

School Profile

Created Thursday, December 06, 2012

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School Information

School Information District Name:	Fulton County Schools
School Information School or Center Name:	Oak Knoll Elementary School

Level of School

Elementary (K-5 or Primary, Elementary)

Principal

Principal Name:	Angela Parham
Principal Position:	Principal
Principal Phone:	4046698060
Principal Email:	parhamah@fultonschools.org

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

School contact information Name:	Angela Parham
School contact information Position:	Principal
School contact information Phone:	4046698060
School contact information Email:	parhamah@fultonschools.org

Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

PK-5

Number of Teachers in School

41

FTE Enrollment

491

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: Larry Wallace

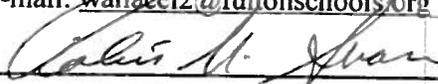
Position/Title of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: Program Administrator

Address: Fulton County Schools - 2370 Union Road SW

City: Atlanta Zip: 30331

Telephone: (404) 346-4376 Fax: ()

E-mail: wallace12@fultonschools.org


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

Dr. Robert M. Avossa

Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head (District Superintendent or Executive Director)

12-11-12
Date (required)

Georgia Department of Education Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy

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

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

i. Conflicts of Interest

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

a. Organizational Conflicts of Interest.

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

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

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.

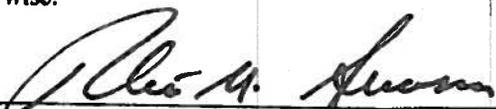
II. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest after Agreement Execution**

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)

Robert M. Avossa - Superintendent
Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head and Position Title

12-11-12
Date



Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

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

12/8/12
Date

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

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

Date (if applicable)

Preliminary Application Requirements

Created Monday, December 10, 2012

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Click on the [General Application Information](#) link below to assist you in the grant development process.

[General Application Information](#)

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

-
- Yes
-

Click on the [SRCL Rubric](#) link below to assist you in the grant development process.

[SRCL Grant Rubric](#)

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

-
- Yes
-

Click on the [Assessment Chart](#) link below to assist you in the grant development process.

[Assessment Chart](#)

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

-
- Yes
-

Assessments

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

-
- I Agree
-

Unallowable Expenditures

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

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

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

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

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

Advertisements, Promotional or Marketing Items

Decorative Items

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

Land acquisition

Capital Improvements, Permanent Renovations

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

Dues to organizations, federations or societies for personal benefits

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

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

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

• I Agree

Grant Assurances

Created Monday, December 10, 2012
Updated Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Page 1

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

Page 2

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

Page 3

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
-

Fulton County Board of Education
Audit Findings
Fiscal Years 2007 - 2011

2007

07-1. Segregation of Duties - Repeat

Condition/Cause: The size of the School System's accounting and administrative staff and the lack of proper delegation of duties and training precluded certain internal controls, that would be preferred if the office staff were large enough, to provide optimum segregation of duties. Substantial duties relative to the receipt and disbursement processes, computer controls, payroll, and general ledger functions are handled by one individual.

07-2. - Proper Recording of Property Taxes Receivable and Deferred Revenue

Condition/Cause: Property taxes receivable and deferred revenue were underestimated by management as of June 30, 2007.

07-3. - Proper Recording of On-Behalf Payments in the General Fund

Condition/Cause: Management did not recognize revenue and expenditures in the General Fund for health insurance paid on the School System's behalf by the Georgia Department of Education to the Department of Community Health for health insurance of non-certified personnel.

07-4. - Error in Posting Year-end Donated USDA Commodities in the School Nutrition Special Revenue Fund

Condition/Cause: Management made an error in posting donated USDA commodities as revenue and inventory at year-end.

07-5. - Cash Management - Title I, Part A (CFDA 84.010) - Repeat

Condition and Context: The School System is not properly segregating duties in regards to draw down requests in that the draw down requests tested for the year ended June 30, 2007 were prepared and authorized by the same person.

07-6. - Cash Management - Title II, Part A, Improving Teacher Quality (CFDA 84.367)

Condition and Context: The School System is not properly segregating duties in regards to draw down requests in that the draw down requests tested for the year ended June 30, 2007 were prepared and authorized by the same person.

07-7. - Error in Student Benefit Determination - Child Nutrition Cluster (CFDA 10.555) - Repeat

Condition and Context: For the year ended June 30, 2007, we noted one instance in which an ineligible student received benefits under the Child nutrition Cluster program.

2008

2008-1. Restatement of Beginning Fund Balance/Net Assets -Prior Period Adjustments

Finding: Internal controls were not sufficient to prevent material misstatements in the reporting of the School System's financial statements.

2008-2. Timely Recording of Intergovernmental Receivable and Deferred Revenue – 2002 SPLOST Capital Projects Fund and 1997 SPLOST Capital Projects Fund

Finding: The School System's Program Management Director responsible for State Capital Outlay projects and management of the School System did not timely request State reimbursements for capital construction as of June 30, 2007

2008-3. Proper Reconciliations of Cash Accounts – General Fund and Pension Fund

Finding: Management of the School System did not accurately or timely reconcile the School System's bank account in the General Fund and the Pension Fund's bank account at year-end.

2008-4. Eligibility - Title I, School-wide Programs (CFDA 84.010)

Finding: As noted in our testing of the schools in the district operation school-wide programs, one (1) of the thirty-three (33) schools tested did not have all of the required elements to operate a school-wide program.

2008-5. Error in Student Benefit Determination – Child Nutrition Cluster (CFDA 10.553 and 10.555)

Finding: An ineligible student received benefits under the grant and reimbursement for the student's meal was claimed under the grant. Therefore, unallowable costs were charged to the grant. In one (1) instance, the necessary changes were not made to the system when verification documents provided by the student did not support the initial benefit determination.

2009

2009-1. Restatement of Beginning Fund Balance/Net Assets -Prior Period Adjustments

Condition: Internal controls were not sufficient to prevent material misstatements in the reporting of the School System's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2009.

2010

NO FINDINGS

2011

2011-01 Timely Recording of Intergovernmental Receivable and Deferred Revenue - 2007

SPLOST Capital Projects Fund

Condition: As of June 30, 2011, documentation from the State regarding approved proceeds from the 20 10 application to support the recording of State reimbursements for capital construction projects was not recorded by the School System.

2011-02 Collateralization of Deposits

Condition: As of June 30, 2011, deposits of the School System held at a financial institution totaling approximately \$2.7 million were not fully collateralized or insured in accordance with the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) Section 45-8-12(c). The pledged collateral for these accounts was less than the required amount by approximately \$2 million.

2011—03. Allowable Costs/Activities - U.S. Department of Education. IDEA, (CFPA #s 84.027, 84.173, 84.391, and 8.4.392)

Condition and Context: For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011, the School System did not properly maintain semi-annual certification of time and effort sheets for teachers and other staff being paid out of Special Education funds during the period of August - December 2010. Eleven (11) out of 120 items sampled during our testing did not have semi-annual certification of time and efforts sheets for the fall semester of the school year. The errors occurred during the procedure to send the forms to each of the schools as several forms were improperly not sent. The processes, however, were updated during the spring semester and our testing disclosed no instances of noncompliance for that period of the fiscal year.

DISTRICT NARRATIVE

Brief History and Demographics: Fulton County Schools (FCS) is a large district both in terms of enrollment – more than 93,000 students – and in terms of geographic size – 78 miles from north to south. FCS has two distinct regions that are physically bisected by the City of Atlanta’s school system, the Atlanta Public Schools. The district employs approximately 10,500 staff, including more than 6,800 teachers and other certified personnel. During the 2012-2013 school year, FCS students are attending classes in 96 traditional schools and 6 start-up charter schools. FCS is a diverse district both in terms of demographic and socio-economic enrollment. Its racial composition is 42% Black, 33% White, 13% Hispanic, 9% Asian, and 3% Multi-Racial. More than 44% of FCS students receive free and/or reduced-priced meals. Many schools in the northern part of the district have less than 5% of their students eligible for free and/or reduced-priced lunches while many schools in the southern part of the district have over 95% of their students eligible. Ten percent of FCS students are classified in special education, and seven percent are classified as having limited English proficiency.

Current Priorities and Strategic Planning: As part of its strategic planning process, FCS examined environmental realities, student needs, and organizational opportunities and identified five major themes based on stakeholder feedback: Advancing Instruction, Enhancing People, Integrating Technology, Ensuring Effective Schools, and Managing Resources. Under each theme, FCS identified its current priorities and built a strategic plan for 2012-2017. The plan focuses on enabling students to graduate college and to be career ready. To hold FCS accountable for the strategic plan, the district has committed to three long-term outcomes:

Graduation Rate: 90% of Fulton students will graduate on time; **College Readiness:** 85% of

Fulton’s seniors will be eligible for admission to a University System of Georgia college or university; **Work Readiness:** 100% of FCS graduates will be work-ready certified.

Current Management Structure: FCS is governed by an elected seven-member Board of Education that selects the Superintendent of Schools. Within the school system, the Superintendent – Dr. Robert Avossa - oversees the operations of six divisions: Academics, Information Technology, Operations, Financial Services, Human Resources, and Strategy & Innovation. In addition, FCS is divided into four “learning communities”: Northwest, Northeast, Central, and South. Organized geographically, the learning communities allow a decentralized approach to school management and provide schools the opportunity to work more closely together, aligning resources. Each is managed by an area superintendent and supported by an executive director.

On July 1, 2012, FCS became the largest charter system in the state of Georgia. Operating as a charter system is a game-changing opportunity for FCS to leverage more autonomy to implement innovative strategies, to increase student achievement, and to guide continual improvement. With state approval of the charter system model in hand, FCS has the legal authority to implement non-traditional instruction and curriculum options, as well as education reform ideas articulated by its stakeholders. The organizational framework by which FCS is implementing its charter system will devolve decision-making to the local school level, generating new opportunities for innovation and place-based strategies. Striving Reader schools will take advantage of the flexibility provided to the district through its charter system status to implement the more innovative aspects of their literacy plans.

Past Instructional Initiatives: FCS Teachers have access to model lesson plans written by district master teachers and the English/Language Arts Department staff. The model units

demonstrate a balanced approach to the teaching of standards. Instructional plans outline the standards addressed in each of the four nine-week units. Additionally, resources, strategies, and balanced assessments accompany each unit of study. A comprehensive scope and sequence outlines the standards and elements for each semester of the school year.

Literacy Curriculum: FCS is implementing the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) in K-12 English language arts and K-9 mathematics as well as literacy standards in grades 6-12 social studies, science, and technology curricula. The Common Core Standards infuse more rigor, complex texts, and informational reading for our students. FCS is adopting new Reading and English/Language Arts (ELA) materials for the next school year. FCS solicited extensive input from teachers, parents, students and administrators via surveys, feedback from a district oversight team, and a pilot of two vendor finalists. This process served not only the materials adoption but also established a basis on which to build our district's literacy plan. Balanced literacy is a K-5 literacy instructional approach that creates a gradual release of responsibility from the teacher to the student. FCS's balanced literacy approach will be used to ensure that each student will progress at his/her optimum pace and depth to maximize academic achievement. This approach will include:

- assessment based planning and student placement;
- modeled, shared, guided, and independent reading and writing;
- explicit skill instruction;
- use of authentic texts across content areas;
- integrated use of technology;
- authentic applications of learning.

Literacy Assessments: *Our* Striving Reader Cohort 1 schools use DIBELS Next and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) literacy assessments. Other schools use Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2) and Balanced Assessment System (BAS) reading assessments. Further, FCS uses benchmark assessments called Checkpoints. Checkpoints assessments use a pre and post-test formula and are aligned to the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), Georgia’s summative assessment that is administered in the spring. The 2013 and 2014 CRCT will be aligned to the CCGPS. The Partnership for the Assessment of College and Career Readiness (PARCC) assessment will become the summative assessment in April 2015. As FCS transitions to CCGPS and the administration of new summative assessments, FCS anticipates a temporary dip in scores. FCS schools administer a writing assessment every nine weeks that focuses on the studied genre. Schools create common assessments and assess formatively; therefore, a balanced assessment approach continues to be the assessment model for the district.

Need for a Striving Reader Project: *The* schools included in our district-wide submission for Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy Cohort II funding were strategically selected to demonstrate FCS’s commitment to literacy improvement from Pre-K to 12th Grade. By including our Pre-K program, 6 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 1 high school we demonstrate a clear need for literacy support that runs throughout an entire feeder pattern. All schools selected are within the South and Central Learning Communities, where additional literacy resources are of the greatest need.

On average, students in FCS perform better than students across the state. In 2011, a larger percentage of FCS students met or exceeded CRCT standards than students across the state—in every grade and every tested subject. Yet, these district averages mask the rather striking achievement gaps within the district. As with so many schools and districts across the

country, the high poverty schools in FCS tend to fall at the lower end of the performance spectrum. Schools with large groups of students with disabilities or English learners struggle to meet achievement standards. A survey conducted last year of administrators, teachers and parents highlights concerns with the district's literacy efforts and Reading and ELA curriculum and instruction. More than 53% of administrators responding do not believe the current Reading and ELA materials provided by the district address the needs of all components of literacy. More than 54% of parents do not believe their school offers adequate opportunities for parents to learn strategies to support their child's learning in the home. Clearly, the data point to a need for additional materials, professional development, parent outreach and supports to ensure quality literacy instruction in our schools. The Striving Reader grant will help FCS address these challenges.

District Management Plan and Key Personnel

The FCS management team has extensive experience working across departments and with external partners to achieve project goals and thus will implement the proposed project on time and within budget. The following individuals are qualified for their role and committed to improving literacy in targeted schools. The full time equivalent (FTE) for Fulton County Schools' staff to implement the grant is included in parentheses.

Dr. Robert Avossa – FCS Superintendent (0.025 FTE) – will be ultimately responsible for grant implementation. Dr. Avossa will keep the Fulton County Board of Education briefed on grant progress and results and will allocate the necessary resources to ensure fidelity of implementation.

Dr. Scott Muri – FCS Deputy Superintendent Instruction (0.05 FTE) will chair the Striving Reader Governing Board and provide strategic oversight for grant implementation. Dr. Muri reports directly to the Superintendent.

Amy Barger – FCS Assistant Superintendent Learning and Teaching (0.10 FTE) will be accountable for the Striving Reader grant and will supervise the Striving Reader Program Administrator to integrate proposed strategies and supports with other system processes to ensure alignment.

Dr. Donald Fennoy and Karen Cox – Area Superintendents (0.10 FTE) are the Area Superintendents for the South and Central Learning Communities. They will ensure vertical alignment of curriculum and professional learning across Striving Reader schools. In their capacity as members of the FCS Executive Leadership team, they will communicate best practices to schools across the district to support sustainability of Striving Reader strategies. The

Fulton County Schools - District Management Plan and Key Personnel

learning communities also have program specialists in each content and specialty area that provide support in all areas of instruction.

Larry Wallace – FCS Striving Reader Program Administrator (1.0 FTE) will coordinate the Striving Reader project and manage the grant budget. Mr. Wallace will serve as a bridge among the schools and the functional areas involved. Mr. Wallace has most recently served as Program Administrator for the district's \$4.2 million Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grant and the \$5.2 million Smaller Learning Communities grant. He has extensive experience managing complex projects, involving multiple partners, with significant reporting requirements.

All members of the Executive Leadership Team have read each individual school's plan and reviewed each application with both the system and school teams. In reviewing the applications, we looked for alignment of Striving Readers goals with the district's and school's strategic and Title I plans. After reviewing all of this information there is a clear understanding of each school's plan and support will be given to implement the plans. The alignment of the Striving Reader goals allows the Learning Communities to narrow the focus of their monthly meetings and provide targeted support to the schools.

When start-up funding is awarded in February, principals will meet with the Area Superintendent and Program Administrator to develop their performance plan and begin the Budgeting for Outcomes (BFO) process. The BFO ensures that the cost center and grant budgets are developed by priority and are comprised of new ideas, innovations, cooperation, and improvement. Once the performance plan and budget are completed they are submitted to the Superintendent, Board of Education, and Georgia Department of Education for approval. The performance plans, budgets and assessment data are reviewed monthly to ensure implementation and compliance with local, state and federal regulations. In January, budget services conduct an

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analysis by function, department, and commitment item. The midyear analysis and necessary adjustments are then presented to the Board of Education. Final reports will be completed by the Program Administrator and forwarded to the state in July.

EXPERIENCE OF THE APPLICANT

Fulton County Schools (FCS) has a strong track record of effectively implementing large, competitive grants at the federal, state, and private foundation level. The table below summarizes our grant initiatives.

Competitive Grant Title	Funded Amount
Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy Cohort I grant	\$4.5M
Innovation Fund grant	\$640,326
Smaller Learning Communities grant	\$5.2M
Readiness & Emergency Management for Schools grant	\$608,355
Teaching American History grant	\$989,801
Carol M. White Physical Education grant	\$1.5M
Mathematics and Science Partnership grant	\$440,356
Strategic Data Project grant	\$500,000

Capacity: As demonstrated through our history with successful implementation of multiple federal, state and private grants and internal initiatives, FCS staff and faculty have the capacity and expertise to successfully implement large, complex initiatives. FCS will implement the proposed Striving Reader project on time and within budget. The FCS management team has extensive experience working across departments and schools as well as with external partners to achieve project goals. Further, FCS has rigorous internal controls that ensure funds are properly used and achieve intended results. FCS provides grant management training on all policies and procedures to all staff prior to releasing grant funds. Programs with similar goals and purposes are coordinated to reduce waste and increase efficiency. FCS is committed to the Striving Reader project and values the need to provide high-quality literacy support to targeted schools. Dr. Robert Avossa, the superintendent, has made this initiative a district priority. Conducting needs assessments in the Cohort 2 schools has provided a solid foundation for FCS’s Striving Reader grant and has allowed district and school leaders to plan with the end in mind. That is, the district

and targeted schools have established long-term goals and incorporated sustainability considerations into their literacy plans.

Sustainability: FCS will sustain programming beyond the grant period by securing funding from a variety of sources. FCS general operating funds will be used to support literacy investments. Title II, Part A funds will help support professional development in literacy. Grant funding from local and national philanthropic organizations will be pursued to sustain the literacy interventions over time. Prospective funders who have a philanthropic focus on supporting literacy initiatives include: Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program, National Endowment for the Humanities, The Libri Foundation, The Braitmayer Foundation, The Malone Family Foundation, etc. The local business community will also be solicited for corporate contributions to support literacy interventions, e.g., Dollar General, Verizon, AT&T, Target, Wal-Mart, Sylvan Dell Publishing, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Barnes and Noble, ING, Sun Trust, etc.

Internally-funded Initiatives: FCS has developed and implemented numerous education programs designed to increase student achievement using general operating funds without the support of outside funding. These programs attend to the delivery of student-focused instruction, ongoing assessment, use of data, and continuous improvement. FCS's benchmark assessment program, known as Checkpoints, assesses student mastery of standards in a pre-test/post-test format each semester. Teachers and principals have easy access to Checkpoints data for formative instructional planning, as well as placement of students within the on-level, advanced or accelerated curriculum through an online Student Achievement Management System (SAMS). Teachers access SAMS to support instructional practices through pacing guides, units, lesson plans and instructional resources for all curricular areas and grade levels. The utilization of these

formative assessments and the analysis of student-specific data have enabled teachers to implement differentiated learning strategies to improve student achievement.

School Narrative

Oak Knoll Elementary School is located in East Point within South Fulton County, Georgia. The city of East Point has approximately 39,595 residents of Oak Knoll with the following racial breakdown: 12.36% Caucasian, 80.54% African American, 7.57% Hispanic, 0.04% American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.79% Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander 0.30% and 5.98% other. Oak Knoll's residents speak English and/or Spanish at home. As of 2010, 18.7% of the residents' income was considered below poverty level. Currently, the unemployment rate in the community is over 13.8%. Only 18% of East Point residents have a High School Diploma or equivalent degree; approximately 34% of the families have two parents in the home. Of the more than 4,000 crimes committed in East Point last year, 9% were considered violent crimes, and the other 91% were considered property crimes. Despite the population growth, the community continues to lack vital resources that support literacy education. Our community does not have a theaters or cultural arts programs. As a result of these statistics, our student body faces a plethora of literacy challenges.

Oak Knoll Elementary School was established in 1963. It currently has an enrollment of 477 students, grades Pre-K through 5; however, this fluctuates due to our 52% mobility rate. The mobility rate in East Point is high primarily due to low socio-economic status of residents. Some residents are not able to maintain the rent/mortgage on their residence, and some people are living with other families. Compared to the city of East Point, we have a significant number of Hispanic residents in our attendance zone. The racial breakdown at our school is 61% African American, 37% Hispanic, 1% Caucasian, and 1% Multi-racial. Twelve percent of our students are classified in special education, and twenty percent are classified as English Learners (EL). Approximately 90% of the school's population is eligible for free and/or reduced meals. As a

result, many of our students lack basic necessities and rely on the school and our community agencies to fulfill these needs. For example, on an ongoing basis, our community groups donate school supplies, clothing, food, eyewear, etc. Oak Knoll Elementary School is staffed with highly qualified educators, whose vision is for all students to reach their full learning potential. Our mission is to empower our students to become critical thinkers and lifelong learners so they may become productive citizens in our global society. Although Oak Knoll has made AYP for nine consecutive years (since the conception of AYP) and is a Title-I Distinguished School, literacy development remains a concern. A Striving Reader grant will enable our school to better address students' literacy needs and continue to make AYP.

Administrative and Teacher Leadership Team

Mrs. Parham, 3rd year Principal, and Mrs. Grainger Smith, 3rd year Assistant Principal, serve as Oak Knoll's administrators. They began working at Oak Knoll Elementary School during the 2010-2011 school year. Mrs. Parham has over 18 years of experience in education and over 10 years serving as a curriculum or instructional leader. Mrs. Grainger Smith has over 13 years of experience in education and over 10 years in school counseling. They embrace and implement distributive leadership, empowering employees to share, contribute, and implement strategies to improve student achievement. We have dedicated teachers within all grade levels who lead initiatives throughout the school year to support literacy development. Oak Knoll Elementary School is fortunate to have seven staff members who have completed post-secondary degrees in Reading and/or Reading Endorsements.

Instructional Initiatives

To ensure smooth transitions from the community, within the school, and into the middle school grades, Oak Knoll has implemented the following evidence-based initiatives to help improve student achievement.

- **Extended Day Tutorial:** CRCT Level 1 students in grades 3 - 5 in the areas of math and reading from October – March.
- **Standards-Based Classrooms:** instruction based solely on Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) and/or Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), utilizing research-based best practices: flexible grouping, progress monitoring, tiered instruction, and differentiation.
- **Co-teaching / Inclusion Classes:** instruction provided to students with disabilities using the Least Restrictive Environment, as well as those who receive Speech and Language Services; teachers practice the integration of Individualized Education Plan goals and grade level curriculum.

Need for a Striving Readers Project

Imagine an articulate child who has become self-confident, empowered, and equipped to maneuver in an ever-evolving, technology-driven, global society. For this child, there are no boundaries or roadblocks. They are free to travel upon the limitless road of possibilities. This is how Oak Knoll's exemplary literacy education will unleash students' abilities to reach their full learning potential. A Striving Reader grant will help us implement our literacy plan to enhance instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

School/District Literacy Plan

Oak Knoll has built its literacy plan around the six building blocks identified in the document, *Georgia Literacy Plan Kindergarten-to-Grade 12 Necessary Building Blocks for Literacy: “The What”*, developed by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). The needs assessment that our literacy team conducted help to guide us as we carefully researched and leveraged documents such as GaDOE’s *Georgia Literacy Plan: “The Why”*. The team discussed each of the building blocks and how it serves as a blue print for our literacy plan. Our approach to literacy is evolving as the needs of our students change. Oak Knoll’s literacy plan is a living document. The six building blocks and related research are described in detail in the pages that follow.

Building Block 1: Engaged Leadership

Administrators at Oak Knoll demonstrate commitment to learn about and support evidence-based literacy instruction in the school. The Leadership Team consistently seeks out and attends professional development to expand their knowledge base and increase proficiency with providing support to teachers. Each member of the Leadership Team has a reading endorsement.

The purpose of Oak Knoll’s Literacy Leadership Team is to focus on literacy and curriculum. This is accomplished by researching effective literacy-based strategies, modeling, and attending different professional development opportunities to redeliver to the school community. The principal, teachers representing each grade level, and support staff are all members of the team. The literacy coach and curriculum support teacher are responsible for organizing the team.

Community support is obtained through the Literacy Council which is made up of a model teacher from the Literacy Leadership Team, community agencies and local day care providers. The purpose of the Literacy Council is to facilitate a symbiotic relationship between the school and community regarding literacy in East Point. This is accomplished by providing resources, forming study groups, researching effective literacy-based strategies, monitoring the implementation of research-based strategies within community daycare centers. The Literacy Council conducts parent surveys about awareness of the balanced literacy plan. Results from the survey provide information that assist in creating meaningful parent workshops related to literacy. Adult literacy classes are provided to help increase parents' literacy, which in turn allows them to support their child and the school more effectively.

Collaborative Planning

The use of time and personnel is leveraged through scheduling and collaborative planning. The master schedule ensures that each grade level is able to provide at least 2 hours of literacy instruction daily. A 45 minute intervention block is built into the master schedule for every grade level. Teachers are given 45 minutes of common planning daily and collaborative planning every Wednesday beginning at 3:00 PM. English Language Learner (ELL) teachers' schedules are designed based on the number of students that they serve and ELL guidelines. Early Intervention Program (EIP) teachers' schedules are designed based on the number of students whom they serve and EIP guidelines regarding time allotment.

Current Instructional Schedule

Based on input from stakeholders, the Literacy Leadership Team has mapped our literacy plan strategies to our current instructional schedule. The sample schedule below is for the third grade.

Current Instructional Schedule		Literacy Plan Strategies
7:40 - 8:00 – Calendar Math Students receive additional instruction with alternative materials to support deficits.		Books in audio format eBooks Subscription databases Classroom libraries
8:00 – 10:15 Reading/Language Arts Block During this block, students are exposed to a wide range of literature. Students either read from a basal, multiple copies of trade books, or big books. Instruction is activated with a discussion led by the teacher to build or review any background knowledge necessary to scaffold future learning. Comprehension strategies are taught and practiced at this time.		Professional development (phonics, writing, technology, and general educator/special educator cross-training). Reader’s/Writer’s Theater 3 rd -5 th Classroom libraries Interactive technology Mobile laptop labs
<i>30 Minutes</i> Whole Group	Teacher reads aloud, introduces new skills, introduces new spelling words, conducts word wall activities, assigns partners for paired reading, and uses a cooperative learning structure to discuss a story.	eBooks Digital storytelling Web-based software Classroom libraries
<i>60 Minutes</i> Small Group	Students participate in tiered instruction via Early Intervention Program models, peer tutoring, and individualized activities during independent center rotations. Small group instruction relates to the whole group lesson. Students take turns using various reading aloud techniques. Assistance is provided with developing fluency, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension.	Leveled texts in a variety of content areas. Mobile laptop labs eBooks Table mount projectors
<i>45 Minutes</i> Writing Block	The writing block provides students with a model that is sequential and consistent: 1) Prewriting-Students brainstorm to generate ideas for writing using charts, story webs, and graphic organizers 2) Rough Draft-Students record their ideas without the distraction of making mistakes in grammar, spelling, capitalization 3) Peer Editing-Classmates share rough drafts and make suggestions for improvement 4) Revising-Students use the suggestions from classmates to make additions or clarify details 5) Editing-Students work with the teacher or peers to correct all mistakes in grammar and spelling 6) Final Draft-Students discuss final draft with the teacher who offers	Professional development (writing and genres) Mobile laptop labs Table mount projectors

Current Instructional Schedule	Literacy Plan Strategies
feedback 7) Publishing-Students publish their writing and may make a personal portfolio or send their work to local newspapers or children’s magazines for publication.	
10:00 – 11:00 Science/ Social Studies Block To build content appropriate vocabulary and prior background knowledge, we utilize classroom library sets, county funded databases, periodicals from the Media Center, and various non-fiction trade books.	eBooks Subscription databases Classroom libraries Interactive technology Mobile laptop labs
11:00 – 11:45 Specials	
11:45 – 12:25 Lunch/Recess	
12:30 – 1:45 Math Block To build connections to real-life experiences, we utilize trade books and use of interactive technology provides for hands-on manipulatives.	Classroom libraries Interactive technology Mobile laptop labs
1:45-2:20 – Intervention Students receive additional (individual or small group) instruction with alternative materials to support deficits. RTI tiered interventions are provided for students during this time for the appropriate amount of time.	Classroom Libraries eBooks Media Center books
2:45- 4:45 Extended Learning Grades 3 rd and 5 th participate in remediation for Math, Language Arts, and Reading. Class sizes are currently 15:1. Students begin in October and end in March. They meet two times per week. The program focuses on test preparation.	Saturday Enrichment Academy through the Woodruff Arts Center for students in 3 rd – 5 th grades focused on writing Author’s visit Digitally published books

Note: The allotment of time for each subject is consistent across grade levels. However, the actual time that the subject is taught during the day varies by grade level and special programs (ELL and Exceptional Children).

A Culture of Literacy

A school culture exists in which teachers across the content areas accept responsibility for literacy instruction as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS). The staff at Oak Knoll Elementary School has received professional development in disciplinary literacy across the content areas, but implementation is not consistent. Teachers are able to incorporate informational text during their guided reading block, but they are not consistently teaching reading strategies across content areas. In order to become operational in

this area, administration is scheduling walk-throughs throughout each month to observe literacy instruction. Information from these observations is used to provide specific and immediate feedback and identify strengths and areas of concern. The administration and Leadership Literacy Team provide support by modeling best practices and providing professional learning.

Literacy instruction at the school is optimized in all content areas. Teachers accept responsibility for optimizing literacy instruction across content areas. Teachers collaborate on literacy integration across all content areas during grade levels Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Grade level PLCs meet weekly to discuss student data, identify interventions, and share best practices that will help them implement literacy instruction. The community at large supports schools and teachers in the development of students who are college-and-career-ready as articulated in the CCGPS. Representatives from local business speak to students weekly about careers and provide information on the process that they followed to be successful in their line of work. Community businesses provide incentives for teachers and students based on literacy data.

Research Findings

Oak Knoll’s Literacy Leadership Team understands that literacy instruction must be integrated into all subject areas. The team reviewed GaDOE’s *The Why, The What* and *The How* documents as a foundation in developing our literacy program. Our literacy plan includes a balanced approach to teaching literacy, in which vocabulary, writing, and appropriate grade-level texts are included. The integration of literacy skills into the content areas has been made even more explicit in the CCGPS. In grades K – 5, there are separate sets of standards for reading literature and for reading informational text while supporting the same anchor standards for

narrative reading, e.g., identifying main idea, using diagrams, using text features, skimming to locate facts, analyzing multiple accounts of the same events.

For Building Block 1, Engaged Leadership, the Literacy Leadership Team has identified the following strategies to optimize literacy instruction across all content areas:

- Integrate strategic literacy instruction into all curriculum areas for the development of students' ability to use language (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 32);
- Train content teachers on effective reading and writing strategies (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 37);
- Embed effective instructional principles in content areas so that teachers provide instruction and practice in reading and writing skills specific to their subject area (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 66);
- Integrate literacy in all subjects as articulated within CCGPS so that teachers have a common process to teach academic vocabulary in all subjects and students write in every class. Provide professional learning on using literary and informational texts, incorporating writing instruction, conducting research projects, navigating the text structures, developing a school-wide writing rubric that is aligned with the CCGPS (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 6);
- Introduce technology so that teachers can coach, model instructional practices, co-teach, observe, and give feedback to each on literacy strategies (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 26);
- Assess the skills or knowledge that students need to reach standards proficiency (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 26);
- Monitor literacy instruction across content areas through observations, lesson plans, walkthroughs, and student work samples (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 26);

- Provide opportunities by leveraging technology for students to write, speak, and listen (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 26); and
- Identify creative strategies to help ELs meet English language proficiency standards (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 26).

Building Block 2: Continuity of Instruction

Teachers at Oak Knoll participate in active Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum. During grade level PLCs, the staff collaboratively plans integrating literacy-based strategies throughout the curriculum. These strategies are evident in lesson plans, small group instruction, and differentiated activities. Literacy instruction is provided during Social Studies and Science. Collaborative planning helps teachers provide literacy instruction during Social Studies and Science. The English Language Arts (ELA) Coach observes, provides feedback, models, assists with planning, and provides professional development on targeted literacy strategies on an on-going basis.

Community Collaboration

Oak Knoll collaborates with community agencies and organizations to support literacy within the community. The East Point Public Library and Barnes and Noble invite families to participate in literacy-based activities at their respective locations. The Literacy Council collaborates to determine what types of activities are provided based on the surveys completed by parents and community partners. Some examples of the activities that are scheduled every month:

- Prose, Poetry and Parents- students and their parents are exposed to different types of poetry and have an opportunity to create their own to be displayed in the school and Public Library.

- Fiction Fun Night- Students and parents dress up like their favorite characters and listen to the Barnes and Noble Representative read from different fiction books. Upper grade students read books of their choice in the café.
- Information Station- The East Point Library holds an event where parents and children are exposed to informational text. There are different stations, and students can select based on interest. Parents learn how to use questioning strategies to help their children understand what they are reading.

Doziers' (birth to Pre-K) and Childcare Network (birth to Pre-K) are two day care centers that feed into our school and also provide afterschool care for the Oak Knoll community. Oak Knoll collaborates with both centers to provide literacy-based support to the students who attend the centers. Leveled libraries coupled with technology-based reading programs are used to ensure that students in the centers are being exposed to text on their ability and interest level. A representative from each center is on the Literacy Council, and they provide information about students' progress based on the literacy resources and strategies that are being implemented.

The Woodruff Arts Center provides literacy-based activities for our students through the Wolf Trap and Readers and Writer's Theater for 3rd – 5th grade students. Woodruff provides professional development for the teachers during a summer institute as well as ongoing professional development on integrating literacy through the arts. This collaboration provides teachers with additional resources that are used to enhance literacy instruction and provide rigorous engaging lessons for the students. Students have more choices for performance tasks that require higher order thinking and creativity.

Vertical Teaming

Oak Knoll Elementary partners with Woodland Middle School to obtain resources and strategies that help provide rigorous instruction for accelerated fifth-grade students who perform above grade level. Members from Woodland Middle participate on the Literacy Council to stay abreast of resources and strategies that are being used to instruct the students as they matriculate through the day care centers and Oak Knoll Elementary School. Members of the Literacy Council understand current trends in students' literacy data through bimonthly data talks. This information is used in conjunction with middle school expectations to prepare activities and resource suggestions that help students be better prepared upon entering middle school. The middle school continues to implement strategies that are successful with the students.

Research Findings

The Literacy Leadership Team understands that all students must be exposed to literacy while implementing research-based strategies to ensure proficiency. This is accomplished through strategic planning and collaboration. In our efforts to make sure all learners' needs are being met, the Literacy Team will collaborate with the Literacy Council to create a shared vision for literacy instruction from birth to high school that will support the components of GaDOE's *How* document, which will help support the goals and objectives at the school and district level.

For Building Block 2, Continuity of Instruction, the Literacy Leadership Team has identified the following strategies to ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams:

- *Reading Next* (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004) has identified research-based program elements that improve literacy achievement of adolescent learners, which include: direct comprehension instruction, effective instructional principles embedded in content, text-based collaborative learning, extended time for literacy (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 66).

- The Leadership Team examines the quality of teachers’ practices in implementing literacy initiatives in the classroom by observing direct instruction, modeling, and practice in reading comprehension strategies as well as structuring of content area instruction and reading assignments to make them more accessible to students (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 131).
- Teachers support the Response to Intervention (RTI) tiers 1 and 2 to enable all students to access the CCGPS by 2014 (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 131).
- Teachers support ELL students by screening for reading problems, monitoring progress, offering small reading groups, providing vocabulary instruction, and providing peer-assisted learning opportunities (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 132).
- Cross disciplinary teams for literacy instruction are established with scheduled time to collaborate and examine student data/work where student achievement goals are aligned with grade-level expectations (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 7).
- The Leadership Team uses walk-throughs and observations to ensure consistency of effective instructional practices across content areas (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 7).
- The Literacy Council actively engages key personnel in out-of-school organizations and governmental agencies that support students and families (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 8).
- The Cross disciplinary teams research effective strategies for differentiating instruction, promoting active engagement, and teaching literacy and writing instruction (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 29).
- The Leadership Team provides awareness sessions for teachers to learn about CCGPS for literacy in social studies and science; they videotape teachers to provide feedback on literacy concepts and skills; they use of rubrics to improve literacy instruction; they use technology to infuse literacy throughout the day (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 29).

- The Literacy Council evaluates the effectiveness of after-school tutoring programs and partners with community and faith-based groups to accommodate students (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 32).

Building Block 3: Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments

An infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments is in place to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. DIBELS Next is the screening tool that teachers use to assess students' initial level in reading. Teachers then administer specific diagnostic assessments based on areas of concern identified by DIBELS Next. These diagnostic assessments are administered every 9 weeks to monitor progress. Word Your Way is administered for K-2 students to determine consistency of progress and intervention needs. Summative data is used to determine student placement in RTI, EIP, and rotation in flexible groups.

A clearly articulated strategy for using data to improve teaching and learning is followed. Teachers follow the established Critical Friends Group (CFG) protocols for analyzing and using data during weekly collaborative planning teams. This data guides instruction, flexible grouping, and incorporates this protocol into existing data analysis.

Professional development is provided on DIBELS Next, Word Your Way and Critical Friends Protocols. The professional development for the assessments trains teachers on the purpose of the assessment, how to administer it, how to score the instrument, and how to use the results to provide appropriate literacy instruction to students.

Research Findings

Oak Knoll's Literacy Leadership Team understands that the systematic administration and use of formative and summative assessments should be a component of our literacy plan.

Further, we understand the importance of identifying student needs based on data from ongoing assessments to implement effective literacy-based strategies. For Building Block 3, Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments, the Literacy Leadership Team has identified the following strategies to optimize the use of assessments in literacy instruction across all content areas:

- The Literacy Leadership Team is refining our assessment plan to better use existing assessment data, identify other assessment tools for further diagnostic and/or progress monitoring feedback, incorporate daily classroom instruction as a means of ongoing formative assessment, and analyze results from multiple sources to set goals for students and to identify appropriate instructional strategies (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 96).
- The assessment plan includes commonly shared mid-course assessments across classrooms, universal screeners to determine instructional decisions for RTI service options, technology infrastructure supports to safely store data, a formative assessment calendar, a protocol to identify high achieving/advanced learners who would benefit from enrichment of advanced coursework, opportunities for students identified by routine screenings to receive diagnostic assessment, and multiple-entry points to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 8).
- The Literacy Leadership Team establishes an infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments by selecting effective progress monitoring tools to measure general-outcome literacy competencies, by providing students opportunities to assess their own learning, by analyzing student data in teacher teams to develop and adjust instructional plans, and by using technology to share relevant student progress data with parents and caregivers in an easily interpreted user-friendly format (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 34).

Building Block 4: Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

All students receive direct, explicit instruction related to reading and writing using a balanced literacy approach within our core reading program. The master schedule indicates specific amounts of time for each subject, and teachers incorporate the balanced literacy approach across all content areas.

Ongoing professional development is provided on effectively implementing the balanced literacy approach across all content areas.

Components for Reading

- Reading aloud- Teacher reads to the whole class or small groups.
- Shared Reading- Students use an enlarged text that everyone can see, or they have their own copy; children and teacher read in unison.
- Guided Reading- Teacher works with a small group with similar reading abilities.
- Independent Reading- Children read on their own or in pairs.

Components for Writing

- Shared Writing- Teacher and children work together to compose stories.
- Interactive writing-Teacher and children compose stories.
- Guided Writing/Writing Workshop- mini-lesson, individual writing with individual conferencing, author's chair.
- Independent Writing- Children write their own pieces.

Professional learning is also provided on data analysis and differentiation.

The effectiveness of the balanced literacy plan is monitored during the weekly collaborative planning meetings. The students' data is assessed to make needed adjustments regarding implementation. Teachers receive professional development in strategies for

developing and maintaining interest and engagement appropriate to their grade level.

Research Findings

Oak Knoll’s Literacy Leadership Team understands that literacy involves actively engaging students in authentic and purposeful reading and writing tasks. Our literacy plan considers the unique needs, skills, and interest of individual students. Our approach involves all students receiving direct and explicit instruction in literacy and, therefore, includes extensive ongoing professional learning for teachers on best practices in reading and writing.

For Building Block 4, Best Practices in Literacy Instruction, the Literacy Leadership Team has identified the following strategies to optimize direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students:

- As reported by Dole, Duffy, Roehler, and Pearson (1991), reading comprehension instruction can be highly effective when teachers focus on seven main strategies for readers: visualizing, questioning, making connections, predicting, inferring, determining importance, and synthesizing/creating (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pages 41-43).
- “In keeping with the expectations of a rigorous curriculum and standards for all students, including English Language Learners, students with exceptional needs, and other at risk population, it is crucial that teachers access students’ prior knowledge and build upon students’ background experiences” (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pages 42).
- “...the most important outcome of reading comprehension should be a reader’s ability to self-monitor for understanding, thus motivating a reader to use the strategies flexibly and with purpose (Duke & Pearson, 2002).
- “All students receive direct, explicit instruction in reading:

1. A core program is in use that provides continuity based on a carefully articulated scope and sequence of skills that is integrated into a rich curriculum of literacy and informational texts.
2. Student data is examined regularly to identify areas of instruction with greatest needs (e.g., phonological awareness, word identification, fluency, vocabulary, word study, comprehension, motivation and engagement).
3. Administration conducts classroom observations (e.g., Literacy Instruction Checklist, GA, the FCRR Literacy Walkthrough, or some other instrument) using an assessment tool to gauge current practice in literacy instruction.
4. Daily literacy block K-3 includes the following for all students:
 - a. Whole group which includes explicit instruction in word identification, vocabulary, and comprehension
 - b. Small groups for differentiation
5. Various aspects of literacy instruction students have been allocated for instruction within specific content areas.
6. Faculty participates in professional learning on the following:
 - a. Using of data to inform instructional decisions and explicit teaching
 - b. Selecting of appropriate text and strategy for instruction
 - c. Telling students specific strategies to be learned and why
 - d. Modeling of how strategy is used
 - e. Providing guidance and independent practice with feedback
 - f. Discussing when and where strategies are to be applied
 - g. Differentiating instruction” (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 9-10).

- “Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students:

Planning

- Research and select 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
- 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., 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

Implementing

- Provide training to all pertinent staff in the use of the core program
 - Use online options where feasible, provide professional learning on research-based differentiated instructional strategies that support diverse needs
 - Using videotaping and peer-to-peer coaching, ensure that teachers receive frequent feedback and coaching
 - Ensure a daily literacy block in K-3 that includes whole group explicit instruction in word identification, vocabulary, and comprehension as well as small groups for differentiated instruction for all students” (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 26).
- According to NCTE, “Instructional practices, writing genres assessments should be holistic, authentic, and varied,” (NCTE, 2008, pg 2). The following are effective instructional and

assessment strategies for writing:

1. Require all students, especially those less experienced, to write extensively so that they can be comfortable writing extended prose in elementary school and writing essays in high school. Create writing assignments that ask students to interpret and analyze a variety of texts and to write in various genres.
 2. Employ functional approaches to teaching and applying rules of grammar so that students understand how language works in a variety of contexts.
 3. Foster collaborative writing processes.
 4. Include the writing formats of new media as an integral component of writing.
 5. Use formative assessment strategies that provide students with feedback while developing drafts.
 6. Employ multiple assessment measures, including portfolios, to assess students' development as writers (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 44).
- “In every class at least one day a week, teachers provide instruction in and opportunities for one of 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” (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 10).

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

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a comprehensive approach to the initial diagnosis of children with possible learning disabilities, and/or speech impairment. Oak Knoll's teachers are trained to work in Professional Learning Communities, where all students' progress is monitored

on a weekly basis. Information developed from the school-based data team is used to inform RTI process. Data teams meet monthly to review data and ensure that interventions are being implemented to address student needs. Data determines whether new interventions should be implemented, if the current interventions are working, or if the intervention needs to be adjusted. Data also determines specific areas where the student may need more support as he/she moves through the different tiers of the RTI process.

Tier 1 Instruction is based upon the CCGPS in grades K-12 and is provided to all students in all classrooms. All students are given a reading assessment to determine present levels. Teachers use this data and ongoing assessments to create flexible differentiated groups. Literacy instruction is assessed by using a Literacy Instruction Checklist. All classrooms are analyzed based on student data and the Literacy Instruction Checklist. Students who are not responding to Tier 1 differentiated instruction are moved to Tier 2. As part of Tier 2, teachers consult the RTI Manual and receive specific intervention strategies from vertical data teams which include special education teachers. Students performing below grade level are given tiered, evidence-based interventions in the general education setting. Students who make expected rates of progress with interventions are considered appropriate for the general education setting. In Tier 3, the Student Support Team and Data team monitor progress jointly. Teachers provide information on interventions being used to meet the student's academic needs. The teacher also includes what the intervention is, how many students are participating in the group, and student progress in the group. If a student does not adequately respond to all three tiers of general education intervention, then we consider a referral to special education, Tier 4.

Our RTI model considers the failure to respond to well designed and implemented interventions as evidence of an underlying disability. We have structured our literacy plan

around our tiered instruction model. Our literacy plan includes strategies that will enable Oak Knoll to achieve its Striving Reader project goals. These literacy strategies will not conflict with existing programs because they will be embedded within all tiers and content areas.

Tier 1-Core Curriculum

General education teachers and kindergarten paraprofessionals provide 2.5 hours of daily literacy instruction for K-5 in Tier 1. They currently use the following materials for Tier 1 Instruction: adopted textbooks, print and non-print collections in the Media Center, and the computer lab. To supplement the existing resources, we are implementing the following literacy strategies:

- Woodruff Arts Programs (Wolf Trap for K-2, Reader’s/Writer’s Theater for 3-5) – Classroom teachers work with professional teaching artists to learn drama strategies that promote literacy skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing. Wolf Trap builds drama skills in oral and non-verbal expression, creative and critical thinking, ensemble work and self-regulation. Readers’ Theatre is a dramatic form in which students read, rehearse and give oral presentation of text. The process includes application of skills in word recognition and pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and non-verbal communication to make meaning for an audience.
- Classroom Libraries –Teachers identify and purchase genres and leveled readers needed to support literacy across the curriculum, using guided instruction, literature circles to support independent reading in the classroom, and use as model texts for writing instruction.
- Phonics and Writing Instruction Professional Development – The Literacy Leadership team identifies presenters to speak to the faculty and local and national literacy conference

opportunities for staff. Data from DIBELS Next and Common Writing Assessments are used to plan and execute staff development trainings.

Tier 2-Strategic Intervention

General education teachers, kindergarten paraprofessionals, the media specialist, and the school technology specialist provide 30-45 minutes daily of literacy instruction for K-5 students in Tier

2. Students participate in some of the following literacy activities:

- Saturday Enrichment Academy – includes having a published author visit the school. During the Saturday Enrichment Academy, students will work on literacy-based strategies to meet current CCPGS that are being implemented in their respective grades.
- Subscription databases – support literacy across content areas.
- eBooks – provide engaging literacy media for students to access to information across content areas.
- Digital storytelling – helps students develop creative presentations utilizing writing, communication, and technological skills. Creating a digital story increases the student's ability to read and write text, as well as understand and create media to communicate their ideas.
- Mobile laptop computer labs – enable our students to develop technology skills for communicating, investigating, accessing and using information, computing, thinking critically about messages inherent in new media, and understanding and evaluating data.
- Professional Development- provides reading endorsement training on diagnosis and treatment of reading difficulties.

Tier 3-Intensive Intervention

General education teachers, paraprofessionals, the EIP reading teacher, and the ESOL teacher provide 45-50 minutes of instructional time implementing the following literacy strategies to Tier 3 students:

- Books in audio format - strengthen student and parent comprehension and foster independent reading for primary, ESOL, and SWD students.
- Technology hardware (table mount projection systems, larger/oversized keyboards, talk systems) – provide students with needed equipment to help them access and utilize information.
- Rave-O – provides small-group reading interventions that target serious reading challenges.

Tier 4-Due Process

The time devoted to literacy instruction in Tier 4 is determined by a student’s IEP. Tier 4 consists of specially-designed learning implemented through specialized programs, methodologies, or strategies based upon students’ inability to access the CCGPS any other way. School schedules have been developed to ensure instruction in the least restrictive environment, based on individual IEPs. Special Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologist, and General Education teachers implement the following literacy activities:

- Students in 3rd and 4th grade participate in team-taught classes for each subject. Fifth grade students participate in self-contained classes for specific subjects and co-taught classes for the remainder of the subjects.
- Professional development- Special education teachers participate in ongoing professional development on differentiated literacy-based instruction that meets requirements of CCGPS and IEP goals.

Research Findings

Oak Knoll’s Literacy Leadership Team understands that a system of tiered instruction is a critical component of our literacy plan. The Literacy Team understands that all students must be college and career ready, so we have established protocols for examining student data to enable teachers to address and meet the needs of all learners.

For Building Block 5, System of Tiered Intervention (RTI), the Literacy Leadership Team has identified the following strategies to inform our RTI process:

- “Student Movement to Tier 2:
 - District and/or school benchmark assessments are used to determine student progress toward grade level mastery of the GPS and (CCGPS by 2014).
 - 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
 - Students identified are placed in Tier 2 interventions that supplement the Tier 1 classroom.
 - During the instructional year, Tier 1 progress monitoring is used in the classroom as a part of standards-based instruction.
 - As student assessment data indicates a need for Tier 2 support, the data team will follow school created procedures for decision making” (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pages 133-134).
- The literacy plan includes the following best practices:
 - A protocol has been developed and is followed for making decisions to identify the instructional needs of students.

- A data storage and retrieval system is adequate and is understood and used by all appropriate staff members.
- Procedures and expectations for staff to review, analyze, and disseminate assessment results are in place.
- Protocols for team meetings are regularly followed (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pages 11-12).
- The Literacy Leadership Team uses information developed from the school-based data teams to inform RTI process:

Planning

- 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.
- Develop protocols for students and matching them to the appropriate intervention.

Implementing

- Purchase, train, and implement data collection.
- Purchase schedule, train providers and implement interventions.
- Monitor to ensure that interventions are occurring regularly and with fidelity.
- Monitor results of formative assessments 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 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 (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pg. 43).
- If fewer than 80% of students are successful in any area:
 1. Student data is examined to determine instructional areas of greatest need (e.g., decoding, fluency, comprehension, written expression).
 2. Current practice in literacy instruction in each subject area has been assessed in using a checklist (e.g., Literacy Instruction Checklist, GA or some equivalent instrument) and a review of teachers' lesson plans.
 3. Teachers participate in ongoing professional learning on the following:
 - a. A. Direct explicit instructional strategies that build students' word identification, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills.
 4. Administration conducts classroom observations (e.g., Literacy Instruction Checklist, GA, FCRR Literacy Walkthrough, or some other instrument) using an assessment tool to gauge current practice in literacy instruction
 5. Daily literacy block in K – 3 includes the following for all students:
 - a. Whole group which includes explicit instruction in word identification, vocabulary, and comprehension
 - b. Small groups for differentiation
 6. Various aspects of literacy instruction students have been allocated for instruction within specific content areas.
 7. Faculty participates in professional learning on the following:
 - a. Using data to inform instructional decisions and explicit teaching
 - b. Selecting of appropriate text and strategy instruction

- c. Telling students specific strategies to be learned and why
 - d. Modeling of how strategy is used
 - e. Providing guidance and independent practice with feedback
 - f. Discussing when and where strategies are to be applied
 - g. Differentiating instruction (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pages 11-13).
- “Provide Tier I Instruction based upon the CCGPS in all grades to all students in all classrooms
 - Examine student data to determine the current percentage of successful students in the areas of literacy (i.e., reading and writing)
 - Develop a plan to strengthen Tier 1 instruction of disciplinary literacy in each content area.
 - 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 grade levels.
 - Schedule time for instructional planning as well as for student progress conversations (vertical) as well as within (horizontal) grade levels
 - Use data from universal screening process to identify general weaknesses in instruction Tier 1 as well as struggling students
 - Use system-developed classroom-based formative assessments 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
- Provide professional learning to support literacy, either face-to-face or online” (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pages 43-44).
- “Student movement to Tier 3:
 - The data team will confirm the fidelity of implementation of the intervention through frequent contact and observation during instruction
 - Additional Tier 2 interventions may be required if little or no progress is documented. The data team will follow previously established protocols to determine if additional tier 2 interventions should be implemented.
 - After the appropriate amount of time (time in weeks dependent on the intervention), the data team should added student progress and determine if continued support through Tier 2 is required, if additional Tier 2 interventions are required, or if Tier 3 support, in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 is required: (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 134).
- “In Tier 3, Student Support Team (SST) and Data Team monitor progress jointly:
 1. In addition to everything that occurs in Tier 1 and Tier 2, data teams (expanded to include school psych, ESOL teacher, SLP, etc.) meet to:
 - a. Discuss students in T3 who fail to respond to intervention
 - b. Receive professional learning on Student Support Team processes and procedures as outlined in the GaDOE manual and guidance
 - c. Verify implementation of proven interventions
 2. T3 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

3. Interventions are delivered 1:1 – 1:3 during a protected time daily by a trained interventionists
4. T3 SST/data teams follow the established protocol to determine the specific reason when an EL fails to make progress (i.e., language difficulty or difference vs. disorder)” (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 12).

Building Block 6: Improved Instruction through Professional Learning

Oak Knoll provides pre-service education to prepare new teachers for all aspects of literacy instruction in the content areas. The Curriculum Support Teacher (CST) and Humanities department provides professional development on basic literacy strategies and the CCGPS expectations. All teachers participate in ongoing professional learning in all aspects of literacy instruction across all content areas. All staff members are provided with the opportunity to earn a Reading Endorsement.

At Oak Knoll, on-going professional learning is critical. We provide all teachers both individualized and group professional learning opportunities including: Creating a Standards-based Classroom, WOW: Working on the Work (Enhancing Student Engagement and Student Work), Differentiation of Instruction To Meet The Needs of All Learners, Critical Friends Groups, and How To Use Progress Monitoring to Improve Instruction.

Our data shows an increased need for professional learning in several areas of literacy development. Teachers benefit from a refined understanding of integrating reading and writing in the content areas, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, interactive technology, and general educator/special educator cross-training, and the implementation of reading strategies and timely interventions through RTI.

Currently, our method of administering Professional Learning is the redelivery of content to staff by the Curriculum Support Teacher, Instructional Coaches, principal, assistant principal and classroom teachers who attend off-site trainings. With this grant, we will be able to fund additional Professional Learning opportunities through outside entities and continue developing our staff in the above mentioned areas. These staff development needs were determined through our Literacy Team’s needs assessment surveys.

Research Findings

Oak Knoll’s Literacy Team understands that in order to have an effective balanced literacy program professional learning is essential. The Literacy Team understands that instruction is improved through appropriate pre-service training and on-going professional development; this will allow us to address and meet the needs of all teachers and learners.

For Building Block 6, Improved Instruction Through Professional Learning, the Literacy Leadership Team has identified the following strategies to optimize teacher effectiveness related to literacy instruction:

- “In-service personnel participate in ongoing professional learning in all aspects of literacy instruction including disciplinary literacy in the content areas:
 1. The school calendar includes protected time for teachers to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on practice.
 2. Teachers participate in ongoing professional learning in the CCGPS based on the needs revealed by student data as well as by surveys, interest inventories, and teacher observations.

3. Teachers’ instruction is monitored through classroom observations or walkthroughs using a variety of assessment tools tied to professional learning.
 4. An instructional coach provides site-based support for administrators, faculty,, and staff, where possible.
 5. Intervention providers receive program-specific training before the beginning of the year to prepare teachers and staff for implementation” (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 13).
- “Provide professional learning for in-service personnel:
 - Provide targeted professional learning on the CCGPS based on student and teacher needs
 - Meet in collaborative teams (include pre-service teachers currently working within the school) to support teachers in using literacy strategies effectively
 - Provide opportunities for teachers to practice techniques in non-threatening situations.
 - Use checklists tied to professional learning when conducting classroom observations or walkthroughs to provide specific feedback to teachers on student learning.
 - Revisit and revise professional learning yearly based on student mastery of CCGPS and classroom observations” (GaDOE, *The How*, 2012, pages 48-49).

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Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). (2010). *Georgia's literacy conceptual framework for birth-to-grade 12; Georgia literacy plan: The "Why"*. Retrieved from <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Documents/Georgia%20Literacy%20Action%20Plan%20-The%20Why%208-1-12.pdf>

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Needs Assessment, Concerns, and Root Cause Analysis

Needs Assessment Process

When looking at the literacy needs of Oak Knoll Elementary School, teachers and staff use a combination of data from the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT), Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the state writing assessment. In addition, we use data from our Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA2), common assessments, the district's benchmark assessments and mock writing scores to determine students who are at risk. Teachers review their data weekly to identify areas of concern and their next steps. We also meet twice a year to analyze school-wide data and identify data trends. As a result we are able to identify our literacy needs for our economically disadvantage students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. It is evident that these subgroups are making progress but there continues to be room for growth. Yearly, we conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to support our School Improvement Plan. Our needs assessment allows us to make data-driven decisions regarding our current practices, needs and goals.

In developing our literacy plan, the Literacy Leadership Team collected input and feedback from stakeholders including teachers, administrators, parents, and students. The team members completed the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment development by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Our literacy plan is informed by the needs assessment data and framed around the six literacy building blocks.

Areas of Concern

The table below targets student groups, identifies the standards that are weak based on assessment data, highlights the areas of concern, summarizes current strategies, indicates future strategies, demonstrates the critical transitions and finally analyzes the root causes for the areas

of concern. The three student subgroups included in the table are Economically Disadvantage (ED), English Learners (EL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD).

Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

Oak Knoll’s Literacy Leadership Team compiled and analyzed extensive data as part of its needs assessment process. The findings related to student and teacher data are highlighted below.

Student Data

Oak Knoll Reading CRCT scores 2011-2012

Grade Level	# of students Did Not Meet	% of students Did not Meet	# of students Meets	% of students Meets	# of students Exceeds	% of students Exceeds
Grade 3	13	19%	41	60%	14	21%
Grade 4	5	9%	35	60%	18	31%
Grade 5	7	11%	43	68%	13	21%

Source: Georgia CRCT School Performance Summary Report 2012

Oak Knoll Reading CRCT scores 2010-2011

Grade Level	# of students Did Not Meet	% of students Did not Meet	# of students Meets	% of students Meets	# of students Exceeds	% of students Exceeds
Grade 3	23	26%	48	55%	17	19%
Grade 4	15	21%	43	60%	14	19%
Grade 5	11	14%	55	69%	14	18%

Source: Georgia CRCT School Performance Summary Report 2011

Oak Knoll Reading ELA scores 2011-2012

Grade Level	# of students Did Not Meet	% of students Did not Meet	# of students Meets	% of students Meets	# of students Exceeds	% of students Exceeds
Grade 3	2	13%	44	64%	12	17%
Grade 4	7	12%	38	64%	14	24%
Grade 5	4	6%	37	59%	22	35%

Source: Georgia CRCT School Performance Summary Report 2012

Oak Knoll Reading ELA scores 2010-2011

Grade Level	# of students Did Not Meet	% of students Did not Meet	# of students Meets	% of students Meets	# of students Exceeds	% of students Exceeds
Grade 3	23	26%	48	55%	17	19%
Grade 4	15	21%	43	60%	14	19%
Grade 5	11	14%	55	69%	14	18%

Source: Georgia CRCT School Performance Summary Report 2011

When looking at Oak Knoll’s Reading CRCT data there is an increase in overall amount of students who met or exceeded the standards in 2012 by 1.22%. In ELA, there was an increase in the amount of students overall by .82%. Though growth is evident, data shows that students need more support in informational text and vocabulary.

The team identified the following major literacy strengths: an increase of 3rd grade students meeting/exceeding in Reading by approximately 2-5%, a decrease of 12% in the percentage of 4th grade students in the Did not Meet category for Reading, and an increase in the range of students that met overall by 1.22%. Further, the team identified the following weaknesses: a decrease in the number of students who exceeded in 2012 and a decrease in 5th grade students who met the standards in Reading from 2011 to 2012.

Grade 3 Writing Assessment 2011-2012

Types of Writing	Ideas			Organization			Style			Conventions		
	DN M	M	E	DN M	M	E	DN M	M	E	DNM	M	E
Informational	16%	65%	19%	25%	66%	9%	31%	60%	9%	35%	54%	10%
Persuasive	12%	72%	16%	25%	60%	15%	24%	60%	16%	32%	57%	10%
Narrative	19%	67%	13%	22%	66%	12%	31%	60%	9%	31%	60%	9%
Response to Literature	25%	60%	15%	32%	57%	10%	28%	60%	12%	37%	54%	9%

The third grade writing data shows a variation of strengths and weaknesses across different types of writing:

Major Writing Strengths

- More than sixty percent of third graders met ideas, organization and style for information, persuasive, narrative, and response to literature.
- Third graders were able to exceed standards in ideas, organization, style, and conventions for information, persuasive, narrative, and response to literature.

Major Writing Weaknesses

- For ideas, eighteen percent of students did not meet the standards.
- For organization, twenty-six percent of students did not meet the standards.
- For style, about twenty-nine percent of the students did not meet the standards.
- For conventions, about thirty-four percent of the students did not meet the standards.

Grade 5 Writing Assessment 2011-2012

Performance Summary: Persuasive, Informational, and Narrative						
Domain Scoring	Regular Education		Special Education		English Learners	
	% Did not Meet	% Meets	% Did Not Meet	% Meets	% Did not Meet	% Meets
Ideas, Organization, Style, and Conventions	17%	79%	50%	50%	20%	75%

When looking at Oak Knoll’s Fifth Grade Writing assessment scores, Special Education students report half of the students not meeting the standards for ideas, organization, style, and conventions. English Language Learners shows one in five students not meeting the standards for ideas, organization, style, and conventions.

Disaggregation of Data

Oak Knoll	FRL %	SWD %	ELL %	Mobility Rate %	Met AYP?
2011-2012	93%	8%	28%	50%	Yes
2010-2011	91%	12%	30.9%	51.75%	Yes

Oak Knoll Elementary School has three major subgroups: economically disadvantaged (as measured by students eligible for free and/or reduced priced lunches), students with disabilities, and English Language Learners. Students from these backgrounds are faced with challenges that directly affect individual literacy development.

Teacher Data

Oak Knoll Certified Personnel Data 2012-2013

Georgia Educator Certificate Level	# of Teachers
4	16
5	19
6	6
7	1

Source: Georgia Professional Standards Commission

Oak Knoll has 42 certified teachers of whom 38% have a Bachelor’s degree (Level 4), 45% have a Master’s degree (Level 5), 14% have a Specialist degree (Level 6), and 2% of the teachers have a Doctoral degree (Level 7).

Teacher Analysis of Separations

Oak Knoll	# Certified	Resign	Retire	Trans	Total	
2011-2012	41	4	0	3	7	17.1%
2010-2011	49	6	2	2	10	20.4%
2009-2010	52	7	3	0	10	19.2%

Source: Fulton County Board of Education Analysis by School of Certified Separations

Out of the 41 teachers who worked at Oak Knoll during the 2011-2012 school year, 9% resigned and 7% transferred to another school within the district. The teachers had various reasons for leaving, e.g., having an opportunity to work closer to home or moving out of state and looking for a different type of environment.

Teacher Retention Data

School Year	Percentage of Certified Teachers Retained
2011-2012	82.9%
2010-2011	79.6%
2009-2010	80.8%

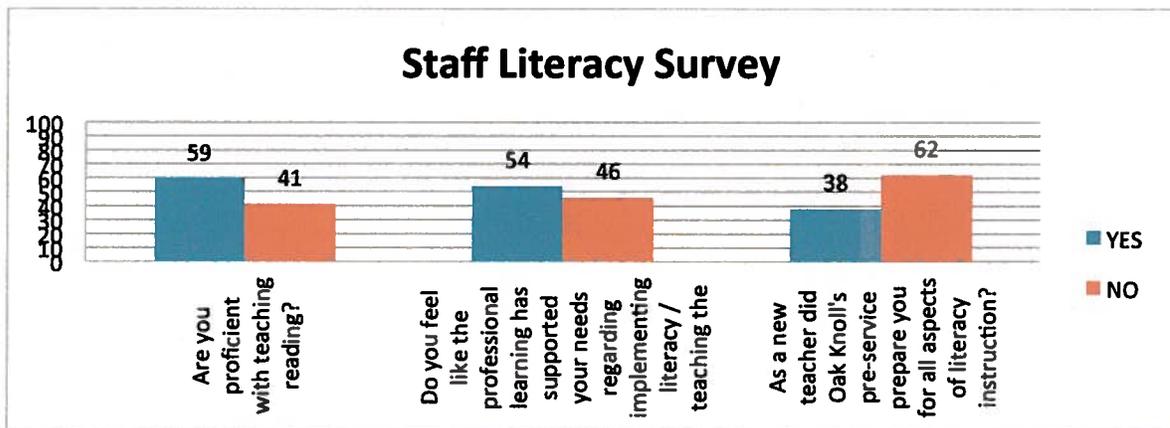
Source: Fulton County Board of Education Analysis by School of Certified Separations

Due to professional development, self-assessment strategies, consistent feedback of Teacher Evaluations, and community partnerships, Oak Knoll has been able to retain a significant number of staff each year. It is noted that our staff development, workshops, Professional Learning Communities, access to research-based literature on best practices, and the availability of additional resources positively impact our teacher retention data.

Teacher Professional Learning Needs in Literacy

Oak Knoll has a committed staff with strong educational and culturally competent backgrounds. Teachers participate in ongoing Professional Learning throughout the year in the areas of Technology, Data Analysis and Usage, Math, and CCGPS.

A teacher survey was completed to determine professional learning needs in teaching reading. The results are indicated below:



Survey results indicate that most teachers at Oak Knoll thought they were proficient with teaching reading. Even though 54% of the teachers thought that the professional learning

supported their needs in the area of teaching reading, their comments indicated that they still need some professional learning which emphasizes the reading process, assessing reading, and applying best practices when teaching reading. In addition new teachers felt more professional development was needed in teaching literacy.

Project Plan, Procedures, Goals, Objectives, and Support

Goals

Based on our needs assessment data, Oak Knoll Elementary School has developed the following goals to support our literacy plan:

Goal	Objective/Measure	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will retain 87% of teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compared to 2011-2012 retention rate of 83%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of all students will Meet or Exceed in Language CRCT (PARCC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 2011-2012 CRCT data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 87% of all students Meet or Exceed in Language CRCT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018-2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students that will Meet or Exceed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3rd: Reading 86%, ELA 86% ○ 4th: Reading 93%, ELA 90% ○ 5th: Reading 94%, ELA 96% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 2011-2012 data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grade 3: Reading 81%, ELA 81% ○ Grade 4: Reading 91%, ELA 88% ○ Grade 5: Reading 89%, ELA 94% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018-2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of Students with Disabilities (SWD) that will Meet or Exceed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3rd: Reading 50%, ELA 50% ○ 4th: Reading 50%, ELA 50% ○ 5th: Reading 78%, ELA 94% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 2011-2012 data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3rd grade: Insufficient data ○ 4th grade ELA 50% ○ 5th grade 91.7 % 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018-2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of English Language Learners (ELL) that will Meet or Exceed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading 90%, ELA 90% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 2011-2012 data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ELL: Reading 86.3%, ELA 80.8% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018-2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in grades 3 and 5 will improve achievement in writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of 3rd and 5th grade students taking the Georgia Writing Assessment will meet the standard. • 85% of 3rd and 5th grade students taking the Georgia Writing Assessment will meet the standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 (baseline) • 2014

Objectives

Oak Knoll selected four areas to meet the goals that have been determined based on our needs assessment and a survey that the staff completed regarding literacy instruction and implementation. The identified areas are professional development, a balanced literacy plan, technology integration, and RTI specific resources. By focusing on these areas, Oak Knoll will be able to address and improve performance in each of the areas listed in our needs assessment.

Professional Development

Based on our needs assessment, Oak Knoll will provide additional professional development in the following areas: CCGPS, balanced literacy, the relationship between CCGPS and IEP goals, classroom management, student engagement, differentiation, technology integration, RTI, motivation and engagement, and DIBELS Next. Professional learning for parents will be provided in the areas of reading and writing. Oak Knoll will utilize teacher leaders, representatives from various technology-based companies, educational consultants and trainers from the specific literacy programs to conduct professional development.

Balanced Literacy Plan

We are enhancing our balanced school-wide literacy plan so that staff will be trained on literacy programming throughout the year in every subject. We will increase the availability of print media for both school and home use (i.e. – more “Just Right” books to check-out on different levels for students to practice reading at home). We will make more language masters available for use throughout the school. Further, we will implement Supplemental Reading Programs such as Accelerated Reader.

Technology Integration

Oak Knoll will increase the availability of technology/software in the school by making e-reader devices available for all classes. We will provide learning response systems for each grade level to use during literacy instruction. Additional laptops and tablets will be used to facilitate rigorous standards-based activities for all students. Students will be able to access Internet sites for more engaging lessons and learning opportunities.

RTI Resources

Oak Knoll will increase the number of resources available to teachers by providing research-based interventions and progress monitoring. Data teams will be more proficient in monitoring data and determining the appropriate tier that the student should be placed based on the data. Data teams will meet monthly to ensure that students are receiving the appropriate interventions for the specified amounts of time. All Tier 2 students will receive the appropriate amount of specialized interventions for 15 – 20 minutes three to five times a week. All Tier 3 students will receive the prescribed 30 minutes of intervention 4-5 times per week.

Plan for Tiered Literacy Instruction

Oak Knoll's RTI model works to ensure that students receive appropriate instruction and interventions based on their needs. Vertical teams of teachers and support staff collaborate to ensure that each student succeeds. All struggling students are identified based on their academic and/or behavioral concerns. An individualized plan is then devised to meet those specific areas of concern.

In Tier 1, all students participate in standard-based, differentiated instruction. Teachers frequently monitor progress towards mastery of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. This progress monitoring is done through summarizing activities and collection of informal data as well as by common and post-assessments. With the data, teachers are able to provide timely interventions and create flexible groups.

In Tier 2, teachers determine which students need additional support, and a general education intervention plan is developed. Students may receive extra support from the Early Intervention Plan (EIP) teacher in a small group setting. Teachers may also provide interventions and monitor those interventions within the general education classroom. Through this meaningful interaction, teachers are provided with a support network and strategies from varying perspectives. The effectiveness of the interventions is determined based on data collection.

In Tier 3, teachers seek additional support from the Student Support Team (SST) since the student continues to struggle after multiple strategies have been utilized. At this step, teachers work with support staff, parents, EIP teacher, and SST chair to establish additional strategies and interventions that are tailored to the needs of the individual student. Teachers continue to gather data on the effectiveness of the interventions for 12 weeks. Students who do not respond to interventions in Tiers 1-3 may move to Tier 4 for consideration for Exceptional Children services. Students who respond favorably to interventions may move to Tier 1.

Best Practices

While developing our goals and objectives, we were guided by our literature review including the following research-based best practices:

- Integrate literacy in all subjects as articulated within CCGPS so that teachers have a common process to teach academic vocabulary in all subjects and students write in

every class. Provide professional learning on using literary and informational texts, incorporating writing instruction, conducting research projects, navigating the text structures, developing a school-wide writing rubric that is aligned with the CCGPS (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 6);

- The Leadership Team examines the quality of teachers’ practices in implementing literacy initiatives in the classroom by observing direct instruction, modeling, and practice in reading comprehension strategies as well as structuring of content area instruction and reading assignments to make them more accessible to students (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 131).
- Teachers support the Response to Intervention (RTI) tiers 1 and 2 to enable all students to access the CCGPS by 2014 (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010, pg. 131).
- The assessment plan includes commonly shared mid-course assessments across classrooms, universal screeners to determine instructional decisions for RTI service options, technology infrastructure supports to safely store data, a formative assessment calendar, a protocol to identify high achieving/advanced learners who would benefit from enrichment of advanced coursework, opportunities for students identified by routine screenings to receive diagnostic assessment, and multiple-entry points to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach (GaDOE, *The What*, 2012, pg. 8).

Assessment / Data Analysis Plan

Oak Knoll’s current assessment protocol is summarized in the table below.

Assessment	Purpose	Skills	Frequency
Checkpoints	Diagnostic	Comprehension	3 times per year
Common Formative Assessments	Progress monitoring	Comprehension, Vocabulary, Phonics	Monthly
End of Unit Assessments	Outcome	Comprehension, Vocabulary, Phonics	
GKIDS (kindergarten)	Progress monitoring, Outcome	Phonological Awareness, Alphabet knowledge, Concept of Print, Oral Language	ongoing
Informal Assessments	Progress monitoring	Comprehension, Vocabulary, Phonics	Ongoing
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	Outcome, Screening	Comprehension, Vocabulary	Once per year
Online Assessment Results	Progress monitoring	Comprehension, Vocabulary	Ongoing
Periodic Fluency Assessments	Progress monitoring	Fluency	4 times per year
State Writing assessments (grades 3 and 5)	Outcome	Writing Instruction	Once per year

Protected time is set aside for teachers to meet in our professional learning communities to review student work, analyze data, and make decisions based on assessment results (common assessments, district assessments, etc.). Grade level chairpersons collaborate with members of the administrative team to make decisions after reviewing assessment data.

Our school commits to using the DIBELS Next assessments as part of the Striving Reader project. This assessment tool is needed because we currently do not have an evaluative instrument aligned with phonics instruction. Administrators and teachers will participate in the Georgia Department of Education’s professional learning sessions to

learn how to administer DIBELS Next assessments and to learn best practices on how to include DIBELS Next in our current assessment protocol.

Parental Engagement

It is important that we share assessment data with our parents. We receive two copies of student test results. We give one copy to parents through the mail, in student packets, or during parent/teacher conferences. We also send out “user friendly” email messages to further explain the results of our state tests. We offer multiple resources to parents to help them understand their child’s assessment data and how to improve performance:

- The interpretation of the test results is provided to parents during conferences and upon request. Our parents can arrange a parent-teacher conference any day of the week, after speaking to the teacher.
- We facilitate testing workshops for parents to discuss the CRCT regarding content weight, testing strategies, and test score interpretation.
- We offer parent workshops for parents to learn how to teach certain strategies at home to assist their children.
- We offer parents the passwords for Study Island, so they can work with their child at home to practice the Common Core Standards that are being taught.
- We promote our Title I Parent Resource Room. It’s a place where parents can utilize computer programs, check out teaching aids for their children to use at home, and utilize learning materials of their choice.
- Parents also meet with the Title I Parent Liaison to acquire additional resources to assist their children.

Oak Knoll will continue with our current assessment protocol until the district mandates alternative assessments or changes.

Resources, Strategies, Materials including Technology to Support the Literacy Plan

Implementation Plan for Goals and Objectives Identified

Oak Knoll’s instructional schedule, including tiered instruction, will consist of a daily 2 hour reading block, small group instruction and differentiated instruction. Technology will continue to be implemented in the learning process and include curriculum enhancements such as digital storytelling, classroom libraries, guest author, and content area database subscriptions. Media literacy programs currently in use will continue to be integrated. The following literacy programming will also be implemented:

- Woodruff Arts Program (K-2 Wolf Trap, 3-5 Reader’s/Writer’s Theater) – Staff from Woodruff Arts Programs will work collaboratively with teachers and students by transforming the lives and learning of young people through the arts. GA Wolf Trap Artists developed a K-2 program to provide active engagement through the disciplines of drama, music and movement activities to teach literacy skills. Reader’s/Writer’s Theater uses innovative drama-based teaching strategies to build literacy skills and includes oral presentations of text, application of word recognition and pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and non-verbal communication to make meaning for an audience.
- Development of a professional resource library.
- Increased exposure to non-fiction text through leveled classroom libraries.
- Professional learning for teachers.

Faculty and Staff to Implement Plan

All certified staff will be responsible for implementing Oak Knoll’s literacy plan. Designated staff members will be responsible for redelivery of professional development. All members of the staff that do not currently hold reading endorsement or postsecondary degrees in Reading and Literacy will be

provided the opportunity to partake in the reading endorsement. Administrators will work assiduously to monitor the reliability of the implementation and teams will regularly evaluate the processes.

Existing Resources (Time, Personnel, and Strategies) for Tier I-Tier IV Instruction

	Time	Personnel	Strategies
Tier 1-Core Curriculum (Grades K-5)	2.5 hours of daily literacy instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Ed. Teacher • Kindergarten Para-pro • Media Specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole group instruction • Small group instruction • Differentiated centers • Technology/websites • Instructional timelines • Informal progress monitoring
Tier 2-Strategic Intervention (Grades K-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 to 20 minutes • 3 to 5 days a week • At least 6 weeks of intervention • Up to 8 students • Extended Day 2 hours 2 times a week (3rd-5th) • Learning Lab 20 minutes, 5 days a week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Ed. Teacher • Kindergarten Para-pro • EIP Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group instruction • Differentiated centers • Technology/web-based instruction • Instructional timelines • Individualized progress monitoring
Tier 3 Intensive Intervention (Grades K-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIP 45-50 minutes • Extended Day 2 hours 2 times a week (3rd-5th only) • Learning Lab 20 minutes, 5 days a week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Ed. Teacher • ESOL Teacher • School Counselor • SST • EIP teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Instruction • Instruction Games • Study Island • Reading Eggs • Individualized Progress Monitoring • CRCT practice materials
Tier 4-Due Process (Grades K-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined by Individualized Education Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Ed. Teacher • Special Ed. Teacher • Instructional Support Teacher • Speech-Language Pathologist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Support Team • Speech and language services • Co-teaching • Specially Designed Instruction • Second Language support

Listed below are the resources and/or activities readily available at Oak Knoll Elementary:

Current Resources/Activities	Shared Resources	Library Resources
Reading A to Z DRA2 Kit Study Eggs Discovery Learning Reading Eggs Access to Study Island Unlimited access to Leveled Readers Stories on tape/CD Access to Georgia Online Assessment System (GOAS) Read/Write out loud 6 Draft Builder 6 Harcourt Trophies Literature Box Reading Rods (phonics) Learning Lab Extended Day Book It! Reading Program Six Flags Reading Club	Rock-N-Learn CDs Big books on CD and/or tape Reader’s Theaters	Magazine subscriptions for students Instructional CDs and videotapes Reader’s Theaters Professional resource library Big books on CD and/or tape Limited leveled reading books

Proposed Resources

Listed below are proposed implementation strategies to support Oak Knoll’s literacy plan and classroom practices:

- Online texts and instructional resources
- Handheld response systems
- Assessment materials/item bank for common assessments
- Internet based publishing software
- Reduction of extended day class size for students with disabilities

Library Resources

- Materials for leveled instruction library and professional resource library.
- Supplemental reading materials for EL and EC teachers.
- Supplemental reading materials for General Education teachers.
- Professional develop to include research based strategies for teaching English learners, tiered instruction, research-based strategies for literacy instruction for students with disabilities, cross-curricular connections, writing across content areas, reading and writing application and software.

Professional Learning Strategies Identified on the Basis of Documented Need

The Oak Knoll Leadership Team consistently seeks out and attends professional development to expand their knowledge base and to increase proficiency with providing support to teachers. The school culture values and supports ongoing professional learning. The table below highlights the professional learning activities that our teachers have attended during the past year.

Professional Learning Topic	PL Hours	% of Staff Attending
Steps-2-Achieve	5	100%
Common Core GPS	6	100%
Differentiated Instruction	5	100%
Science/Math PLC	8	100%
Teacher Leadership	3	100%
High Order Thinking	5	100%
Data Usage/ Analysis Workshop	10	100%
High Impact Rubric	1	100%

On-going Professional Learning

Our current professional learning focuses on balanced literacy, differentiated instruction and reading/writing across the curriculum. The table below describes each approach.

On-going Professional Learning	Descriptions	Delivery Method
Balanced Literacy	To provide teachers with an understanding of Balanced Literacy and its components.	Once a month, grade level
Differentiated Instruction	Provide teachers with strategies for leading and managing a differentiated classroom.	Once a month faculty professional learning

Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum	The goal is to help teachers in several disciplines become effective in incorporating reading and writing instruction into their teaching.	Once a month faculty professional learning.
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Measuring Effectiveness

Oak Knoll teachers collaborate on literacy integration across all content areas during grade levels Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). These PLCs meet weekly to discuss student data, identify interventions, and share best practices that will help them implement literacy instruction. The PLCs help the Literacy Leadership Team identify professional learning needs and evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

Professional Learning Needs

The application section, 'Needs Assessment, Concerns and Root Cause Analysis,' describe in detail our professional learning needs based on our assessment of student and teacher data (see page 5 of that section). In summary, teachers lack knowledge in planning and implementing rigorous instruction and higher order thinking skills. They integrate reading strategies inconsistently during science and social studies. They lack adequate time during social studies and science blocks to implement literacy strategies. They have limited knowledge of teaching writing effectively. Further, they inconsistently use informational texts during reading.

Sustainability Plan

Oak Knoll is committed to the Striving Reader project and values the need to provide high-quality literacy support to our students. Our principal, Angela Parham, has made this initiative a priority. By establishing the Literacy Leadership Team and the Literacy Council, our school has a solid governance structure to implement and sustain a Striving Reader grant. We have established long-term goals and incorporated sustainability considerations into our literacy plan. We will sustain programming beyond the grant period by securing funding from a variety of sources. Our general operating funds will be used to support literacy investments. Title II, Part A funds will help support professional development in literacy. Grant funding from local and national philanthropic organizations will be pursued to sustain the literacy interventions over time.

Extending the Assessment Protocol

Beyond the life of the grant, the Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS Next) and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) can be used to provide essential data for all students. Not only does DIBELS Next provide a fluency measure, it also assesses early phonemic awareness and first sound fluency of an individual student. The SRI provides benchmark assessments for the identification of students' reading skills; SRI guides teachers to differentiate and offer intervention strategies for struggling students. Students receive a Lexile score based on the comprehension of a text which has an equivalent reading level. Once a student masters one level, the program gives another reading passage at a higher level. Media centers categorize books by their Lexile levels; therefore, SRI helps match the reader to the appropriate text for 75% reading accuracy rate. An accuracy rate ensures that appropriate challenge is built in while mitigating a student's level of frustration.

Extending Professional Learning

Extending the professional learning practices beyond the grant will be provided to all teachers with the skills and knowledge to enhance language, literacy, and reading development of children, particularly those from low income families, through strategies and professional development that are grounded in scientifically-based reading research and family literacy. The professional development plan systematically addresses early literacy skills essential to future reading success by providing seminars, field trips to model classrooms, study groups, in-classroom coaching, summer institute and local and national conferences. As Striving Reader schools bring on new staff in future years, literacy training will be provided as part of new teacher development. Curriculum contacts will provide opportunities for new teachers to learn grant-funded strategies, such as those learned through the partnership with the Woodruff Arts Center, and use resources during the first two years of induction as a part of our new teacher support program. An assigned mentor teacher will work with new staff as they begin to plan and implement instructional strategies that support the school's literacy plan.

Extending Technology

We will sustain our technology beyond the grant by using the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds that were voted on in the November 2011 election. The SPLOST proposal calls for technology enhancements, particularly in the areas of wireless, mobile learning devices for student use, updated video and audio recording tools, improved and expanded distance learning for students, virtual space for digital student work, interactive classroom websites with curriculum resources and assignments, updated equipment for technology and career-oriented classes, teacher/student communication and collaboration tools, and online

professional learning resources for staff. The district's technology plan will help sustain the Striving Reader investments made in educational technology at our school.

Budget Summary

Professional Development

Oak Knoll Elementary requests funding for targeted teachers to attend literature conferences to understand best practices in utilizing literature circles, guided instruction, independent reading, and classroom libraries. We also request funding for DIBELS Next, differentiated instruction, classroom management, Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, and balanced literacy.

We are also requesting funding for professional development to offer teachers a reading endorsement. A reading endorsement program prepares certified teachers to meet the diverse literacy needs of all students. The program typically includes coursework in theoretical models and processes of reading, individual and classroom assessment methods, and content area instructional strategies for teaching reading. Other topics might include scientifically-based reading research, diagnosis techniques, strategies for working with struggling, as well as gifted readers, and strategies for working with ELL students more effectively.

Additionally, professional development funds will be utilized in a partnership with the Woodruff Arts Center to provide the Georgia Wolf Trap Literacy Program K-2 and Reader's Theatre 3-5, which have a professional learning focus. Teachers will receive professional learning to enhance instruction through Reader's Theatre and they will learn drama strategies that promote learning in literacy skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing. The program builds drama skills in oral and non-verbal expression, creative and critical thinking, ensemble work and self-regulation.

Instructional Materials

We request funding to build classroom libraries, which includes purchasing different genres and readers based on students' needs. Students will have the opportunity to read selected books on their independent level. The funding will also be used to purchase novels for book studies for students in third through fifth grade. We will invite students to participate in a novel study where they will read a book per semester and meet twice a month to have discussions about their book. At the end of the novel study there will be a culminating activity sponsored by parents and the Reading Committee. In addition we will use these funds to purchase classroom supplies for interventions. This will assist teachers in creating literacy-rich centers and an engaging environment for students. In an effort to provide support for the identified day care/afterschool providers, Oak Knoll will request leveled readers to support continued literacy exposure at these centers. Oak Knoll will request funding for professional development of day care staff in the areas of initial reading instruction (phonics and phonemic awareness) for the pre-school aged children.

Technology and Software

Oak Knoll Elementary School requests funding for laptop computer mobile labs to access electronic literacy content, oversized keyboards to provide access for primary general education students and special education students, a learner response system, and document cameras for each classroom. We also request funding for digital storytelling software, reading and subscription databases, translation and interpreting software, electronic books, and books in audio format to strengthen student and parent

comprehension and foster independent reading for primary and ELL students, and students with disabilities.

All hardware and software purchased will comply with Fulton County Schools' policies, procedures and guidelines. Hardware and software purchased that is considered non-standard to FCS must either be purchased with manufacturer warranty agreements that cover repair and maintenance, or the items budgeted must include funding for a consultant who will provide maintenance and support.

Stipends

We will use grant funds to provide teachers with stipends for Saturday School and additional trainings held on the weekends or over the summer.