers to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on practice

Data Analysis Notes:

The second area of concern shows 53% of the staff feel there are adequate materials and resources for teaching literacy, basic word identification, and differentiation aligned to the CCGPS to prepare students to read on grade-level literature or informational texts. Forty percent of the teachers felt there were adequate materials and resources to teach writing instruction. Of those surveyed, no one felt that all students receive effective writing instruction across the curriculum. Thirty-three percent felt there are adequate materials and resources to teach language skills. Also, the survey results showed in reading fluency, possessing resources for differentiation and writing, and language arts instruction, teachers felt

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literacy instruction is not part of their curriculum. Our middle school concentrates its instruction on comprehension and not the explicit reading instruction for struggling readers or obtaining text selections for higher achieving students. Professional learning is needed to adequately address these concerns.

“In-service personnel participate in on-going professional learning in all aspects of literacy instruction...”
(What, p. 13)

Area of Concern

Time Constraint (What, p. 5-6; 10) (How, p.22-23)

Root Causes:

- Teachers in all content areas feel they do not have time to teach their content and in addition to literacy and writing instruction
- Teachers in all content areas do not feel confident in teaching reading and writing instruction in their classrooms

Actions Taken:

- Professional learning has been provided in the systematic writing program
- Master schedule include specific days for collaborative planning and discussion

Needs:

- Administration needs to ensure that all teachers have professional learning on the effective use of instructional and planning time
- Current practice in literacy instruction in each subject area must include assessment using a checklist and a review of teachers’ lesson plans.
- Professional learning must be developed related to direct, explicit instructional strategies in word identification, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills
- On-going, job-embedded support for data collection and analysis as well as intervention strategies must be developed
- Scheduled time for instructional planning and student progress horizontally and vertically is necessary

Data Analysis Notes:

The third area of concern identified by the results appeared as a time constraint to teach literacy effectively. Fifty percent felt that they have adequate time to conduct whole group, small group differentiation, writing, language skills, and content area literacy in the amount of time provided. Of

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those 50%, more than half felt the major area of concern was concentrated in small group instruction. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers felt they need materials and professional learning for small group instruction. Again, a large portion felt teaching literacy was not in their curriculum. Professional learning again is needed to address these concerns.

“Intentional efforts have been made to identify and eliminate inefficient use of student and faculty time within the schedule.” (What, p. 6)

Area of Concern

Academic growth and achievement has plateaued for most students (What, p. 8 & 9) (How, p. 37-41)

Root Causes:

- Inconsistent use of intervention strategies for Tier 2/3 identified students
- Lack of understanding of systemic RTI protocols
- Inconsistent development of interventions intended to fill skill gaps with the CCGPS
- Resources for higher level learners are not provided to increase academic achievement

Actions Taken:

- Most resources are limited to students with average or below grade level performance
- Review of standards-based practices in place
- Support of Academic Coach in determining interventions strategies
- Increase in remediation students in Connections classes for math instruction has occurred

Needs:

- Increase connections classes to include ELA remediation class
- Professional learning to vertically align the standards across the grade levels
- Revise and build more focused intervention time into the master schedule
- Funds and professional development designed to increase rigor need to be targeted for those students who are higher achieving to go beyond the core learning group

Data Analysis Notes:

The fourth area of concern indicates the issue of students with gaps in reading and writing skills. Results showed 33% feel approximately 40% can read on grade level. Teachers also felt only 30% of the students have access to interventions. The teachers feel additional intervention is needed for those students struggling to read. Many professional development workshops have been centered on newly-

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adopted programs. Teachers believe professional development from experts in their field would benefit them tremendously. In addition, historical test scores indicate the school has plateaued on academic achievement, and new initiatives need to be examined to reach beyond our achievement scores.

“A system of on-going formative and summative assessments is used to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.” (What, p. 8)

Building Block 1. Engaged Leadership

Administrators at Pickens County Middle School demonstrate commitment to learn about and support evidence-based literacy instruction in his/her school. There are 6 ways in which administration can help in successfully administering the literacy plan: develop a literacy support team and vision which includes a literacy coach; provide assistance in building trust with the faculty; provide assistance in using time, managing projects and documenting their work; provide access to materials; provide access to professional learning; and provide feedback to the literacy coach (Why, p. 148).

Administration has and will continue to participate in state sponsored webinars and face-to-face sessions to ensure that adherence to the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards are smoothly and easily translated to the teachers (What, p. 5). Moreover, administration at PCMS places high regards on literacy by monitoring use of literacy strategies, student engagement and learning, and consistent use of effective instructional practices (What, p. 5).

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

Why is this important?

“Because of the variety and complexity of issues that affect current levels of reading proficiency among adolescents, significant improvements will be achieved only through a comprehensive effort involving changes in...policies, improved assessments, more efficient school organization, more involved and effective leadership, and extensive professional learning for all leaders and teachers.” (Why, p. 156) Based on the Needs Assessment, 60% of the teachers at Pickens County Middle School feel that administrators display commitment to literacy by encouraging research-based guidelines, strategies, and resources for literacy instruction set forth in the “Why” document. This is proven in the fact that protected time for literacy instruction and teacher collaboration is set forth in the daily schedule.

Each of the six ways in which administration can help administer the literacy plan is detailed below in regards to Pickens County Middle School. It is apparent when looking at our needs assessment that providing professional development in all areas of literacy instruction is essential to formulating and implementing a successful plan.

Administration will:

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Showing a commitment to ongoing literacy success, administration will

- Continue to provide and seek professional learning based on student data, teacher needs, and the PCMS School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- Serve as a model by enforcing best practices in literacy instruction, sharing professional resources among faculty, facilitating professional discussions, ensuring that technology is implemented across the grade levels to improve literacy skills, and training team leaders as facilitators
- Provide time and support for staff to participate in job-embedded professional learning on or off campus (What, p.5; Why pp. 26 & 56-57).

B. Action: Organize a Literacy Leadership Team

Why is this important?

The Why document referenced recommendations by the National Center on Educational Excellence that posited that administrators “establish a clear vision for school-wide data use” and “provide supports that foster a data-driven culture within the school.” (Why, p. 120) Based on the Georgia Literacy Needs Assessment 64 % of the teachers (connections, math, and science) feel that we are in the “not addressed” phase of literacy development.

Administration will:

The administration will

- Continue to align the school literacy goals with the School Improvement Plan
- Continue to align the school literacy goals to the District Strategic Plan
- Identify stakeholders and partners to be part of the literacy leadership team such as faculty, representatives from feeder schools, community leaders, and parents alike so that we can reach a fully operational status (NSDC 2001, paragraph 2)
- Maintain student literacy data in order to make informed decisions about future literacy instructional paths
- With the help of the teachers, identify and prioritize a list of students to be targeted for intervention or support using data obtained from AIMSweb, Study Island, Lexile levels from CRCT scores, or the Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC), and the Georgia Milestones Test

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- Continue to analyze formative and summative student assessment results obtained from OAS benchmarking and AIMSweb
- Literacy goals will be refined based on the above data obtained (Why, p. 120 & 156)
- Ensure that goals and objectives are aligned with the School Improvement Plan
- Ensure that staff stays motivated, productive, and centered on student achievement in literacy
- Define literacy priorities and allocate needed resources to sustain over time.
- Share student achievement gains with District Literacy Leadership Team, School Board members, community members and parents through online media, newspapers, websites, Facebook, Twitter and other traditional outlets.

Literacy Leadership Team will:

In a common effort, the Literacy Leadership Team will

- Create a shared literacy vision for the school and community aligned with the School Improvement Plan as well as the District Strategic Plan (What, p. 5; Why, p. 156).
- Evaluate current practices in all classrooms by using observation or walkthrough tools such as a literacy instruction common checklist, the Georgia Literacy Instruction Observation checklist, or TKES observation to determine strengths and weaknesses in literacy instruction.
- Maintain student literacy data in order to make informed decisions about future literacy instructional paths
- Schedule time for the Literacy Leadership Team to meet and plan future needs based on collected data
- Consistent professional development and communication with community stakeholders will ensure that effective data analysis procedures and practices are understood and followed.

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

Why is this important?

According to “The What”, p. 7, “active collaborative teams ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum...Scheduled time for teams to meet for regular collaboration and examination of student data/work” must be established. Based on the Georgia Literacy Needs Assessment 60 % of the teachers believe that time and personnel are used effectively through the following: administration provides protected, dedicated 70-minute block allocated for literacy instruction in all grades for all

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students, and ensures that students receive two to four hours of literacy (reading and writing) instruction across all content area classes using Writing to Win, Literacy Design Collaborative, Study Island, and adherence to the CCGPS by implementing reading and writing instruction across the curriculum (How, p. 23; Why, p. 68). Furthermore, researched based guidelines, strategies, and resources have been incorporated into all practices and instruction (What, p. 5; Why, pp. 43, 68).

Teachers will:

- Utilize CARES (character education, advocacy, remediation, enrichment, and spirit) which is set aside each morning from 8:10-8:30 on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday), to include additional time for reading intervention or enrichment based on consistent professional development in research based instructional strategies.
- Effective collaborative planning and examining of student data and work during scheduled times will be a protected part of the school-wide calendar and essential to the success of the literacy plan (What, p. 6).

Administration and Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Maximize the use of scheduled times for collaborative meetings by preparing agendas and action summaries for meetings
- Use protocols to examine student work
- Utilize available resources to assist teachers in identifying opportunities for maximizing use of time in the existing schedule
- Maximize scheduled instructional time by identifying effective strategies for differentiating instruction, promoting active engagement, and recognizing the teaching of literacy and writing instruction using the Writing to Win program in all content area classes
- Continue to study formative student assessment results to drive future instruction (What, p. 6; Why, p.68).

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

Why is this important?

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“Faculty and staff participate in targeted, sustained professional learning on literacy strategies within the content area.” (What, p. 6) Literacy across the curriculum is an important responsibility of the teachers as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, and is essential to the success of the literacy plan. Based on the survey, a plan for targeted, sustained professional learning for the staff on literacy strategies and deep content knowledge must be scheduled in order to become fully operational (How, p. 24; Why, p. 46-49; 154-155).

Administration will:

- Continue to design and implement infrastructure to provide guidance and support for students and families (How, p. 24)
- Evaluate the school culture and current practices by surveying strengths and weaknesses regarding literacy instruction
- Conduct walk-throughs and/or observations noting consistency of effective literacy practices observed such as classroom management, literacy content, and active student engagement across content areas (How, p. 25; Why, p. 156-157).
- Continue to maintain an infrastructure that provides guidance and support for students and families such as school counselors, school psychologists, school nurse, social workers, attendance clerk, health educators, special education, after - school program staff (Boys and Girls Club leaders), ESL and Title I Coordinators, Certified Teachers, and Gifted Services
- Incorporate technologies to more creatively and effectively support stakeholder engagement through various avenues such as blogs, Twitter, electronic newsletters, Blackboard, and Facebook
- Develop an outreach literacy program among families of feeder schools
- Develop and maintain infrastructure to support literacy enrichment
- Enlist literacy learning in outside community organizations
- Provide English language services that extend beyond the classroom
- Provide family-focused services that engage parents and family (Why, p. 26).

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- In collaboration with administration the Literacy Leadership Team will analyze survey data to develop a list of prioritized recommendations and goals for improvement.

Teachers will:

- Engage in professional learning with a focus on the facilitation of instructional technology and literacy
- Participate in and prioritize staff development in order to utilize all staff to support literacy instruction
- Strategically use technology to assist in incorporating culturally and linguistically appropriate two-way communications with parents and stakeholders

E. Action: Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas

Why is this important?

“Because students enter the classroom with such diverse needs, one single approach is no longer effective. According to the NCTE, ‘Instructional practices, writing genres, and assessments should be holistic, authentic, and varied,’” (NCTE, 2008, p.2) (Why, p. 44) It is important that administration optimize literacy instruction across all content areas, and continue to identify research-based strategies and appropriate resources to support student learning of the CCGPS. In addition, differentiated instruction through tiered tasks and incorporating academic vocabulary across content lines will further optimize cross curricular literacy instruction as articulated within CCGPS (Why, pp. 44, 48; How, p. 26). Currently, PCMS integrates literacy in all content areas within the following: Writing to Win, Literacy Design Collaborative, and Study Island. We would like to add textual reading in all content areas, so that students have their eyes on text for a larger portion of the school day to supports literacy instruction. It is very important to incorporate professional development in the areas of literacy and writing to identify teacher skills or knowledge that needs to be strengthened in order to facilitate students to reach standards proficiency.

Administration will:

- Continue to provide professional development to non-ELA content area teachers on incorporating the use of literature and writing in all content areas such as: writing instruction (narrative, opinion, and informational) and text complexity that is appropriate to grade level and adjusted to the needs of individual
- Monitor literacy instruction across the curriculum through formal and informal observations, lesson plans, walkthroughs, and student work samples
- Ensure a systematic approach to the literacy and writing is cohesive throughout the grade levels

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and subject areas.

- Recognize student effort as well as create a digital forum to share creative ideas among the faculty to infuse literacy throughout the school community (How, p. 26; Why, pp. 41 & 65).

Teachers will:

- Guide students to conduct short research projects that use several sources
- Teaching students to identify and navigate the text structures most common to a particular content area
- Incorporating the middle school writing rubric in school-wide writing tasks that are aligned with the CCGPS (What, p. 6; Why, p. 87)
- Conduct a systematic approach to writing and reading instruction
- Include an acquisition of academic vocabulary in order to have the program be fully operational (How, p. 26; Why, p. 131)
- Teachers will identify exemplary samples of student work to model features of quality writing
- Expand the types of writing across the subject areas (e.g., songs, manuals, wikis, blogs, captions, word problems, e-mails, ads, instructions, etc.) and differentiate literacy assignments by offering student choice in topic, writing genre, and final product

Administrators and Teachers will:

- Collaboratively discuss alternative instructional strategies or modifications that may be better suited for promoting student learning of the CCGPS in order to sustain growth over time
- Use online resources to stay well-informed of effective strategies for the development of disciplinary literacy within the content areas
- Join online professional associations such as International Reading Association, Georgia Reading Association, National Council of Teachers of English, and Georgia Council of Teachers of English
- Collectively find meaningful opportunities for students to write, speak, and listen within writing contests, debates, speeches, student blogs, creating videos for instructional learning or debate topics, drama, and student centered assemblies
- Celebrate and publish good student writing products in a variety of formats that promote exemplary writing technique within school or classroom blogs, websites, student blogs, local newspapers, literacy magazines, classroom and school libraries, school bulletin boards, or

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student publishing sites (Why, p. 51)

- Continue to celebrate cultural arts by hosting family nights that engage parents in activities that demonstrate the importance of proficiency in literacy.

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

Why is this important?

“Active collaboration teams ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum.” (What, p. 7)

Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment, 70% of teachers believe the community supports the school and teachers through convening advisory board meetings. However, to create a shared vision for literacy for the school and community we must make the vision tangible and visible to the community at large.

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Identify key members of the community, governmental and civic leaders, business leaders, and parents to serve as members of a community advisory board
- Actively seek avenues to promote literacy within the school and community as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards
- Contact potential members of the Community Advisory Board
- Schedule at least two meetings annually to identify learning supports in the community that target student improvement (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, afterschool programming)
- Publish a list of learning support resources for parents (Why, p. 51)
- Develop a reading incentive program that incorporates family nights with Book Talks by students
- Establish a mentoring system from within and outside of the school for every student who needs additional literacy support
- Support teachers who want to incorporate flipped classroom models and teacher instruction on video
- Enlist members of the various participating community groups to provide leadership by: serving as student mentors, speaking to at-risk students, publicizing efforts within the community, and

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visiting classrooms to support teachers and students (Why, p. 57)

Administration, Literacy Leadership Team, and Teachers will:

- Continue to focus proactively on broad issues that may prevent students from learning
- Work closely with Special Education Department and on-site professional learning for the specific purpose of targeting issues and implementing specialized interventions/programs and necessary materials for successful implementation

Building Block 2: Continuity of Instruction

Integration of literacy into the content area is explicit within the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards whereas you can see that a separate literacy and writing section have been designated for the social studies and science areas (Why, p. 48). According to Why document the CCGPS defines the skills that are unique to content area reading such as identifying main idea, using diagrams and text features to understand context of meaning, skimming for important information, and analyzing various text structures to determine author’s purpose (Why, p. 48).

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

Why is this important?

“Administration established an expectation of shared responsibility for literacy across the curriculum.” (How, p. 29) Because 36% of our teachers and staff believe that we are at the emergent level of a literacy focus across-the-curriculum, the actions below need to be implemented. One key component to this model will be to observe model lessons, organize materials, and practice effective instructional strategies using videos when possible.

Literacy Leadership Team and Administration will:

- Establish an expectation of shared responsibility for literacy across-the-curriculum and will design infrastructure for that purpose (Why, pp. 46-49)
- Establish protocols for literacy team meetings
- Schedule time for literacy teams to meet for regular collaboration and examination of student data/work

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Research the components of the professional learning community model such as “All Things PLC” (www.allthingsplc.info), a collaborative, objective resource for educators and administrators who are committed to enhancing student achievement
- Identify specific, measurable student achievement goals aligned with grade-level expectations to be shared by teachers in all subjects (Why, pp. 154-155)

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- Literacy Leadership Team will utilize online options to provide ongoing professional learning to new and continuing teachers
- collaborate with other teachers using videotaping and online sharing options (i.e., YouTube) to conduct peer observations, and share literacy expertise
- Showcase evidence of student learning success on the school or class websites and through blogs, newsletters, and Blackboard

Administration will:

- Be diligent in providing professional development for teaching/administering effective literacy strategies through various outlets such as:
 - <http://www.comprehensivereadingsolutions.com/>
 - Research effective strategies for differentiating instruction, promoting active engagement, and teaching key areas of literacy and writing instruction
 - Collaborate with other team members to conduct peer observations and analyze lessons to improve disciplinary literacy
 - Study formative student assessment results and use the results to continue to adjust instruction.
 - Assess effectiveness of team actions on student learning

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

Why is this important?

“Adolescents respond to the literacy demands of their subject area classes when they have appropriate background knowledge and strategies for reading a variety of texts. Effective instruction develops students’ abilities to comprehend, discuss, study, and write about multiple forms of text by taking into account what they are capable of doing as everyday users of language and literacy.” (Why, p. 52) An important element of implementing literacy across-the-curriculum is teaching academic vocabulary in all subjects using a commonly adopted, systematic procedure, such as video programing from the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) which can be found at http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/media/siteASCD/common/six_step_flash.html as articulated within the CCGPS and within the School Improvement Plan. Accordingly, identifying skills or knowledge needed to be strengthened in future lessons for students to reach standards proficiency, and monitoring the use of instructional strategies to improve literacy through formal and informal observations will be a priority.

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Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment 60 % of teachers believe that literacy instruction is provided across-the-curriculum. It is essential that teachers identify the concepts and skills students needed to meet expectations in CCGPS, and administer research-based strategies and resources, particularly those found in Why document of the Georgia Literacy Plan to enhance the learning process (p. 51).

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Research and implement standards, resources, strategies, technologies, and accommodations so that access to the curriculum is attainable

Teachers will:

- Discuss exemplary samples with students to model features of quality writing
- Actively guide students to focus on their own improvement by setting goals and helping them accomplish the goals
- Provide opportunities for reading varied genres to improve fluency, confidence, and understanding
- Integrate appropriate comprehension strategies into instruction in all subject areas (“The Why,” p. 57)
- Expand the types of writing across the subject areas (e.g., songs, manuals, captions, word problems, e-mails, ads, instructions, etc.)
- Differentiate assignments by offering student choice (<http://daretodifferentiate.wikispaces.com>).

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

Why is this important?

Because 60% of PCMS teachers believe that agencies and organizations with the community support literacy as associated with the CCGPS, it is necessary to continue to develop avenues of communication (both virtual and face-to-face) with key personnel in out-of-school organizations as well as governmental agencies that support students and families. Currently, PCMS hosts a Learning Academy administered by community members in order to instill excellence and increase exceeds rates within the gifted and high achieving students. Likewise, a comprehensive systematic approach to reach the average or low-level learner should be implemented.

Literacy Leadership Team and Administration will:

- Identify and contact learning supports in the community that will target student improvement (tutoring, mentoring)
- Encourage exceeding the standard. (e.g. Learning Academy and Mountain Mentors) to establish a means of continual learning and enhance student motivation (Why, p. 51)

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Develop a comprehensive system of communication technologies to more creatively and effectively support stakeholder engagement (i.e., blogs, Twitter, electronic newsletters, blogs, websites, Google calendar) as stated in Why document (Why, p. 51, 57)
- Establish a system for assessing the effectiveness of the after-school tutoring program using pre- and post- testing
- Progress monitor from various assessment models such as: OAS Benchmarking, AIMSweb, CRCT data, and the Georgia Milestones EOG Test (How, p. 32)

Building Block 3. Ongoing formative and summative assessments

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

Why is this important?

“Educators and instructional support personnel must be able to sort, aggregate, and/or scan in sufficient time for data analysis and collaborative decision-making to occur.” (Why, p. 96) Eighty percent of the teachers feel the school has an infrastructure for on-going formative and summative assessments to determine interventions needed and to offer effective instruction.

To continue in this direction and to add further structure:

Administration will:

- Provide professional training in the research and selection of effective screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic tools to identify achievement levels of all students
- Ensure teachers understand the purpose for and use of formative assessment
- Ensure teachers understand how formative assessment differs from summative assessment though ongoing professional development and professional discussions and sharing of ideas
- Provide consistent expectations across classrooms and teachers by identifying or developing common curriculum-based assessments (formal, informal, and performance based)
- Ensure that common mid-course assessments are used across classrooms and include a variety of formats (multiple choice, short answer, constructed response, and essay)
- Provide assessment measures to identify high achieving and advanced learners as well as struggling students who would benefit from enrichment activities
- Create a data team that will develop procedures and expectations for staff to review and analyze assessment results
- Clearly define a common standard for selecting appropriate interventions for struggling readers and mediations for advancing the achievement of the high achieving
- Identify and purchase assessment and intervention materials aligned with students’ needs.
- Identify and appropriately train all staff who will administer assessments to ensure standardized procedures and accurate data recording

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- Have all materials and procedures in place prior to start of the school year
- Develop a formative/summative assessment calendar based on local, state, and program guidelines, including specific timeline for administration and persons responsible as possible among contents or grade levels
- Hold high expectations of data collection and a plan for storing, analyzing, and disseminating assessment results
- Upgrade technology infrastructure to support assessment data and dissemination of results.

Teachers will:

- Administer assessments and input and analyze data according to the established timeline set forth by the data team
- Provide timely, descriptive feedback to students with opportunities to assess their own learning (e.g., setting goals and graphing their progress; student access to grades in order to create proactive, and responsible learners)
- Continue to evaluate the results of the assessments in order to adjust expectations and instruction in all classrooms
- Use screening, progress monitoring, and curriculum-based assessments to influence instructional decisions regarding flexible 4-tier service options for Response to Intervention (RTI)

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Designate a person or persons to be responsible for ensuring continued fidelity to all formative assessment procedures and timelines beyond year one
- Analyze student data in teacher teams to develop and adjust instructional plans
- Use technology to share relevant student progress data with parents and caregivers in an easily interpreted user-friendly format
- Record online or in team collaboration sessions for those who could not attend at the designated time
- Continue to research and select effective screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic tools to identify readiness levels of all students (AIMSweb, Study Island, and Scholastic Reading Inventory)
- Continue to provide assessment measures that can help identify high achieving or advanced

learners who would benefit from enrichment activities

- Continue to purchase assessment and intervention materials aligned with students' needs
- Use online training options to train/retrain all staff who will administer assessments to ensure standardized procedures and accurate data recording

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

Why is this important?

“A screening helps determine the level of intervention needed to assist individual students; and, an informal diagnostic assessment helps an educator plan and focus on various interventions.” (Why, p. 97) Only 57% of the teachers believe that formative assessments are being used for universal screening and progress monitoring in the classroom. Although the teachers know that we have these types of screenings they feel they are not being utilized to their fullest extent.

To that end:

Teachers will:

- Identify literacy skills needed to master CCGPS in each content area
- Research and select effective universal screening to measure literacy competencies for all students across the curriculum
- Provide timely, descriptive feedback to students with opportunities to assess their own learning (e.g., graphing their progress, student-teacher conferencing)

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Research and select effective progress monitoring tools (AIMSweb, Study Island, My Base System, and Educators Handbook) to measure general-outcome literacy competencies (e.g., phonemic awareness, phonics, oral reading fluency, written expression, vocabulary, and comprehension)
- Select or develop school -wide classroom-based formative assessments to assess efficacy of classroom instruction (AIMSweb, Study Island, etc)
- Include assessment measures to identify gifted, high achieving, and advanced learners who would benefit from advanced coursework (AIMSweb, Study Island).
- Develop an assessment calendar to include universal screenings and progress monitoring (both general-outcome and classroom based), designating persons responsible
- Administer assessments and input data according to the established timeline

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- Assign a person or persons responsible for monitoring and maintaining fidelity of all formative assessment procedures and timelines
- Implement teacher teams to analyze student data in order to develop and adjust instructional plans
- Use technology to share relevant student progress data with parents and caregivers in an easily interpreted user-friendly format (email, web pages, automated telephone calls, newsletters, etc.)

Administration will:

- Provide opportunities for continued professional learning to staff who administer assessments to maintain use of standardized procedures and accurate data recording
- Acknowledge staff's efforts to improve their use of assessment data to inform instruction
- Make data-driven budget decisions aligned with literacy as a priority

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

Why is this important?

“A universal screening process is used to identify students requiring additional assessments in reading, math, and/or behavior. These additional assessments ensure accurate identification of struggling students or students not performing at expected levels.” (Why, p. 133) Sixty-five percent of the teachers either feel fairly or significantly confident about the use of diagnostic assessment to analyze problems found in literacy screening.

To sustain the present initiatives and to increase this confidence, the following will occur:

Administration will:

- Develop a protocol for ensuring that students who are identified by screenings receive diagnostic assessment
- Identify diagnostic assessments, where possible, that isolate the component skills needed for mastery of literacy standards (OAS Benchmark and Aims Web Probes)
- Select interventions that include diagnostic assessments and multiple-entry points to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach

Teachers will:

- Use results of the diagnostics for student placement within an intervention
- Use results of the diagnostics to adjust instruction (My Base System and Aims Web)

- Use technology to differentiate learning within content areas (e.g., use Lexiles to match students to text; provide practice opportunities to strengthen areas of weakness)
- Use gloss option on e-books to provide definitions for unknown words
- Translate material into student's first language
- Support students whose disabilities (may preclude them from acquiring information through reading)
- Recognize and celebrate individual student's incremental improvements toward reaching literacy goals

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Use student assessment data to assist students and teachers in setting learning goals
- Use student assessment data in monitoring progress toward learning goals
- Use technology to share relevant student progress data with families in an easily interpreted format
- Use technology for communicating data to the district literacy leadership team in a timely manner

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

Why is this important?

“At grade levels above third grade, schools and teachers routinely use the information from the previous year's summative assessments to identify the initial pool of students needing further assessment.” (Why, p. 103) “Screening is Step 12 of the process and does not provide a comprehensive assessment of a student's specific problems.” (Why, p. 102) The use of summative data to make programming decisions as well as to monitor individual student progress is felt by 55% of the staff. The teachers feel the district and PCMS have an overabundance of data, but are unclear how it is being used to make programming decisions.

Administration will:

- Evaluate the capacity of technology infrastructure to support test administration and disseminate results
- Analyze previous year's outcome assessments to determine broad student needs and serve as a

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baseline for improvement: Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) for students with disabilities

- Identify common mid-course assessments (i.e., end-of-unit /chapter tests) that are used to measure progress toward standards
- Study how disciplinary standards are assessed on state and local tests. Analyze assessment data to identify teachers who need support

The Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Discuss assessment results with students to set individual goals
- Upgrade the capacity of technology infrastructure, if necessary, to support administration of assessments and the dissemination of results
- Administer summative assessments at scheduled intervals
- Include specific times on the school calendar for analyzing summative assessment data
- Plan time in teacher teams to review assessment results to identify program and instructional adjustments, as needed
- During teacher team meetings, focus discussions on changes that can be made to improve the instructional program for all students.
- Using online, in-house, and outside training options, offer professional learning on strategies to address specific skills identified as school-wide or subject area weaknesses
- Disaggregate data to ensure the progress of subgroups
- Apply protocols for looking at student assessments and evaluating student progress
- Share and analyze student work samples as a way to inform instruction during collaborative planning (See Section I. B. and II.A.)
- Plan lessons, re-teaching, and intervention activities that target areas of need
- Record online collaboration sessions for those who could not attend at the designated time.
- Based on analysis of summative assessment data:
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of programs and policies
 - Redefine school improvement goals
 - Adjust curriculum alignment to eliminate gaps
 - Ensure that students are appropriately placed in specific programs
 - Using the school or classroom websites, recognize and celebrate individual student's significant improvements and attaining designated standards of achievement

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

“Formative assessments are only effective if they are followed by effective instructional responses or appropriate types of feedback” (Why, p. 98). Fifty-five percent of the teachers feel they evaluate themselves on a daily basis to improve teaching and learning in their classroom, but some do not feel as if there is an articulated strategy in place for using the data.

To improve this area:

Administration will:

- Identify participants for a data team for each content area and for specific grade bands
- Collaborative planning time for data meetings will be scheduled at a minimum of once each month
- Establish or select protocols for team meetings, such as those found on <http://www.lasw.org/methods.html>
- Develop a protocol for making decisions to identify the instructional needs of students
- Develop a data storage and retrieval system
- Develop procedures and expectations for staff to review and analyze assessment results.
- Define roles and responsibilities for team members – including, but not limited to:
 - Building administrators
 - General education teachers
 - Teachers of students with special needs (SWD, ELL, gifted)

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Communicate the expectations for meetings
- Teach the data meeting protocol to the data team members
- Train teachers to use the decision-making protocol to identify student instructional needs and group them by instructional commonalities
- Implement protocol with fidelity
- Using online options, provide teachers with the training and time to analyze the data to determine the need for intervention.
- Review protocols at the beginning of meetings

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- Evaluate the process for using data to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of students and teachers
- Continue to build collaborative data meetings into the monthly calendar
- Use online options to continue to train new members of the meetings in the expectations and function of the established protocols
- Ensure that the data storage and retrieval system is effective and efficient

Building Block 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

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

Why is this important?

“In recent years there has been a growing concern about literacy in general, but adolescent literacy in particular. Providing students with a quality learning environment is the key to a successful adolescent literacy program.” (Why, p. 67) Teachers at PCMS feel that 95% of the students are receiving direct, explicit literacy instruction in the classroom.

In order to sustain this instruction:

Administration will:

- Implement a core program that will provide continuity based on a carefully articulated scope and sequence of skills that is integrated into a rich curriculum of literary and informational texts
- Review teacher and student data to improve instruction
- Collaborate with and obtain additional support from other educators who are on differentiated instruction via online communities of educators
- Share effective differentiated lessons and differentiation strategies in teacher team meetings
- Continue to provide ongoing training to all pertinent and new staff in the use of the core program
- Provide support to new teachers on differentiated instruction for all learners, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities
- Stay abreast of current research and new findings related to differentiated instruction by developing a library of professional books, journals, and online sources
- Provide opportunities for teachers to learn more about how to make adolescent curriculum more accessible to all learners (e.g., participate in professional learning provided by district and state, attend conferences and/or institutes)
- Encourage teachers to participate in online professional communities to share ideas, questions, lesson plans and videotapes of classes.

Teachers will:

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- Examine student data to identify areas of instruction with greatest needs (e.g., word identification, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension)
- Compile and examine classroom observation data (e.g., Literacy Instruction Checklist, GA or some other instrument) using a checklist to gauge current practice in literacy instruction
- Allocate which aspects of literacy instruction students are to receive in each subject area
- Plan and provide professional learning on direct, explicit instructional strategies to build students' vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills within each subject area
- Plan and provide professional learning on differentiated instructional options for literacy assignments
- Use videotaping of differentiated lessons to share with other educators
- Provide instructional and assessment accommodations/ adaptations for English language learners according to their English proficiency levels
- Provide accommodations for students with exceptionalities according to their needs and talents
- Provide families access to resources that differentiate support for students

The Literacy team will:

- Using online options where feasible, provide professional learning on research-based differentiated instructional strategies that support diverse needs
- Continue analyzing data to determine the impact of teaching strategies on student achievement
- Using videotaping and peer-to-peer coaching, ensure that teachers receive frequent feedback and coaching
- Ensure a daily literacy block in 6-8 that includes whole-group explicit instruction in word identification, vocabulary, and comprehension as well as small groups for differentiation for all students
- Address both academic and workplace literacy skills across all content areas and provide students with knowledge of a variety of career pathways.
- Provide training to all pertinent staff in the use of the core program. Provide professional learning on the tenets of explicit instruction:
 - Use of data to inform instructional decisions and explicit teaching
 - Selection of appropriate text for strategy instruction
 - Telling students specific strategies to be learned and why

- Modeling of how strategy is used
- Guided and independent practice with feedback
- Discussion of when and where strategies are to be applied

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

Why is this important?

By the 9th grade year, adolescents are expected to “demonstrate competence in authentic, real world writing in ALL content areas, using formal, informal, literary, or technical language appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context of the communication in a variety of genres.” (Why, p. 76) To do this, a carefully crafted plan must be horizontally and vertically aligned to meet this ultimate readiness for high school. Sixty percent of the teachers feel students are receiving effective writing instruction across the curriculum. Several of the teachers feel they do not have the resources or time involved in their subject area to teach writing.

Administration will:

- Design a vertically and horizontally articulated writing plan consistent with CCGPS - Writing to Win
- Develop a coordinated plan for writing instruction across all subject areas to include: Explicit instruction, Guided practice, and Independent practice
- Provide professional learning on best practices in writing instruction in all subject areas
- Create a plan that describes how technology will be used for production, publishing, and communication across the curriculum (Maintain Google Docs with student accounts.)
- Identify the programs, protocol, and/or materials necessary to implement the plan at each level.
 - Professional Development
 - Teacher training sessions hosted by the developer of Writing to Win
 - Teacher hand books
 - Online access

Literacy Leadership Team will:

- Create a plan for instruction in writing is consistent with CCGPS that is articulated vertically and horizontally
- Implement the plan for writing instruction across all subject areas to include explicit instruction, guided practice and independent practice

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- Provide professional learning on best practices in writing instruction in all subject areas with Writing to Win workshops
- Implement a plan that describes how technology will be used for production, publishing, and communication across the curriculum
- Utilize articulated writing plan consistent with CCGPS and supportive of the School Improvement Plan
- Develop or identify the programs, protocol, and/or materials necessary to implement the plan at each level of development
- Ensure that a coordinated plan for writing instruction across all subject areas to include explicit instruction, guided practice and independent practice
- Ensure the production of student work through various forms of media technology, publishing and communication avenues
- Continue to reflect on the effectiveness of the writing plan maintaining connectivity to the CCGPS and supportive of the School Improvement Plan
- Identify the programs, protocol, and/or materials necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the writing plan
- Provide ongoing professional learning on best practices in writing instruction in all subject areas
- Maintain the writing production plan set forth by the team

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

Maintaining engagement and motivation in the adolescent reader “requires unique focus...To the extent possible, they [adolescents] need opportunities to select for themselves the materials they read and topics they research as well as time during the school day to read. [Steps must be taken] to promote relevancy in what students read and learn.” (Why, p. 51) Eighty percent of the teachers feel that PCMS is working to develop and maintain interest and engagement as students progress through school.

Teachers will:

- Providing student choice opportunities in reading material and topics for research

- Explore ways to use peer collaboration with and discuss within the context of PLCs (e.g., literature circles, cross-age interactions)
- Relating content to the students' work
- Increasing opportunities for collaborating with peers
- Increasing access to texts that students consider interesting
- Scaffolding students' background knowledge and competency in navigating content area texts to ensure their confidence and self-efficacy
- Leveraging the creative use of technology within the learning process to promote engagement and relevance
- Ensure that incentive programs, if used, are:
 - Voluntary
 - Not tied to grades
 - Incentives are minimal
 - Incentives are connected to reading, such as books
 - Targeted at high risk learners that do not have the intrinsic motivation to read
 - Ensure that incentive programs are effectively raising literacy achievement and Lexile levels
 - Scaffold learning to incorporate the non-readers interest
 - Incorporate literacy strategies that promote student achievement such as Socratic circles

The Literacy Team will:

- Use data to promote literacy success and determine weak areas
- Seek and select additional texts such as e-books, eReaders, periodicals, and magazines that are interesting to the non-reader and to challenge the high achieving reader
- Interview students to ensure their interests are being met in regards to literacy
- Integrate social technology to support communication between teams, teachers, students, community leaders and administration (e.g. websites, blogs, email, Twitter, Facebook, Google Calendar)

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

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

Why is this important?

Response to Intervention is based on addressing the needs of all students and responding when students do not succeed at the current level of instruction. The Georgia Department of Education recommends the formation of a data team at each school. This team should be responsible for analyzing achievement and discipline data from all formative and summative measures in use. This team leads the work of using district and school performance norms to set criteria for expected growth and the identification of scientifically based interventions needed to support the learner. Data must be easily accessible to school personnel in order for it to drive decision making. Educators and instructional support personnel must be able to sort, aggregate, and/or scan in sufficient time for data analysis and collaborative decision making to occur (Why, p. 96). Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment, 28% believe that PCMS is operational and an articulated strategy for using data to improve teaching and learning is followed. The establishment and implementation of RTI “requires a school-wide common understanding of the CCGPS, assessment practices, and instructional pedagogy.” (Why, p. 125)

In implementing the use of data to inform the RTI process:

Administration will:

- Determine percentage of students currently being served in each tier at each grade level
- Articulate goals/objectives at building and system level based on identified grade-level and building needs, as well as system needs
- Budget for recurring costs of data collection, intervention materials, and technology used for implementation
- Develop protocols for identifying students and matching them to the appropriate intervention
- Purchase, train and implement data collection technology
- Purchase, schedule, train providers and implement intervention
- Analyze data for individuals to identify students in need of intervention according to established protocols

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- Monitor to ensure that interventions are occurring regularly and with fidelity
- Monitor results of formative assessment to ensure students are progressing
- Develop standardized protocols for the collection of critical information to determine students' literacy competence in various content areas and response to interventions
- Schedule grade-level and data-analysis team meetings
- Provide building and system-level support of the process
- Develop process monitoring the implementation of research-based interventions at the building level and across the system
- Consider the options available through technology to provide ongoing, job-embedded support for data collection and analysis as well as for intervention, e.g., videotaping, videoconferencing, online collaboration
- Use the Georgia Department of Education problem-solving checklist to evaluate:
 - Personnel providing interventions
 - The ease with which students move between tiers

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

Why is this important?

“Response to Intervention is a technique of tiered layers of interventions for students needing support” and is “designed to provide early, effective assistance for ALL underperforming students.” (Why, p. 125) Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment, 100% of the teachers believe that Tier I instruction based upon the CCGPS is not provided to all students in all classrooms. They rated the school as emergent.

In providing Tier I instruction based upon the CCGPS,

The Teachers will:

- Examine student data to determine the current percentage of successful students in the areas of literacy (i.e., reading and writing)
- Develop an understanding for school-wide assessment data and anticipated levels of student mastery during the school year

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- Develop a plan to strengthen Tier I instruction of disciplinary literacy in each content area
- If fewer than 80% of students are successful:
 - Examine student data to focus on
 - instructional areas of greatest need (e.g., vocabulary, comprehension, written expression)
 - Compile data from classroom observations and review of plans to determine current practice in literacy instruction in each subject area using a checklist (e.g., Literacy instruction Checklist, GA or some other instrument)
 - education.ky.gov/nr/rdonlyres/.../ccsso_contentliteracy.pdf
 - Provide professional learning on direct, explicit instructional strategies that build students' word identification, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills
 - GA DOE resources for RTI, universal screening (e. g., Study Island, Aimsweb)
 - Team teaching and inclusion of students with special learning needs (EL, SWD, gifted) in the general education setting

The Administrator will:

- Ensure that teachers within each subject area plan together to implement jointly adopted literacy instruction
- Ensure that teachers develop and agree upon common classroom-based formative assessments within each subject area to ensure consistent expectations across classrooms
- Ensure that teachers regularly meet, either face-to-face or online, to debrief on the progress of these lessons and to plan necessary changes
- Schedule time for instructional planning, for student progress conversations across (vertical), and within (horizontal) grade levels
- Use data from universal screening process to identify general weaknesses in instruction Tier I as well as struggling students
- Use system-development classroom based formative assessment to monitor consistent grade level implementation of curriculum and to gauge students' progress toward mastery of CCGPS at each grade level
- Promote the formation of professional learning communities with protected meeting times
- Establish protocols to teach and monitor teachers' effective questioning and feedback skills

- Ensure adequate time for planning and implementing flexible grouping based on students' learning needs
- Monitor the planning, delivery and assessment for students with special learning needs (EL, SWD, gifted)
- Support teachers' effective use of time through use of technology during each stage of the process
- Establish protocols to support professional learning communities and use decision-making model to evaluate effectiveness
- Provide professional learning to support literacy face to face or online
- Continue to ensure that teachers consistently provide instruction that includes explicit instruction designed to meet the individual students' needs
- Encourage the use of technology to support proactive communication between students and teachers, parents and teachers (e.g., cell phones, texting, email)
- Ensure that communication between teachers and administrators is ongoing and effective

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

Why is this important?

To improve literacy, content area educators should construct and differentiate lessons “to measure student growth in reading across the curriculum.” (Why, p. 152). Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment, 32% of the teachers believe we are fully operational and Tier 2 needs-based interventions are provided for targeted students.

To insure that students needs are meet:

The Administrator will:

- Schedule times for collaborative discussion and planning between content area teachers and interventionists (teachers or para-educators)
- Establish protocols to ensure consistent progress monitoring, data collection, and reporting
- Ensure adequate time for planning and implementing interventions
- Monitor student movement between Tier 1 and Tier 2
- Provide sufficient resources (time, training cost, materials and implementation of interventions)

- Study schools successful in closing the achievement gap have effected change
- Ensure that teachers consistently provide research-validated interventions designed to meet individual student’s needs.
- Document data points to monitor student response to intervention
- Encourage the use of technology to ensure proactive communication between students and teachers, parents and teachers, e.g., cell phones, texting, email
- Use technology to track and ensure the movement of students between Tier 1 and Tier 2 based on response to interventions.
- Provide professional learning to ensure school wide understanding of assessment data and anticipated levels of student mastery during the school year
- Ensure that they are provided by competent, well-trained teachers
- Plan and provide professional learning for interventionists on:
 - Appropriate use of supplemental and intervention materials
 - Diagnosis of reading difficulties
 - Direct, explicit instructional strategies to address difficulties
 - Charting data
 - Graphing progress
- Ensure effectiveness of interventions by:
 - Building sufficient blocks of time into the daily schedule
 - Providing adequate space conducive to learning

The Teacher will:

- Monitor effectiveness of standard intervention protocols in place for students (based on universal screening, progress monitoring and benchmark data)

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

Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Assessment, 64% of PCMS feels that we ensure that SST and data teams monitor progress jointly. The other 36% perceive us as emergent. “Effective adolescent instruction and intervention practices include explicit vocabulary instruction, implementation of strategies that develop independent vocabulary learners, opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation, students’ motivation and engagement in literacy learning, and intensive

individualized interventions for struggling readers.” (Why, p. 131)

To ensure we are doing all we can for our students.

The Grade Level Teams will:

- Discuss students in Tier 3 who fail to respond to intervention strategies
- Receive intervention support from Academic Coaches
- Support Team processes and procedures as outlined in the GA DOE manual and guidance
- Verify implementation of proven interventions
- Ensure that interventionist has maintained fidelity to intervention protocol prior to referral
- Tier 3 SST/Data teams meet at least once a month to discuss student progress based on daily interventions that include a minimum of four data points
- Interventions are delivered during a protected time daily by a trained interventionist
- Tier 3 SST/Data teams follow established protocol to determine if specific nature of ELs lack of progress (i.e. language difficulty or difference vs. disorder)

The Teachers will:

- Consistently provide research validated interventions to meet individual student needs
- Increase explicit vocabulary instruction
- Data points are documented to monitor student response to daily intervention
- Ensure that Tier 3 includes proven interventions that address behavior

The Administrator will:

- Continue to ensure that students move into and out of Tier 2 and Tier 3 data is used to support response to intervention
- Monitor referrals to special education and determine if they are equivalent to proportion of school and system populations representative of the ethnic and racial composition as a whole
- Consistently use a decision-making checklist to ensure appropriate interventions and documentation is current

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

Why is this important?

In addition to Tiers 1 through 3, “targeted students participate in specialized programs, methodologies, or instructional deliveries. This provides a greater frequency of progress monitoring of student response to interventions. Tier 4 is developed for students who need additional support and who meet eligibility criteria for special program placement, including gifted education and special education.” (Why, p. 134). Based on Georgia Literacy Plan Assessment, 100% of our teachers feel that we are either operational or fully operational and that we implement specially-designed learning through specialized programs, methodologies, or strategies based upon students’ inability to access the CCGPS.

To ensure that we continue to provide for our students

The Administrator will:

- Ensure school schedules are developed to ensure least restrictive environment (LRE)
- Ensure that building and system administrators are familiar with funding formulas affecting students in special programming
- Consider assigning a case manager to each student with (IEP) (i.e., the case manager should maintain contact even if the student is served by a different special educator in multiple settings (such as team taught) so that communication with student and parents is seamless)
- Ensure IEP teams include key members required to support students’ individualized transition plans and/or attainment of College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards
- Confirm special education, EL, or gifted case managers meet plan and discuss students’ progress regularly with general education teacher
- Confirm case managers regularly participate in open houses, parent conferences and college and career planning activities
- Ensure student data supports the exit of students from Tier 4
- Develop a system of checks and balances that ensures fidelity of implementation and progress of student subgroups at a rate commensurate with typical peers indicative of closing the present gap in performance

The Teachers will:

- Maintain highly qualified and experience to support the delivery of instruction for students

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with the most significant needs (i.e., best Math II teacher teams with best special education teacher for team-taught instruction)

- Participate in professional learning communities to ensure strict alignment with delivery of CCGPS with all subgroups and in all settings

Building Block 6. Improved Instruction through Professional Learning

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

Why is this important?

More and more research is beginning to show that effective professional learning is linked to higher student achievement. Research shows that “for every \$500 directed toward various school improvement initiatives, those funds directed towards professional development resulted in the greatest student achievement gains” (Greenwald et al., 1996). According to Darling-Hammond (2005), professional learning opportunities must focus on ensuring that teachers understand learning as well as teaching. They must be able to connect curriculum goals to student’s experience. In an increasing competitive global and technology-based economy, students should have strong literacy skills, and teachers should receive the training to improve their instruction and to promote student achievement. Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Assessment, 32% of teachers feel that pre-service education prepares new teachers.

Because of this it is necessary that:

The Literacy Leadership team will:

- Meet with representatives from the Professional Standards Commission to enlist support for ensuring that pre-service teachers receive coursework in disciplinary literacy within content areas
- Revise teacher preparation and training standards to include coursework in disciplinary literacy for pre-service teachers in all subject areas
- Enlist support from institutions of higher learning to require pre-service teachers to demonstrate competency in reading theory and practice as well as in the development of disciplinary literacy
- Provide professional learning, where necessary, for faculty
- Develop revised evaluation instruments for pre-service teachers
- Develop protocols for evaluating implementation of the new coursework
- Ensure that mentoring teachers are fully trained in providing instruction in disciplinary literacy. Continue to monitor and support the integration of disciplinary literacy

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- Provide building level administrators with professional learning on the need to integrate disciplinary literacy instruction into the content areas in order to help them make informed hiring decisions

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

Why is this important?

Based on the Georgia Literacy Plan Assessment, 32% of teachers believe that in-service personnel participate in ongoing professional learning at an operational level because: (Why, p. 140-154)

1. The school calendar provides protective time to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on practice (How, p. 18; Why, p 141, 156).
2. Teachers' instruction is monitored through classroom observations or walkthroughs using a variety of assessment tools tied to professional learning (How, p. 18; Why, p. 149).

To increase the number of teachers believing professional development is operational, the following are necessary:

The Administrator will:

- Schedule and protect time during the school day for teachers to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on practice
- Use teacher data (surveys and interest inventories; teacher observations) as well as student data to target professional learning needs
- Encourage every teacher to develop a professional growth plan based on a self-assessment of professional learning needs
- Use academic coach to provide site-based support for staff including program-specific training in intervention programs (Aims Web and Study Island) to prepare teachers and staff for implementation
- Provide training in administering and interpreting results of assessments in terms of literacy
- Allow pre-service teachers to work at the school
- Provide targeted professional learning on the CCGPS based on student and teacher needs
- Meet in collaborative teams to support teachers in using literacy strategies effectively

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- Provide opportunities for teachers to practice techniques in non-threatening situations
- Use checklists tied to professional learning when conducting classroom observations or walkthroughs to ensure clear expectations and to provide specific feedback to teachers on student learning
- Develop a list of sites for an online professional library that includes research-based books, journals, magazines, videos, etc. that teachers can readily access for professional growth
- Revisit and revise professional learning yearly based on student mastery of CCGPS and classroom observations
- Partner experienced teachers with pre-service and beginning teachers
- Use a model of blended professional learning – combining online learning with face-to-face support – to provide content and resources to teachers and staff
- Use formal and informal observations to monitor and improve literacy instruction (Literacy Instruction Checklist, or some other equivalent instrument)
- Use classroom observations (or videotaping) to identify and support individual teachers with follow-up coaching, conferencing, and mentoring
- Continue program specific professional learning each year for new and experienced teachers
- Encourage all teachers to share resources and redeliver information learned at professional learning sessions
- Analyze student data to evaluate effectiveness of current professional learning on student mastery of CCGPS in all subgroups
- Revisit professional learning options to utilize experts within the school to develop and support colleagues
- Ensure that new personnel receive vital professional learning from earlier years
- Provide videotaped important professional learning sessions for staff to review and share with colleagues inside and outside of school
- Expand and strengthen school-university partnerships to build networks of support for literacy programs through the use of online collaborations, blogs and professional organizations
- Continue to encourage “professional talk” among staff and provide time for discussions
- Consider the inclusion of some or all of the following in personnel in professional learning opportunities:

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- Paraprofessionals
- Support staff
- Substitute teachers

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Disaggregated Data

% of PCMS Students Meeting and Exceeding Standards on CRCT									
	Grade 6			Grade 7			Grade 8		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Reading	97.6	97.1	98.8	94.6	97.8	98.5	98.4	98.8	98.7
ELA	96.4	96.1	97.5	93.3	96.1	94.8	95.1	96.2	96.6
Math	91.2	93.4	91.5	94.4	95.3	91.9	74.5	91.8	95.1
Science	80.8	81.1	90.9	86.1	91.7	88.9	84.4	86.5	86.9
Social Studies	89.8	84.5	83.8	73.1	91.6	92.9	79.6	83.0	90.7

% of PCMS Students Meeting and Exceeding Standards on CRCT Subgroup Breakdown			
	2012	2013	2014
Reading	97.1	98.1	98.6
Female	99.2	100	99.2
Male	98.1	96.6	98.1
SWD	85.7	93.2	96.6
ED	95.7	97.1	97.9
ELA	94.9	96.1	96.2
Female	98.8	99.1	98.8
Male	93.8	93.2	93.8
SWD	81.0	91.3	82.9
ED	92.0	97.2	98.7
Math	86.0	93.1	89.7
Female	94.9	96.3	94.9
Male	85.0	90.1	85.0
SWD	67.6	80.5	64.7
ED	90.1	91.3	86.8
Science	82.8	82.3	85.6
Female	88.3	85.4	88.3
Male	83.3	79.5	83.3
SWD	54.1	53.6	45.8
ED	75.5	75.5	78.7
Social Studies	80.3	85.9	89.3
Female	90.0	87.5	90.0
Male	88.7	84.3	88.7
SWD	44.3	55.1	56.3
ED	72.6	79.7	85.2

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Disaggregation of Data

The CRCT data shows the disaggregated subgroups from years 2012-2014. In 2012, 17% of males, 45.9% of SWD and 24.5% of economically disadvantaged (ED) did not meet standards for Social Studies. Likewise, in 2013, 14.7% of males, 44.9% of SWD and 20.3% of ED students did not meet standards in Social Studies. FY2014 did show some gains, however, the SWD population showed 43.7% and the ED population showed 14.8% did not meet standards in Social Studies.

CRCT data in Science from 2012-2014 indicates that all scores in the subgroups males, SWD, and ED are at or below 85% meets or exceeds standards. In 2013, females decreased in scores to 17.7% did not meet standards in Science.

ELA scores for 2012 showed 14.3% of SWD students did not meet standards, however, significant improvements occurred over 2013 and 2014 indicating that only 3.4% of SWD students did not meet standards.

Math scores for 2012-2014 show difficulties especially with the SWD population. In 2012, 32.4% of SWD students did not meet standards in math. In 2013, significant increases occurred and only 19.5% of SWD students did not meet standards. Significant decreases occurred in 2014, 32.3% of SWD students did not meet standards.

% of PCMS Meeting and Exceeding the Standard for Grade 8 Writing					
Student Groups	2012	2013	2014	State Average	Change
All	84	86	85	80	+5
Female	91	93	90	86	+6
Male	76	79	79	73	+5
SWD	31	42	46	43	+5
ED	75	80	83	Not reported	Not reported

Overall scores on the Georgia 8th Grade Writing Test have been stagnant the last three years but have remained significantly higher than State Averages in all subgroups. Using a district benchmark of 85%, all subgroups require attention. While over the state average for 2014, the SWD population demonstrated 54% did not meet standards. Prior years have demonstrated significant issues with writing proficiency for our SWD population. Concern is with the male population in all grade levels. Males score significantly less than females each year, even while remaining above the state average.

Average Lexile Score 2014 (AIMSweb, SLDS)				
	6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade	Stretch Grade Band
All Students	882	984	1017	925L – 1185L

Lexile scores illustrate the literacy struggles that interfere with the students' ability to perform well in content area classes. According to the Georgia State Department of Education College and Career

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Readiness Band of the Lexile scores for 6-8 grades should be 925L-1185L. As the chart illustrates all students are on the low to mid-range for middle school students.

Strengths and Weakness identified through Prescribed Assessments

Strengths

Gains have been made and maintained in the area of reading and language arts in all grade levels and in most subgroups.

Weaknesses

The lowest scores were found in Math, Science, and Social Studies. This along with diminished overall Lexile scores appears to indicate that students are experiencing significant difficulties in understanding the material read in those content areas. The SWD and male population respectively appear to require close consideration related to intervention strategies, motivation, and engagement with real-world applications to improve achievement in those areas.

Our goal is to develop a systematic method of assessing and addressing our students' literacy needs and evaluating progress to improve achievement in all academic areas. Within this Literacy Plan, students will receive frequent, targeted, and individualized literacy support and progress monitoring to ensure literacy is being fostered and improving literacy gains.

Additional District-Prescribed Data

The following AIMSweb benchmark scores were taken Fall, 2014 and indicate the following data:

AIMSweb Benchmark Scores, Fall 2014			
MAZE (Comprehension)			
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
% Above Target	65	58	58
% Below Target	35	42	42

A significant number of students are identified as at-risk through this universal screening measure and show problems in all grade levels.

Data for All Teachers

The data included in this section represents all teachers at Pickens County Middle School. Instructional and classified staffs include general education, special education, gifted coordinator, media specialist, media paraprofessional, connections teachers, CTAE teacher, special education paraprofessionals, counselor, and two administrators.

Teacher Retention Data

PCMS has a dedicated staff that focuses on student achievement and progress. The attrition rate for 2013 was 13.51% and well below the state average of 17.62%. Six percent of teachers have taught for 3 years or less; 78% of teachers have taught 3 to 20 years; and 17% of teachers have taught more than 20 years demonstrating a veteran staff.

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Goals and Objectives based on Formative and Summative Assessments

Goal 1: Establish a systematic approach to incorporating literacy in all content areas

- Objective 1: Continue to provide universal/benchmark literacy screenings for all students
- Objective 2: Utilize diagnostic assessments to determine student literacy skills
- Objective 3: Collect and analyze student data to support tiered interventions three times per year
- Objective 4: Use assessment data to isolate the skills required for mastery of literacy standards

Goal 2: Students will receive effective literacy instruction, in all content classes, from well-trained teachers using research-based strategies and methods of delivery throughout the Response to Intervention process

- Objective 1: Provide intervention strategies to all students, at all levels, in all classes
- Objective 2: Monitor Tier 2/3 interventions frequently to ensure they occur regularly and with fidelity
- Objective 3: Provide PL in specific RTI interventions, data, and progress monitoring

Goal 3: Professional development will be provided to all instructional staff to support areas identified in the literacy needs assessment

- Objective 1: Develop standardized protocols for the collection of data to determine students' literacy competence in content areas through the RTI process
- Objective 2: Develop standard protocols for analyzing student data
- Objective 3: Use technology to support the disaggregation of data
- Objective 4: Provide PL in the use of data as progress monitoring and its impact on teaching and learning (interventions)

Professional Learning

All teachers participate in professional learning groups monthly at PCMS. Teachers collaboratively meet to participate in technology training, review student data, and discuss differentiation strategies and lesson planning. Teachers have had professional training in TKES, FIP training, PBIS, AIMSweb, RTI software systems, and student information systems. PCMS has maintained a STEM science class in 7th and 8th grades. Teachers have actively participated in on-going training throughout the school year directed by the district as well as the school based from the School Improvement Plan and the District Strategic Plan.

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Goal 1: Establish a Literacy Leadership Team (Building Block 1)			
Current Practices: (What p. 5) Literacy Committee – meetings monthly, literacy needs assessment (What p. 5); collaborative planning (What p. 9), writing strategies across content (What p.6).			
Objectives	Timeline	Funding Source	Measure of Effectiveness
1. Create a team of highly qualified individuals that support literacy (How, p. 21)	Fall, 2014	Release time SRCLG	Professional Learning (PL) Plan Minutes and sign-in sheets
2. Design a calendar that is clear and consistent by setting regular meeting dates (How, p. 22)	Spring, 2015 Ongoing	N/A	PL Calendar PL Plan Minutes and sign-in sheets
3. Create a system for observations that include a literacy checklist and TKES observations (What, p. 10)	Fall, 2014	N/A	Walkthrough/Observation TKES
Evidence of Research-Based Practice:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Establish a literacy leadership group with the responsibility to read and discuss both research and research-into-practice articles on this topic in order to acquire local expertise.” (Why, p. 156) 			
Goal 2: Establish a systematic approach to incorporating literacy in all content areas (Building Blocks 2, 3, 4)			
Current Practices: CCGPS units, frameworks, (What, p. 10), collaborative planning (What, p. 9) (How, p. 22), writing to win initiative (What, p. 6) (How, p. 24)			
Objectives	Timeline	Funding Source	Measure of Effectiveness
1. Provide professional learning on literacy instruction across all content areas (What p. 6, 10)	Spring, 2015 On-going	Release Time SRCLG PL Funds	PL Plan Minutes/sign-in sheets Walkthroughs/Observations
2. Provide professional learning on direct writing instruction across all content areas (What, p. 6)	Fall, 2014 On-going	Release Time SRCLG PL Funds	PL Plan Minutes/sign-in sheets Walkthroughs/Observations
3. Design a vertically and horizontally articulated writing plan consistent with CCGPS (What, p. 10)	Spring, 2015 On-going review	Release Time SRCLG PL Funds	Plan for writing Lesson Plans Writing Samples
4. Continue to provide universal/benchmark literacy screenings for all students (What, p. 8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize diagnostic assessments to determine student literacy skills (What, p. 9) • Collect and analyze student data to support tiered interventions three times per year 	Fall, 2014 On-going	Title I SRCLG Local Funds	Benchmark Reports Analysis of Student Work Rubrics

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use assessment data to isolate the skills required for mastery of literacy standards (What, p. 9) • Use formative and summative assessments to measure goals and objectives 			
<p>5. Provide students access to multiple forms of media, information, and knowledge in all content areas (Why, p. 31; What p. 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide PL designed to support teachers in utilizing the Literacy Design Collaborative to support various genres of reading and improve Lexile levels (Why, p. 47, 52) • Provide technology to support literacy instruction in various formats • Research and purchase best technology devices to support literacy standards (Why, p. 52) • Purchase resources or materials needed to support using technology to enhance literacy (Why, p. 54) 	Summer, 2015	Local Funds Title I SRCLG PL Funds	Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations Technology Plans
<p>6. Create a reading support class (What, p. 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement a reading support class that provides explicit instructional strategies for student literacy achievement (What, p. 10) • Review, design, and/or purchase literacy curriculum that provides proven instructional strategies to support reading and writing (What, p. 9) • Acquire a consultant to provide PL for appropriate instructional reading strategies for middle grade students 	Fall, 2015	QBE/Local funds SRCLG Title I	Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations Benchmark Reports
<p>7. Strengthen implementation of CCGPS (What, p. 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide PL in teaching literacy across content areas (Why, p. 141) • Utilize curriculum models that support literacy integration in all content areas • Incorporate technology into instruction to support CCGPS • Provide PL in the use of technology that supports literacy • Purchase technology materials and resources to support initiatives • Purchase content-related informational texts in a variety of formats • Provide PL in effectively utilizing text at various levels of text complexity 	Fall, 2014 On-going	PL Funds Local Funds SRCLG Title I	Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations Benchmark Reports Technology Plans

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Evidence of Research-Based Practice:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Adolescents’ interests in the Internet, hypermedia, and various interactive communication technologies (e.g., chat rooms where people can take on various identities unbeknown to others) suggest the need to teach youth to read with a critical eye toward how writers, illustrators, and the like represent people and their ideas—in short, how individuals who create texts make those texts work.” (Why, p. 52) 			
Goal 3: Students will receive effective literacy instruction, in all content classes, from well-trained teachers using research-based strategies and methods of delivery throughout the Response to Intervention process (Why, p. 123)			
Current Practices: Current grade-level RTI teams (What, p. 9), common assessments (What, p. 8), use of benchmark/universal screening measures (What, p. 8-9), collaborative annual review of models of instruction (What, p. 5).			
Objectives	Timeline	Funding Source	Measure of Effectiveness
1. Provide intervention strategies to all students, at all levels, in all classes (How, p. 29)	Ongoing	Title I SRCLG	Benchmark Reports Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations
2. Purchase resource materials necessary to implement effective interventions	Fall, 2015	Title I SRCLG	Technology Plan Purchase Order
3. Provide professional development on the implementation of purchased resources (What, p. 9, 11)	Fall, 2014 ongoing	PL Funds SRCLG	Instructional Technology Specialist Plans Meeting minutes/Sign-in Sheets
4. Monitor Tier 2/3 interventions frequently to ensure they occur regularly and with fidelity (Why, p. 126-128)	Fall, 2014 Ongoing	N/A	RTI review documentation
5. Provide PL in specific RTI interventions, data, and progress monitoring (Why, p. 122-124)	Ongoing	PL funds SRCLG	Meeting Minutes/Sign-in Sheets
6. Provide technology resources to support student motivation and engagement (Why, p. 51)	Fall, 2014 Ongoing	Title I Local Funds	Technology Plan
Evidence of Research-Based Practice:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Intervention strategies are systematic compilations or well-researched, evidence-based specific instructional techniques.” (Why, p. 123-124) 			
Goal 4: Professional development will be provided to all instructional staff to support areas identified in the literacy needs assessment			
Current Practices: walkthroughs and observations (What, p. 5), collaborative planning (What, p. 6), Academic Coach support (What, p. 6-8), common writing rubrics and exemplars (What, p. 7).			
Objectives	Timeline	Funding Source	Measure of Effectiveness
1. Provide teacher training in explicit reading/writing literacy standards (What, p. 6)	Summer, 2014 On-going	Title I SRCLG	Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations

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		Local Funds	Meeting Minutes/Sign-in sheets
<p>2. Plan and provide PL on direct, explicit strategies to build students' vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills (Why, p. 143) (What, p. 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboratively develop an instructional plan that supports student acquisition of academic vocabulary, increases reading comprehension, and improves writing technique 	<p>Summer, 2015 On-going</p>	<p>PL funds SRCLG</p>	<p>Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations Meeting Minutes/Sign-In Sheets Instructional Plans</p>
<p>3. Develop standardized protocols for the collection of data to determine students' literacy competence in content areas through the RTI process (Why, p. 104)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop standard protocols for analyzing student data Use technology to support the disaggregation of data Provide PL in the use of data as progress monitoring and its impact on teaching and learning (interventions) 	<p>Fall, 2014 On-going</p>	<p>Local Funds</p>	<p>Benchmark Reports RTI Review Documentation Technology Plan</p>
<p>4. Provide PL in research-based intervention strategies (Why, p. 124)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Release days, stipends, and payment of substitutes Teacher attendance at conferences and/or seminars of related content 	<p>Fall, 2014 On-going</p>	<p>PL Funds SRCLG</p>	<p>Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations Meeting Minutes/Sign-in Sheets</p>
<p>5. Provide PL in technology that supports literacy instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a plan that describes how technology will be used to enhance literacy and writing instruction (Why, p. 52) Prepare a protocol detailing how technology will be used for production, publishing, and communication across content areas (Why, p. 51; What, p. 11) 	<p>January, 2015</p>	<p>PL Funds SRCLG</p>	<p>Lesson Plans Walkthroughs/Observations Meeting Minutes/Sign-in Sheets</p>
<p>Evidence of Research-Based Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The national literacy landscape reflects the need for the education communities to develop and implement a comprehensive literacy program." (Why, p. 27) 			

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Response to Intervention Model

Leveled Instructional Tier	Data Collection is frequent and on-going to measure student improvement.	Instructional Strategies
<p>Tier 1 Standards-based instruction; classroom learning (Why, p. 126)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCGPS Standards-based instruction • Universal screening • Differentiation of instruction
<p>Tier 2 Needs-Based Learning and targeted interventions (Why, p. 126)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic testing to identify student weaknesses • Small group setting based on specific student need • Progress monitoring • Modification of interventions
<p>Tier 3 Intensified, targeted research-based interventions (Why, p. 128)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased frequency and intensity of intervention • Increased progress monitoring • Intensive monitoring and adjustment of specific interventions
<p>Tier 4 Specialized programs and instructional delivery models (Why, p. 128)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific individualized learning plan • Specialized programs, methodologies, and instructional deliveries • Intensive monitoring of instructional goals

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Sample Schedule

8:10 – 8:30: Math and ELA Focus Groups		
6 th	7 th	8 th
8:35-10:05 (45 min segments) Connections 1/2 Math/ELA Connections	8:30-9:40 (70 min) ELA/Literature	8:35-9:40 (70 min) ELA/Literature
10:10-11:20 (70 min) ELA/Literature	9:40-10:50 (70 min) Math	9:40-10:10 (30 min) – split Math
11:20-11:55 (35 min) - split Math	10:50-11:15 (25 min) - split Science	10:15-11:45 (45 min segments) Connections 1/2 Math/ELA Connections
11:55-12:25 (30 min) Lunch	11:15-11:45 (30 min) Lunch	11:50-12:30 (40 min) Math – total 70 min
12:25-1:05 (40 min) Math –total 75 min	11:45-12:35 (50 min) Science – total 75 min	12:30-1:00 (30 min) Lunch
1:05-2:15 (70 min) Science	12:40-2:10 (45 min segments) Connections 1/2 Math/ELA Connections	1:00-2:10 (70 min) Science
2:15-3:25 (70 min) Social Studies	2:10-3:25 (70 min) Social Studies	2:10-3:25 (75 min) Social Studies

*Student class schedules rotate. Morning and afternoon tutoring are available before/after school.

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Current Assessment Protocol

Assessment Type/Purpose	Who's Responsible	When Administered	Purpose
Online Assessment System Benchmarks	All content area teachers	August, October, January, March	Formative
AIMSWEB (R-CBM and Maze)-Screening, Progress Monitoring and Outcome	Reading/Language Arts Team Teachers and School Wide Assessment Team (SWAT)	Fall, Winter, Spring	Universal Screener
AIMSWEB (M-CAP and M-COMP)-Screening, Progress Monitoring and Outcome	Mathematics Team Teachers and School Wide Assessment Team (SWAT)	Fall, Winter, Spring	Universal Screener
Learning Targets Assessments-Progress Monitoring	All content area teachers	Learning Targets assessments given every nine weeks	Formative
Georgia Milestone (Reading, ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies)	Teachers and Administrators	Main administration in Spring	Criterion-Referenced Achievement
Study Island-Progress Monitoring assessment	All content area teachers	Different concepts are administered weekly to monitor progress of concepts learned in the classroom	Formative
ACCESS for ELs	ESOL Teacher	Screener, Diagnostic	1 time per year
Georgia Alternate Assessment	Special Education Teachers	Achievement	Reporting at Checkpoints and main report one time per year

Comparison of Current Assessment Protocol with SRCL Assessment Plan

Currently, PCSD requires the administration of AIMSweb three times per year in grades 1-8 for benchmarking and universal screening. Progress monitoring probes as administered weekly based on tiered interventions in reading and mathematics. While professional learning has been in place for this initiative since 2013, the district is still in the early stages of consistency. Results of the CRCT are used to determine support groups at the beginning of each year and to populate Math Connect classes for remediation. Scholastic Reading Inventory is not being used.

Implementation of New Assessments/Discontinuation of Current Assessments:

As required by the grant, Scholastic Reading Inventory will be used three times per year for benchmarking as designated in the grant assessment plan. State test will continue as mandated. Progress monitoring will be implemented with fidelity through Scholastic Reading Inventory to maintain consistency with the RTI model of interventions. AIMSweb will be maintained until it is determined that it is unnecessary for the purposes of universal screening and progress monitoring.

Professional Learning Needs for New Assessments:

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Teachers and instructional staff will need specific training on the use and administration of Scholastic Reading Inventory. Currently, benchmarking is done through a SWAT team approach of selected individuals. This SWAT team will be trained on SRI through a full day of on-site support. Each team will return to the school and redeliver all information to the schools. Training will be provided related to progress monitoring tools, reports, and the effective use of all data and data tools.

Ongoing training will occur for all new teachers and those needing review in order to maintain fidelity to the administration process. Professional learning will address differentiation, tiered instructions, data and progress monitoring.

Actual administration of the assessments will be administered by the SWAT team according to the district testing calendar for benchmarking and achievement testing. Progress monitoring will be managed by classroom teachers and academic coaches according to the intervention schedule developed during RTI meetings.

Communication of Data of Parents and Stakeholders:

Student data will be presented to parents and stakeholders in a variety of ways.

- Report cards and progress reports
- Parent Portal (Infinite Campus Student Information System)
- Title Parent Meetings
- PTO Meetings
- School Advisory Council
- Literacy Team Meetings
- Leadership Team Meetings
- School Board Meetings
- School Website and social media outlets
- Parent/Teacher Conferences and RTI meetings

The Use of Data to Develop Instructional Strategies/Determine Materials and Need:

The use of data has a strong research base in establishing student needs, teacher instructional strategies, and program evaluation. “The principle assessment challenge that we face in schools today is to ensure that sound assessment practices permeate every classroom—that assessments are used to benefit pupils...this challenge has remained unmet for decades, and the time has come to conquer this final assessment frontier: the effective use of formative assessment to support learning.” (Why, p. 95) In doing so, the effective use of formative assessment must be established consistently and with fidelity as well as ultimately evaluate student achievement and performance.

The results of student assessment data will be used for the following purposes: (Why, p. 96)

- Identify students’ strengths and weaknesses in order to establish appropriate tiered instruction
- Inform progress through the intervention process
- Establish learning goals for students based on the CCGPS
- Match instruction to learning through effective instructional design supporting literacy performance standards
- Evaluate effectiveness of the instruction in meeting the goals for the students
- Inform students and parents of learning targets and goals

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- Evaluate effectiveness of Tier 1, 2, 3, 4 instruction and standards-based learning
- Determine strengths and weaknesses in literacy skills and match programs to specific needs
- Identify areas of need for professional learning, mentoring, and coaching opportunities

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

PCMS has some resources and materials in place to support the school's literacy efforts. Although there are still some resources that are necessary to accomplish our plan below is a list of our current and proposed support.

1. A list of resources needed to implement the literacy plan including student engagement

- Literary and information texts on various levels for classrooms and media center
- Content-based texts on various levels and aligned to units of study
- Research-based literacy instructional materials
- Online informational and literary texts to support content area standards
- Administration of diagnostic screeners for all students in reading comprehension and writing proficiency
- Technology to support disciplinary literacy
- Specific science and social studies materials, resources, and texts to support content reading and student interest
- 21st Century Technology devices
- Expand text and electronic bookshelf focused on student interest
- Audio book resources and headphones for students and teacher access
- Expand access digital audio book players for student checkout
- Novels on an advanced reading levels focused on student interest and engagement
- Intervention materials and site licenses
- Site licenses for online assessment tools
- Travel expenses for conferences
- Scholastic Reading Inventory
- Intervention related professional learning
- Training for academic coaches as intervention specialists
- Family involvement activities
- Consumable materials
- Classroom computers

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- Networkable printers
- Interactive tablets and boards
- Hand-held technology devices

2. A generic list of activities that support literacy intervention programs

- Additional time built into schedule to allow for interventions
- Structured Tutoring (Instructional Extension)
- Research-based scientifically evidenced intervention materials
- Structured reward program for meeting/exceeding literacy goals
- Protected literacy instructional time
- Flexible needs-based groupings
- Response to Intervention protocols
- Title I parent involvement coordinators
- Special Education co-teaching training
- Diagnostic tools for foundational reading skills
- Training in teaching academic vocabulary

3. A generic list of shared resources

- Research-based scientifically evidenced intervention materials for disciplinary literacy
- Pacing guides
- Instructional units and frameworks
- Teacher/student computers
- Student response systems
- Mobile classroom set of student tablets
- Teacher laptops and iPads
- Media Center resources
- Computer labs
- LCD projectors
- Novel sets

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- 2 Copy machines

4. A generic list of library resources or a description of the library as equipped

- 14,679 books available for student and teacher check-out
- 8 computers available for student use
- A mounted projector for group instruction
- Access to a digital library with 54 electronic books
- 1,539 outdated educational VHSs for teacher use
- 19 educational DVDs for teacher use
- 17 audio books for teacher use
- 2 educational magazine subscriptions for student and teacher use
- Parent resources
- Purchased apps for iPads
- Reference materials
- Online Catalogue with Lexile

5. A generic list of activities that support classroom practices

- Daily collaborative grade-level planning time
- Uninterrupted literacy instruction
- Pacing guide and curriculum map aligned with CCGPS
- Intervention programs
- Differentiated instruction
- Collaborative lesson plans
- Structured Tutoring (Instructional Extension)
- Student access to individual reading material based on the individuals reading level
- Formative Instructional Practice training
- Academic Coach availability for training, assessment, RTI, interventions, and instructional strategies

6. A generic list of additional strategies needed to support student success

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- Strategies for increasing student engagement and motivation
- Professional learning in the following areas:
 - Evidence-based content literacy instructional best practices
 - implementation of interventions with fidelity
 - Webb’s Depth of Knowledge
 - Understanding Lexiles
 - Literacy across all content areas
 - Best practices for writing instruction across content areas
 - Effective use of assessment
 - Understanding data and its uses for planning and implementing interventions and progress monitoring
 - Review of the RTI protocol and progress monitoring
- Strategic instruction model and training for content enhancement strategies in content areas
- Multiple means of accessing diverse media to obtain and present informational text
- Student access to individual online reading material based on the individual’s reading level
- Protected instructional time for Social Studies and Science

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

- At least four desktop computers and printer per classroom
- Mounted projectors in all academic classrooms
- A research-based, computer-adaptive reading and math assessment program for students that measures reading comprehension on the Lexile Framework and math computation and application
- Textbooks in all content areas
- Printers

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Resources, Strategies, and Materials	SCRL Funding:	Other Sources of Funding:
Professional Development	Literacy-specific – consultant fees, training materials, travel expenses, stipends, conference fees, substitutes	Title 1; Local funds
Electronic and print materials	Lexile-Leveled classroom materials; Curriculum; technology devices, printers, hardware/software	Title 1; ELOST; SPLOST; Local funds
Instructional Technology	Teacher resources for assessment and literacy instruction; Scholastic Reading Inventory; professional learning, remediation and acceleration materials, informational text, supplies, classroom/media center informational and literary electronic and print text	Title 1; SPLOST; Technology ELOST Funds
Student Technology	Handheld devices, tablets, laptops, Electronic Library, Audio Library	Title 1; Technology SPLOST funds
Community Outreach	Communication devices that motivate families and community members to support literacy in the school and community; Striving Reader updates to parents/families via website, school newsletter, newspaper, Blackboard, social media, and family Literacy Nights and Cultural Arts Fairs that support literacy learning	Title 1; QBE
Extended Day/Year Activities	Personnel, supplies, transportation	Local funds, QBE
Consumable Materials	Notebooks, paper, toner, markers, poster boards, dividers, composition books, etc.	Local funds, QBE

Proposed Technology Purchases:

Technology purchases through the grant are intended to support the following goals:

- ✓ Goal 1: To establish an infrastructure for on-going formative and summative assessments to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction (Building Block 3, A)

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The collection, management, and analysis of data through the RTI process and supported by technology will substantially support efforts to monitor and document intervention and instructional strategies of learners. Under tools such as Scholastic Reading Inventory and AIMSweb, teachers are better able to track and monitor progress as well as drive instruction toward positive student growth.

- ✓ Goal 2: Develop and maintain interest and engagement as students progress through school (Building Block 4, B)

Research has shown that adolescent readers show positive growth in literacy when technology is used as a tool for and a topic of literacy instruction and real-world application. This instruction must include student access to a variety of reading materials both print and online as well as include resources that given them opportunities to discuss what they are reading through online media, the Internet, and other text sources.

Technology is an essential tool for the adolescent learner. Its use strongly supports the goals outlined and increases students' motivation to learn and read when using technology.

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Professional Learning Strategies

PCMS teachers and staff currently participate in a variety of professional learning (PL) opportunities. **Table 1.1** indicates the results of a teacher survey based on the professional development. Teachers were surveyed asking: “When can your professional learning needs be best met?”

Table 1.1

During planning times	1
After school	1
In-Service Days	7
Pre-planning	1
Post-planning	6
Other (video, online)	5

Based on the survey, the majority of teachers feel that instructional training can be met on in-service days, online, with video and post-planning times. It was also suggested by a few that other planning time available is an option.

Table 1.2 is the professional calendar for the current school year 2014-2015. Notice that PCMS has/will receive ongoing professional development in School Improvement, Formative Instructional Practices, Learning Targets, Collecting and Documenting Evidence of Student Learning, Analyzing Data and Providing Effective Feedback, Student Ownership of Learning: Peer Feedback, Self-Assessment, BAASE Training, AIMSweb, RTI, Infinite Campus, Writing Strategies Training, DOK Training, Social Studies Training, Mathematics Training, Special Education Training, Differentiation, Technology Training, PBIS Training, SLO Training, and ethics.

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Effectiveness of PL is measured through administrative walkthroughs and observations, feedback surveys, RTI documentation, and student achievement measures.

June 2014			
June 16, 2014	School Improvement (SIP) Planning	Central Office	School Improvement Teams
June 17, 2014	SIP	Central Office	School Improvement Teams
June 18, 2014	SLO Training/Planning	Central Office	100% of Connection Teachers
June 19, 2014	SLO Training/Planning	Central Office	100% of Connection Teachers
June 20, 2014	SLO Training/Planning	Central Office	100% of Connection Teachers
July, 2014			
July 2014	PBIS Training	Central Office	4 Teachers, 1 Counselor, and 1 Administrator
August – November 2014			
August - November 2014	BAASE Training	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
August - November 2014	AIMSweb Training	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
August, 2014			
August 2014	Legal Issues Orientation	Pickens High School	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
August 2014	PBIS Training	Central Office	4 Teachers, 1 Counselor, and 1 Administrator
September 2014			
September 2014	Intro to Formative Instructional Practices	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
September 2014	Differentiation	Regional Educational Service Agency	Academic Coach
September 2014	Depth of Knowledge (DOK)	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
October 2014			
October 2014	Clear Learning Targets	PCMS	100% school

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			administration and 100% certified faculty
October 2014	Writing Strategies Training (ACE, Acrostic)	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty and paraprofessionals
October 2014	Government Training	State Capitol	5 Social Studies Teachers
October 2014	Technology Training	Regional Educational Service Agency	Academic Coach
October 2014	DOK	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
November 2014			
November 2014	Math Training	Rock Eagle	2 faculty members
November 2014	DOK	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
November 2014	Writing Strategies Training (RACE, Quad Cluster)	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty and paraprofessionals
November 2014	Technology (STEM) Training	Atlanta	1 faculty member
January 2015			
January 2015	Collecting and Documenting Evidence of Student Learning	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
January 2015	DOK	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
February 2015			
February 2015	Analyzing Data and Providing Effective Feedback	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
February 2015	DOK	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
March 2015			
March 2014	Student Ownership of Learning: Peer Feedback, Self-Assessment	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty
March 2015	DOK	PCMS	100% school administration and 100% certified faculty

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The specific professional learning needs of PCMS were identified on the basis of the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment. Every proposed professional learning need is directly aligned to the PCMS literacy plan goals and objectives that were detailed in the “Project Plan, Procedures, Goals, Objectives, and Support” section of the SLCR grant application and refers to the specific Building Block of the plan. The professional learning plan is outlined below:

Strategy	Reference in Literacy Plan	Measures of Effectiveness
Participate in PL to ensure school-wide understanding of assessment data	Building Blocks 3, 4, 5, 6 Goal 2: Objectives 4 Goal 3: Objectives 1, 5 Goal 4: Objective 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-throughs/observations • RTI documentation • Formative/Summative Data
Participate in PL in delivering explicit, direct literacy instruction across-the-content areas	Building Block 4 Goal 2: Objective 1, 2 Goal 4: Objective 1, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-through/observations • CCGPS Units • Formative/Summative Data
Participate in a systematic approach to teaching writing instruction across-the-curriculum	Building Blocks 2, 4, 6 Goal 2: Objective 2, 3 Goal 4: Objectives 1, 2, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-through/observations • CCGPS Units • Formative/Summative Data
Participate in professional training in understanding RTI tiered instructional strategies that support literacy and writing	Building Block 5 Goal 2: Objective 4 Goal 3: Objectives 1, 4, 5 Goal 4: Objectives 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-through/observations • CCGPS Units • Formative/Summative Data
Participate in ongoing PL in the delivery of the CCGPS	Building Block 1, 2, 4, 5 Goal 2: Objective 1, 3, 7 Goal 4: Objectives 1, 2, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-through/observations • CCGPS Units

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative/Summative Data
PL in incorporating informational and literary texts across-the-content areas	Building Block 4, 6 Goal 4: Objectives 1, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-through/observations • CCGPS Units • Formative/Summative Data
Selecting text complexity appropriate to the grade levels as required by CCGPS	Building Block 1, 2, 4, 5 Goal 2: Objective 5, 7 Goal 4: Objectives 1, 2, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-through/observations • CCGPS Units • Formative/Summative Data
Participate in instructional technology uses that promote literacy and writing with student devices	Building Block 4 Goal 2: Objective 5, 7 Goal 3: Objective 2 Goal 4: Objective 3, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC documentation/minutes • Walk-through/observations • CCGPS Units • Formative/Summative Data

Teachers at PCMS are highly motivated individuals who require more professional training that will positively affect student achievement. Collectively, the teachers desire to integrate literacy and writing into the content but most lack proper professional guidance in the teaching of reading and writing in order to integrate it properly. With professional development, additional teaching resources and student materials to support the process, integration of reading and writing across the curriculum will be accomplished.

The effectiveness of professional learning is linked to higher student achievement and will be measured by formative and summative assessments throughout the process as detailed in the “Project Plan, Procedures, Goals, Objectives, and Support” section of the SRLC grant

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application (“The Why,” pp. 140-141). Based on the collection and analysis of the data measures noted in the Professional Learning Plan, we will evaluate the effectiveness of the program and refine our policies accordingly.

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Sustainability Plan

As a result of the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment, we found that teachers collectively agree that improving content literacy in all grade levels will lead to higher student achievement and improve readiness for college and career (Why, p. 26-27). It is essential that we transform PCMS students into “reading to learn” students instead of “learning to read” students. For sure, with the proceeds of the SRCL grant, our mission to “prepare our students for high school graduation and future success by inspiring them to become responsible learners and productive members of society” will be brought to fruition.

Table 1.1 shows the coordination of funding of the literacy plan with SRCL funding and other sources of funding, which will ensure the sustainability of the plan.

<p>Extending the Assessment Protocol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review expectations of the SRCL Grant annually with all staff • Develop and implement a teacher mentor program to assist new staff across all content areas • Maintain a consistent professional learning calendar to train all administrators, academic coaches, teachers and paraprofessionals to ensure on-going implementation of all initiatives with fidelity • Provide updates to member of the Board of Education regarding the need for literacy initiatives • Utilize local, state, and federal funds to continue formative and summative assessments
<p>Developing Community Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include literacy goals and plans into parent involvement plans • Continue to develop relationships with community partners to solicit potential resources for initiatives
<p>Sustainability Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation by all Academic Coaches in all trainings to develop a train-the-trainer model of on-going in-house professional learning • Development and implementation of school schedules to support collaborative planning time and student data review • Continuation of professional learning communities to support

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	<p>discussion of best practices, differentiation, analysis of data, and standard-based instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule monthly district literacy team meetings to monitor fidelity of initiatives, analysis of assessment data, and grant implementation. • Continue to encourage teacher participation in certification endorsement programs, e.g., gifted, ESOL, Reading, Science, Social Studies, and Math. • Extension of the assessment protocols through purchases meeting requirements of Title I needs and budgets. • Develop a technology resource review cycle to evaluate licenses, maintenance agreements, and hardware. • Administer a needs assessment annually to review and revise specific concerns
<p>Replacing Print Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All print materials possible will have a library binding for protection and durability • Funds from other grant sources and local funding will replace print materials as needed following the grant period • Books will be housed and catalogued in order to provide access to inventory and review replacement cycles
<p>Training New Teachers; Professional Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend new teacher orientation session during pre-planning each year to introduce programs, curriculum, instructional design, and literacy initiatives. (What, p. 12) • Provide continuous professional learning through mentor teacher program • Designate professional learning days in the school calendar • Utilize Comprehensive Reading Solutions website for on-going training in professional learning communities
<p>Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and upgrade current infrastructure through the goals of

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	<p>the Technology Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and maintain a review process for licenses, software, hardware, and warranties.• Create a position on the Literacy Leadership Team for the Instructional Support Specialist• Coordinate all technology purchases through the Director of Technology to prevent duplication and support appropriate pricing.
Lessons Learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Literacy Plan and Project Plan goals and objectives during monthly School Improvement Team Meetings.• In an effort to create professional learning communities within PCMS, the faculty and staff continuously review the student achievement data and school improvement plan each year to create a comprehensive professional learning plan.• Monitor teacher participation through classroom walkthroughs and observations• Use data obtained throughout the grant to update/strengthen the literacy plan.

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Budget Summary

As a result of a comprehensive review of literacy needs, PCMS has identified specific areas of need, utilized available data, and established the Literacy Plan and Project Plan for implementation under funding from The Striving Readers Literacy Grant.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment: The foundations of the literacy plan must include adequate and robust materials to support dynamic instruction. Materials and resources are necessary to support the effective use of data to inform instruction. Teachers, academic coaches, and other instructional personnel will need professional learning and support to maintain fidelity to the initiatives.

- Literary and information texts on various levels for classrooms and media center
- Content-based texts on various levels and aligned to units of study
- Research-based literacy instructional materials
- Online informational and literary texts to support content area standards
- Specific science and social studies materials, resources, and texts to support content reading and student interest
- Expand text and electronic bookshelf focused on student interest
- Audio book resources and headphones for students and teacher access
- Expand access digital audio book players for student checkout
- Novels on an advanced reading levels focused on student interest and engagement
- Family/Parent involvement activities
- Consumable materials
- Scholastic Reading Inventory

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- Administration of diagnostic screeners for all students in reading comprehension and writing proficiency
- Intervention materials and site licenses
- Site licenses for online assessment tools
- Intervention strategy related professional learning

Professional Learning: Professional learning will be key to the success of the Literacy Plan and student growth in literacy. Staff members including teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, media specialists, and academic coaches must have adequate and appropriate training before initiatives are implemented. Funding will support on-going training to maintain fidelity to the initiatives and support new staff.

- Training for academic coaches as intervention specialists
- Travel expenses for conferences
- Consultant fees
- Instructional training materials
- Funding for substitutes
- Funding for stipends

Technology: The use of technology is intended to promote motivation and engagement during and through the learning process.

- Technology to support disciplinary literacy
- 21st Century Technology devices
- Classroom computers
- Networkable printers

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- Interactive tablets and boards
- Hand-held technology devices