



# School Profile

Last updated: 04/08/2015

## Page 1

### School Information

System Name:	Rockdale County Public Schools
School or Center Name:	Rockdale County Early Learning
System ID	0722
School ID	0722

### Level of School

Early Learning (Birth to Five)

### Principal

Name:	Shauna Miller
Position:	Early Learning Coordinator
Phone:	770-388-5677
Email:	<a href="mailto:smiller2@rockdale.k12.ga.us">smiller2@rockdale.k12.ga.us</a>

### School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

Name:	Jennifer Everhart
Position:	Parent Educator
Phone:	770-388-5677
Email:	<a href="mailto:jeverhart@rockdale.k12.ga.us">jeverhart@rockdale.k12.ga.us</a>

### Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

pre-k

### Number of Teachers in School

37

### FTE Enrollment



**By clicking the "yes" boxes below, you are executing a legally-binding digital signature indicating that you are the authorized signatory of the entity responsible for the operation of the grant program, that you have read, understood, and agree to abide by each specific assurance and that failure to abide by any or all assurances may result in loss or reduction of grant funding.**

## 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

## Page 1

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

[SRCL General Information Packet-Cohort 4](#)

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

Yes

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

[SRCL Scoring Rubric-Cohort 4](#)

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

Yes

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

[SRCL Required Assessments Chart](#)

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

Yes

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## Assessments

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

I Agree

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## 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](mailto:jmorrill@doe.k12.ga.us)

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

I Agree

## **Georgia Department of Education Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy**

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

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

### **I. Conflicts of Interest**

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

#### **a. Organizational Conflicts of Interest.**

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

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



## Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

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

### **b. Employee Relationships**

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

## Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

- iv. The Applicant must incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements awarded under this Agreement and must further require that each such subcontractor or consultant incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements at any tier awarded under this Agreement unless GaDOE determines otherwise.
  - v. The information as it is submitted must be certified as being true and correct. If there is no such information, the certification must so state.
- c. **Remedies for Nondisclosure**  
The following are possible remedies available to the GaDOE should an Applicant misrepresent or refuse to disclose or misrepresent any information required by this clause:
- 1. Termination of the Agreement.
  - 2. Exclusion from subsequent GaDOE grant opportunities.
  - 3. Other remedial action as may be permitted or provided by law or regulation or policy or by the terms of the grant agreement.
- d. **Annual Certification**. The Applicant must provide annually, based on the anniversary date of Agreement award, the following certification in writing to GaDOE. The annual certification must be submitted with the grantees annual end of year program report.

### ANNUAL CERTIFICATION OF DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

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

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

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

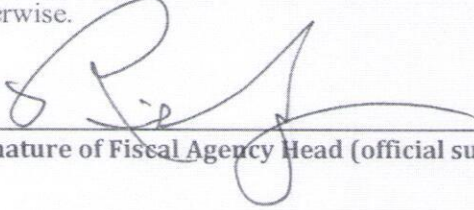
## II. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest after Agreement Execution**

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

Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

III. Incorporation of Clauses

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



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

Richard Autry, Superintendent  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head and Position Title

11/07/2014  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

Shauna Miller  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed Name of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head and Position Title

11/17/14  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Co-applicant's Authorized Agency Head (if applicable)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed Name of Co-applicant's Authorized Agency Head and Position Title (if applicable)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (if applicable)

# Fiscal Agent Memo of Understanding

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

## Fiscal Agent/Applicant Required Signatures:

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

Please sign in blue ink.

Name of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: Richard Autry

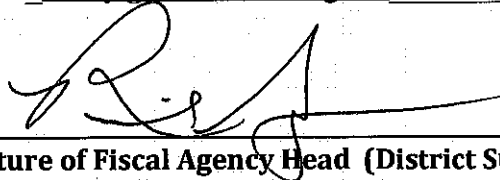
Position/Title of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: Superintendent

Address: 954 North Main Street

City: Conyers Zip: 30012

Telephone: (770) 860-4211 Fax: (770) 860-4266

E-mail: rautry@rockdale.k12.ga.us



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

Richard Autry

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

10/29/2014

Date (required)

## Brief History of the System

Rockdale County is located approximately 25 miles east of Atlanta on Interstate 20 and within the Metropolitan Atlanta Region. Despite being the second smallest county in Georgia geographically, Rockdale County ranks 10th in population density and 28th in overall population, with a total population of approximately 85,765 (2010 US Census.) The median household income in Rockdale was \$55,779 in 2010, up 4.07% since 2000, though income growth rate is more than 50% lower than the state average rate of 9.42%. This is substantially lower than the national average rate of 19.17%. Categorized as being on the "urban fringe of a large city," Rockdale is uniquely comprised of 34% suburban, 35% rural and 16% urban class/land structures and is equally represented by both White and African American residents, including significant identification with Hispanic, Asian and East Indian cultures. This is not, however, reflective of our student population. As a result of the county's slow economic growth, we have experienced a large number of home foreclosures and a rapid and steep decline in the tax digest.

Rockdale County Public Schools (RCPS) has 16,300 children enrolled in 22 schools and programs for the 2014-15 school year - 11 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 3 high schools and a variety of specialty schools and programs. RCPS is fully immersed in high rigor and strong academic standards and expectations as evidenced by its remarkable accomplishments in student achievement and closing gaps among subgroups.

## System Demographics

RCPS has experienced increasing numbers of students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. District-wide, the student population is 65% African American, 18% White, and 12% Hispanic. All of our eighteen "traditional" schools are Title I eligible. The free and reduced meal rate in RCPS is currently 71% with some schools as high as 91%, up from 63% in 2009. 99.8% of RCPS certified staff are "Highly Qualified." Each elementary school has a *Bright from the Start* pre-k program and there is a district-funded Early Learning Center for three and four-year old students.

## Current Priorities and Strategic Planning

RCPS's renewed strategic plan identifies six overarching strategies which will drive district and school initiatives over the next five years.

1. Create a rigorous system of teaching and learning that empowers students to define and achieve their educational success.
2. Create safe and supportive learning environments that inspire and activate the love of learning.

3. Create a culture that nurtures individual uniqueness and embraces the diversity of our school community.
4. Provide optimum resources to support a world-class educational system.
5. Continually maximize the district's capacity through the individual growth of each person.
6. Engage students, parents, community members and other stakeholders to build an alliance for student success.

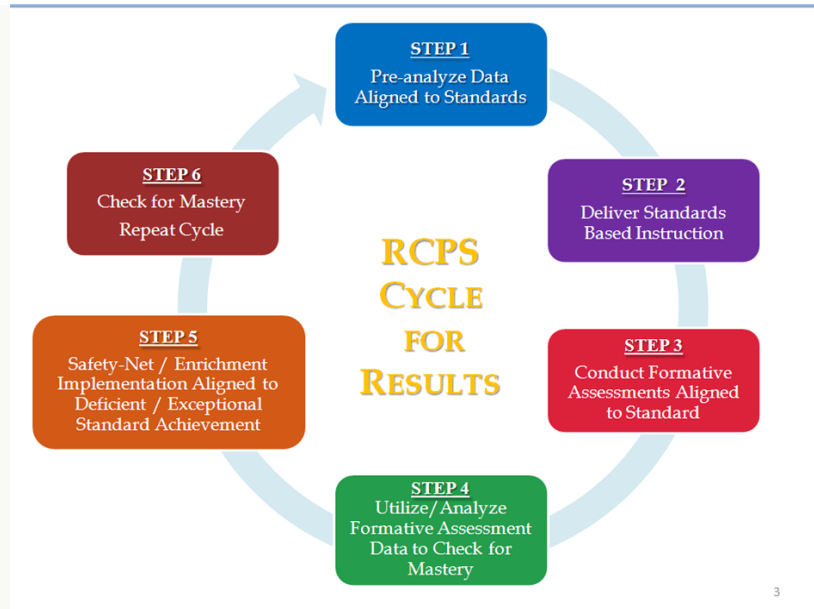
RCPS has a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that will 1) ensure educational equity; 2) accelerate student achievement by supporting each student's unique learning needs and individual interests; and 3) help each student achieve his or her greatest potential through a wide variety of strategies, supports and resources that are appropriate to his or her interests, abilities and learning styles. RCPS understands that this requires thoughtful, intentional planning and movement toward its goal of increasing literacy, and has identified the practices, policies, supports, systems and technologies needed to reengineer participating schools.

### **Current Management Structure**

Mrs. Shirley Chesser, Chief Academic Officer, will oversee all management of the Striving Readers grant. Ms. Shauna Miller, RCPS Early Learning Coordinator, will serve as project manager. All early learning sites in Cohort 4 will comply with Striving Readers grant requirements with principals, teachers, and literacy teams overseeing day-to-day instruction and monitoring of student progress.

### **Past Instructional Initiatives**

RCPS has prioritized its efforts to fully embrace the Georgia Performance Standards and the supporting tenets of Standards-based Education; thus, we have implemented a content coaching model and now employ district-based coaches. The Cycle for Results is the focal point.



RCPS has developed a framework for K-12 specialty and Choice options. For the first time ever, RCPS implemented four new Choice options for the 2013-14 school year. Thus far, three elementary, two middle schools, and two high schools offer Choice specialty programs, with plans to roll out additional Choice options over the next 3-5 years. In addition, Rockdale Virtual Campus expanded its offerings to enable a high school student to fulfill all graduation requirements through online courses, and welcomed its first full-time students last year.

## Literacy Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards and Common Core GPS. High schools and middle schools currently use the Pearson Common Core Literature series. Elementary schools are using Story Town. Pre-K Sites are using the High Scope curriculum.

## Literacy Assessments used District Wide

- STAR Early Literacy assessment from Renaissance Learning is the reading assessment for K-2. Grades 3-10 take the Scholastic Reading Inventory. Both assessments are given three times a year.
- In addition, we administer the Write Score mock writing assessment to grades 3, 5, and 8 and 10th, which this year included 2-3 reading passages along with the prompt. The old version with just a prompt and no passages was given twice in the fall to grades 3, 5, 8, and 10.
- The District ELA Benchmarks are given three times a year for grades 1-8, 9th & 10th.

- In addition, we receive data from other assessments such as SLO's, ITBS, CogAT, CRCT, and beginning in December for high school, the new Georgia Milestones assessment.
- Bracken Assessment is administered twice yearly to measure student growth for all pre-k students
- Work Sampling Online and Galileo are used to measure achievement and monitor progress of 3 and 4-year-old students
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire is used to screen students in the Parents as Teachers caseload

### **Need for a Striving Reader Project**

Student performance on state tests, such as the CRCT, reveals the need for a more structured enrichment process for the entire student population. On the 2014 CRCT, only 28% of our 6th graders and 41% of our 8th graders scored in the exceeds category on the ELA portion. The performance on the reading portion of the CRCT also highlights an area of improvement. In 5th grade, 40% of the students scored in the exceeds category, but the percentages varied widely, from 26% to 57% across the district. In 7th grade, only 39% of the students scored in the exceeds category, with a county low of 33% at EMS. While we have made great strides in increasing the percentage of students who meet the standards on the CRCT, there are still gains to be made. While our county average on the Georgia 5th grade Writing Assessment was higher than the state average of 80%, eight of our elementary schools scored below the Metro RESA. On the 8th grade writing assessment, we showed a decline district-wide from the previous year's performance. This downward trend is evident in our students' performance on the Georgia High School Writing Test. In examining the two year trend, we showed a decline in all subgroups. Additionally, the increased rigor of Georgia Milestones will only widen this gap.

*RCPS Striving Readers* is highly responsive to a rapidly changing high-need student population and increasing call for attention to personalized learning, with an overall goal of having a significant impact on improving student outcomes. The *RCPS Striving Reader* program will incorporate a customizable learning path that puts the needs of students first, honors each student as an individual learner, and recognizes that each student has a unique learning style, interests, aspirations, and challenges to learning. It is a deliberate framework that blends professional development, comprehensive literacy assessments, a multi-layered RTI process, and cross-curricular literacy programming for students in seven Rockdale schools and infused into early learning programs.




## District Management Plan and Key Personnel

The decision to apply for Georgia’s Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy Grant was made only after discussion with all elementary school leaders, school staff and district level support personnel. Responsibilities included with the grant application and implementation were fully vetted. The system is committed to applying for, receiving, implementing, and monitoring the grant with integrity and fidelity. Grant funding will provide a vehicle to support many of the goals within our district’s strategic plan. The implementation, monitoring, and reporting of goals and objectives in the grant will be ultimately managed at a district level through the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. The chart below indicates those individuals involved in the district level process.

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
<b>Purchasing</b>	Project Manager; DeDe Cottingham, Purchasing Manager; and Lisa McMillan, Finance Reporting Manager	Keith Hull, Director of Business Services
<b>Finances</b>	Keith Hull, Director of Business Services	Lee Davis, Chief Financial Officer
<b>Professional Learning</b>	Tammy Smith, Director of Professional Learning	Shirley, Chesser, Chief Academic Officer
<b>Technology</b>	Grover Dailey, Director of Technology	Gene Baker, Chief of Staff
<b>Assessment</b>	Erika Tucker, ELA Coordinator and Laura Grimwade, Director of Research, Assessment and Accountability	Shirley Chesser, Chief Academic Officer
<b>Site Level Oversight</b>	Shauna Miller, Jennifer Everhart and Early Learning Literacy Teams	Superintendent and Cabinet
<b>District Level Oversight</b>	Shauna Miller, Project Manager and Erika Tucker, ELA Coordinator	Andrea Pritchett, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

The RCPS Striving Readers Program Manager will be responsible for managing the grant operations, implementing related activities, coordinating relevant meetings, preparing and/or disseminating information and surveys to schools and administrators as an evaluation tool to determine project success and needs for improvement, collaborating with district and school level administration in all program implementation(s), collaborating with partners on relevant activities, establishing a plan to ensure sustainability of grant initiatives, establishing goals and objectives of the grant that are aligned with the philosophy within the RCPS strategic plan, overseeing funding for the grant, and collecting and analyzing data to ensure and evaluate the quality of the implementation of the service learning program. At the building level, each school principal and pre-k teacher will be responsible for overseeing the grant at his/her location. Grant

teams will participate in project reviews and support the early learning literacy plan. The Program Manager and District Literacy Team will meet as soon as the grant is awarded to begin planning to prioritize needs, create budgets, and establish timelines for plan implementation. The Program Manager will also participate in meetings and networking with other grantees. Budget decisions will be made by the Program Manager in consultation with the pre-k teacher at each location. All requisitions will be approved by the *RCPS Striving Readers* Program Manager. Our established procedures for internal control for federal programs will be followed. All pre-k teachers will meet monthly to discuss project implementation and progress. Day to day implementation of the literacy plan at each school will involve instructional coaches, assistant principals, lead teachers and the Literacy Team. *Striving Reader* goals and plans will be integrated into our school improvement plans and our system strategic plan.



## Experience of the Applicant

Rockdale County Public Schools oversees an annual budget of approximately \$211 million including federal, state, and local funds. As one of the only school systems in Georgia to continue to operate debt-free, RCPS has a well-established internal and external structure for successfully managing large projects.

Project/Dates	Funding Source	Amounts	Sustained?
Rockdale Virtual Campus – opened in 2006	Implemented internally	Varied over the years.	Yes and expanded.
Rockdale Open Campus – opened in 2007	Implemented internally	Varied over the years.	Yes.
Rockdale Career Academy – opened in 2006	Funded locally	Varied over the years.	Yes and expanded (see below.)
Rockdale Career Academy expansion– 2009 to 2013	Georgia Career Academies Project - Technical College System of GA	\$2,720,000	Yes. Capital project; built new wing.
Data Warehouse, Longitudinal Data System, Teacher/Leader Assessment System– 2010 to present	Georgia DOE Race to the Top grant	\$2,355,000	Yes, using local funds and SPLOST dollars.
STARS Project (Support Team for All Rockdale Students)– 2010 to 2014	Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant	\$3,900,000	The effective portions of the initiative are being sustained with local funds and additional grant money.
REMS Emergency Preparedness Audits, Assessments and District Emergency Response Plan – 2008-2010	Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools - USDOE	\$229,000	Yes. The Emergency Preparedness Plan continues to be maintained as the district standard for student safety.
Academy of Environmental Science at Memorial Middle School	Governor’s Office Innovation Fund	\$676,000	Yes.
Credit Recovery Program – pilot – 2009-2010	Federal grant	\$429,000	Yes, now district-wide.
Math Science Partnership – 2008-2010, and 2010-2012	GA DOE	\$371,000	Not the original model, though the professional learning activities continue.
Expansion of the AVID program – 2011-2013	Federal funding	\$300,000	Yes.
Pre-K Early Learning Initiative – 2011-2013	Federal funding	\$400,000	Yes and expanded.

RCPS has managed partnerships of similar size and scope, through a participatory planning process with all partners – more specifically, the STARS project (Safe Schools/Healthy Students) brings together community members to create a “Support Team for All Rockdale Students”. The STARS Project has seen improvement in the areas of bullying, mental health

services, early childhood education and alcohol/tobacco/ substance abuse prevention. Additionally, Rockdale County is the birthplace of the Georgia System of Care Model – a network of community partners creating a menu of comprehensive, needs-based wrap-around services for children and their families. The RCPS Early Learning Center and its supportive programs allow many of the county’s neediest children to be prepared for success when they begin Kindergarten. Additionally, as a result of sound budgeting and community support/confidence, students are benefitting from enhanced learning opportunities through technology, school safety and improved facilities funded by the fourth E-SPLOST referendum.

These multi-million dollar projects involve large-scale compliance, fiscal, personnel, purchasing and program management activities, and included a variety of evaluative and auditing processes. RCPS also uses a continuous improvement model to ensure the projects are high-quality and operating with fidelity. The proposed activities will be managed within this structure, using existing internal and external groups for communication and feedback to meet stakeholder needs.

RCPS has no audit findings in the last four years to report and full district audits are available for inspection.

Year	Net Assets	Expenses	Findings
2010	\$178,703,756	\$159,043,392	No matters were reported.
2011	\$211,973,439	\$160,094,402	No matters were reported.
2012	\$210,377,467	\$162,097,614	No matters were reported.
2013	\$211,143,889	\$158,440,201	No matters were reported.

### School Narrative

Rockdale County Public Schools' (RCPS) introduced an early learning program in 1996, creating one pre-k classroom at J.H. House that was funded by *Bright from the Start*. In 1997, *Bright from the Start* added two additional pre-k classrooms in the county. The program expanded in 2003, with an additional pre-k classroom funded in Rockdale County. Partnering with the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning has allowed the district to grow the program, now housing 13 GA Pre-K classrooms, 4 locally funded pre-K classrooms, 4 inclusion classrooms and the Parents as Teachers program.

The pre-K program consists of 13 four-year old classes funded by *Bright from the Start*. Three of the 13 classes are inclusion classrooms, serving students with disabilities (SWD) with two special education teachers and one instructional paraprofessional. There are 22 students in the Georgia Pre-K classes and 20 children in Georgia Pre-K inclusion classes. Additionally, the district houses an Early Learning Center with 2 additional four-year-old classes and 2 three-year-old classes. The NAEYC accredited Early Learning Center is funded with local dollars, housed at the Rockdale Career Academy and works cooperatively with students enrolled in the Early Childhood Education Pathway. There are 4 self-contained READY classrooms in the school system, serving three and four- year- old students. All early learning classes use the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) and student growth is monitored through 1 of 2 electronic platforms: Work Sampling Online or Galileo.

RCPS also serves early learning students using the Parents as Teachers (PAT) model. PAT employees follow the home visiting curriculum to serve students ages 0-5 and teen parents. Currently, PAT serves 82 families in their primary caseload, receiving a minimum of one home visit monthly, and there are 69 families on the secondary caseload, which allows parents opportunities to participate in monthly activities such as children's book clubs, make-it/take-it literacy activities, or parent seminars to educate adults about the GELDS.

Georgia's Pre-K Classrooms Students Enrolled: 282 Students	
Economically Disadvantaged	66%
Black	59%
Hispanic/Latino	21%
White	37%
Asian	1.5%

American Indian/Alaskan Native	0%
Multi-Racial	1.5%
Students With Disabilities	9%

	Early Learning Center at Rockdale Career Academy Students Enrolled: 92	Families enrolled in the Parents as Teachers program
3-year-olds	32 students	—
4-year-olds (excluding GA Pre-K Classroom)	40 students	—
Economically Disadvantaged	83%	66%
Black	37%	59%
Hispanic/Latino	43%	21%
White	63%	37%
Asian	0%	1.5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0%	0%
Students With Disabilities	3%	9%

#### Administrative and Teacher Leadership Team

Shauna Miller is the Early Learning Coordinator and has over 15 years of early childhood and education experience. Jamie Wilson is the Lead Teacher for Compliance for birth-5 year olds and previously taught students in the READY program. Megan Sayago is the Learning Support Coordinator who oversees appropriate placement and services for children birth-five. The county employs two behavior specialists that work with students and teachers as needed for behavior support.

In addition to local school-based administrative support, RCPS works closely with a *Bright from the Start* state consultant who conducts classroom observations and provides oversight and support. NAEYC accreditation reports are submitted and classrooms at The Early Learning Center continue to meet required guidelines. The RCPS Parents as Teachers program is in the process of Quality Endorsement, and additional support is provided at the state and national level to ensure model fidelity. RCPS provides full-time speech and language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, teachers for students with visual impairments, and diagnosticians who serve children throughout the district.

The district has a diverse Literacy Coalition that meets to discuss current Early Learning Initiatives and Developmentally Appropriate Practices.

### Instructional Initiatives

RCPS early learning classrooms and learning specialists use the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). These standards reflect current educational research and are aligned with CCGPS for grades K-12. The Learning Support Department identifies special needs students and determines eligibility for services. Three and four-year-olds are provided services in self-contained or inclusion classrooms and/or in community settings. The IEP committee determines the amount of special education time for each service area.

RCPS GA pre-K classes utilizes the High Scope Curriculum. This curriculum is appropriate for pre-K students, but continued use presents challenges for the district. The training for appropriate implementation is extensive, which is not conducive to the turnover and growth for pre-K in RCPS. Currently, RCPS is seeking alternative curriculum options that require less intensive training and offer technology implementation strategies. RCPS has recently purchased 10 iPads for every pre-K classroom in the district, and technology integration is an expectation for all classrooms.

All pre-K students are screened twice a year using the Bracken assessment. Teachers use the data to provide differentiated learning and targeted instruction to students.

### Professional Learning

The goal of the Early Learning Department is to maintain high quality programs in every school. RCPS seeks to provide learning opportunities to all parents and community centers regarding Developmentally Appropriate Practice. All community personnel interacting with young learners need access to high quality training for long-term academic success. Early Learning personnel need an understanding of the developmental stages of young children and age appropriate instructional strategies to employ. Staff need training in differentiation strategies for young children and tools to effectively integrate technology into pre-K classrooms. Early Learning personnel needs professional learning in creating a classroom and learning environment that fosters the development of early literacy and language development.

### Need for a Striving Reader Project

Although state and local funds continue to decrease, RCPS has made a commitment to educate the youngest learners in our community using local tax dollars, and the need for additional training and learning is apparent. It is imperative that our system seek grant funds to provide professional learning and instructional materials and technology to improve the academic achievement of all young learners. Pre-K advocates maintain that high quality pre-K

program professionals should receive specialized training in early childhood education, birth-five learning standards and developmentally appropriate practice.

Poverty and illiteracy are closely connected. Nationally, 1st graders from low-income families have 50% smaller vocabularies than their peers from higher income families. Before they even enter school, children living in poverty face a host of challenges that their wealthier peers do not: food and housing insecurity, poor health care and unsafe environments, limited exposure to books and language. Any one of these obstacles can affect their school performance, cognitive development, and ability to learn; some children face all of them, all at once. **In Rockdale County, the average Free & Reduced Lunch rate in our elementary schools is 75%, with some schools as high as 90%.** Of adults over the age of 25, 14% have not completed high school, compared to 16% statewide. Poverty (15%) and unemployment rates (7.2%) are high in Rockdale County when compared to national averages.

For several years, the data has indicated a need to improve teachers' skills and strategies in how to teach writing and students' abilities to write effectively. The SRCL grant would provide the necessary professional learning and materials to improve both the classroom teachers' and students' literacy skills; thereby, impacting the graduation rate and the number of students meeting and exceeding in reading/English/language arts on standardized assessments.

### **Georgia 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Writing Test – Spring 2014**

Rockdale County students are scoring significantly lower than the state average in all areas:

	<b>Rockdale County – Did Not Meet</b>	<b>Georgia – Did Not Meet</b>
Informational/Conventions	39%	29%
Informational/Ideas	19%	16%
Informational/Organization	31%	25%
Informational/Style	30%	26%
Narrative/Conventions	42%	31%
Narrative/Ideas	22%	17%
Narrative/Organization	29%	23%
Narrative/Style	33%	26%
Persuasive/Conventions	40%	30%
Persuasive /Ideas	26%	18%
Persuasive /Organization	32%	27%



Persuasive /Style	32%	28%
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Needs Assessment

A. Needs Assessment Description

The Community Stakeholders' Needs Assessment for Birth-to-Five Literacy for SRCL Cohort 4 was administered to a variety of community members including: teachers from pre-k, kindergarten, CTAE and special education, early learning community providers and paraprofessionals. Results were compiled and analyzed. In September 2014, the Rockdale Early Learning Literacy Leadership Team was formed in response to the need for enhanced literacy instruction. The Literacy Leadership Team reviewed student data to determine areas of concern.

B. Assessment Used

- a. Community Stakeholders' Needs Assessment for Birth-to-Five Literacy (15 questions related to the Building Blocks of Literacy Instruction) – given to community stakeholders
- b. Bracken Data for Pre-K Students – Screener administered twice yearly to all enrolled pre-k students to measure student growth and readiness for school
- c. Parent knowledge Surveys provided by Parent Educators for all program participants – measures parent knowledge on appropriate child development expectations
- d. RCPS District Strategic Plan – developed for Rockdale County Public Schools with a group of stakeholders including representation from local businesses, faith based organization, school system employees, law enforcement and government entities
- e. Kindergarten Readiness Screener – developed by Rockdale County Public Schools' Early Learning Transition Team and aligned with Kindergarten Common Core GPS and assessed GKIDS standards – all students who enter kindergarten in Rockdale County are screened for Kindergarten Readiness

C. Root Cause/Underlying Causes

The Needs Assessment Survey and review of our school literacy achievement data revealed the following needs and underlying root causes:

- a. Building Block 1: Leadership
  - i. The early learning literacy plan should include all stakeholders. 46% of survey respondents indicated a plan for literacy exists but is not used by all stakeholders.

Root Causes: low socioeconomic factor for majority of young children, low-education for parents of young children, lack of community engagement in educational issues, lack of knowledge and evidence about the longitudinal effects of early learning

- b. Building Block 2: Continuity of Instruction
  - i. Early Learning Coalition meets but meetings are not consistent and stakeholder participation is limited.
  - ii. Communication with families is primarily one-way, meaning the school system pushes information out utilizing a variety of methods but the information is only received by those that initiate interest.

- iii. The early learning department lacks intentional planning intended to communicate with stakeholders and request support. A large number of survey respondents expressed concerns regarding the transition of students from private centers to kindergarten. (purchase of books for young children, training for families in development of literacy)

Root Causes: limited staff to assist with outreach, community is not aware of benefits of early learning, budget cuts, limited community partners, lack of trained personnel to deliver professional learning

- c. Building Block 3: Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessment
  - i. Screening is limited to families that seek-out assistance
  - ii. Method for data analysis is sporadic and does not always inform short or long term planning or measure program effectiveness - 40% of those surveyed the results of collected data is not analyzed on a regular basis.
  - iii. Lack of standardized screening/assessments

Root Causes: lack of training in data analysis, release time for teachers to collaborate, lack of students in the community screened, communication to those not enrolled in school is inconsistent

- d. Building Block 4: Best Practices in Literacy Instruction
  - i. Quality training to private community centers cannot be verified
  - ii. Lack of training offered to in-district teachers
  - iii. Teachers are not all trained in current curriculum and curriculum should be updated to reflect new GELDS standards and technology-rich classrooms

Root Causes: budget cuts due to a decrease in local tax digest, release time for teachers, training for teachers is costly, all teachers are not trained in CLASS, all classrooms do not have a CLASS observation, GELDS standards are not familiar to early learning professionals, lack of expertise in existing personnel, lack of training in currently adopted curriculum, curriculum is inconsistent between pre-k classrooms

- e. Building Block 5: System of Tiered Intervention (RTI) for ALL Students
  - i. Screening tools are available for all ages, but they are not consistently used
  - ii. RTI process for early learning students is not clearly articulated. 56% of survey responses indicated concerns with screening tools being implemented consistently.

Root Causes: lack of communication with all stakeholders, awareness of tools available for screening, compliance with DECAL guidelines, system requires communication from multiple departments within the school system, budget cuts decreasing local tax digest, release time from class to screen students, lack of training for student screenings, lack of knowledge about age-appropriate instructional interventions

- f. Building Block 6: Professional Learning
  - i. Stakeholders are invited to participate in professional learning opportunities, but few take advantage of the courses
  - ii. Few proactive professional learning courses are offered, specifically in developing literacy strategies

Root Causes: lack of time for community members and classroom teachers, transportation, lack of English proficiency in students changes the intervention for teachers, lack of expertise with available resources, lack of consistent technology, lack of alignment between professional learning and collected data, budget cuts decreasing tax digest

D. School Staff Involved in Needs Assessment

The Needs Assessment included all certified and classified staff for Early Learning as well as parents and students.

E. Disaggregated Data:

Rockdale County Public School's overall scores in 2014 were strong; however, early learning is the time to close all achievement gaps or provide appropriate resources.

**Numbers reported are percentages of students scoring average or above average on developmental norms, indicating Kindergarten readiness using Bracken assessment**

Test Data	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Pre-test	82%	84%	80%
Post-test	98%	96%	94%

**Numbers are reported in percentage of students that met cut score indicating Kindergarten Readiness for ELA.**

Locally developed Kindergarten screening instrument (aligned with EIP indicators for the state)	2012-2013	2013-2014 *Screener was re-normed in alignment with EIP expectations
ELA	93%	69%
Math	97%	68%

F. Areas of Concern Related to Research-Based Practices

- a. Building Block 1: Need for Literacy Leadership Team for Rockdale Early Learning

Currently:

- Literacy Coalition has previously existed
- Student assessment results are shared with building level administrators
- Transition Teams are in Place at elementary schools
- Quarterly Community Collaborative Training Meetings

Moving Forward:

- Literacy Coalition will meet regularly and membership will be expanded

- Teachers and administrators will meet to examine assessment data, share observations, and develop needs for Professional Learning
- Transition Coach will work with teachers and community partners to provide outreach and training for literacy strategies for parents and community

b. Building Block 2 & 4: Need for Systematic Core Literacy Program

Currently:

- High-Scope Curriculum is used
- GELDS is the common standards for Birth-to-five
- Peer Observations in place
- Access to *Read Right from the Start* by Atlanta Speech School
- Parents as Teachers program provides Developmentally Appropriate Practice for children ages 0-5
- Kindergarten Transition Activities
- Mandated Parent Conferences

Moving Forward:

- Purchase new curriculum that is aligned with community and resources
- Partner with Atlanta Speech School and Rollins Center to ensure quality professional learning and classroom practice
- Expand Parents as Teachers program
- Increase kindergarten registration information and awareness
- Workshops and activities for parents and private providers at schools, public libraries, PTA events, school book fairs, etc.
- Provide books for children and partner with parents to teach early literacy skills

c. Building Blocks 2, 4 & 6: Need for Professional Learning

Currently:

- CLASS observations at randomly selected schools
- 10 iPads purchased for every pre-K classroom
- Teachers invited to participate in district-wide training events
- Kindergarten Screening Assessment, Bracken Assessment

Moving Forward:

- CLASS training and observation for all teachers
- Train teachers on effective classroom technology use (TPACK & SAMR Model)
- Provide substitutes for training and job-embedded learning
- Utilize data to plan Professional Learning relevant to student need
- New Assessments

**Birth-to-Five Literacy Plan**

**Building Block 1: Engaged Leadership**

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

<p>The Why?                  Reading Next (Biancarosa &amp; Snow, 2004) has identified fifteen research-based program elements that improve literacy achievement of adolescent learners. One of the key elements includes the literacy development of leadership and teachers, which can come from principals and teachers who have a solid understanding of how to teach reading and writing to the full array of students present in schools ("The Why" p. 66). Furthermore, the administrator must support instruction through scheduling times for collaboration, developing a literacy leadership team, and providing access to professional learning and instructional materials ("The Why" p. 148).</p>	
<p>Current Practices</p>	<p>Future Practices</p>
<p>Identify stakeholders and partners from governmental, business, educational, and medical communities as well as parents and private early childhood providers ("The How" p. 1)</p> <p>Plan for ongoing data collection and analysis to inform program development and improvement ("The How" p. 2)</p> <p>Build relationships with providers of early childhood care and education service ("The How" p. 1)</p> <p>Create a culture among all stakeholders that promotes and celebrates positive outcomes for children and families ("The How" p. 2)</p> <p>Enlist experienced teachers and trainers in modeling developmental^ appropriate practices ("The How" p. 1)</p> <p>Administrators or community leaders initiate plans for an early childhood coalition for literacy of stakeholders within the early-childhood community ("The What" p.5)</p>	<p>Create a common vision and goals aligned with state literacy plan to be shared by all stakeholders in early childhood ("The How" p. 1). The creation of an Early Learning Collaborative team will develop a strategic plan using existing collaborative partners.</p> <p>Initiate plans for a Child Literacy Coalition with stakeholders and partners from governmental, business, educational, and medical communities as well as parents and private early childhood providers ("The How" p. 1) ("The What" p.5)</p> <p>Ensure use of research-based practices aligned with GELDS and Great Start Georgia. ("The How" p. 1) This will happen with observation and collaboration with providers.</p> <p>Establish a system of communication for sharing information with all partners (e.g., e-mails, newsletters, website) ("The How" p. 1)</p> <p>Analyze program assessment data and determine programmatic improvements aligned to the GELDS standards and CCGPS ("The How" p. 2)</p> <p>Utilize technology to collect and report results of data collection regularly to stakeholders via the Early Learning Coalition ("The How" p. 2)</p> <p>Provide follow-up professional development and</p>

	technical assistance based on data ("The How" p. 1)
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**Building Block 2: Continuity of Care and Instruction**

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

<p>The Why?                  It is paramount that administrators and community leaders plan for an early childhood coalition for literacy of stakeholders within the early-childhood community ("The What" 2012). This coalition could include community members from: Georgia Pre-K, Parents as Teachers, faith-based organizations, community agencies, Rotary and United Way. Leaders must collect and analyze student achievement data from the local school board to assess student achievement and build plans for a comprehensive literacy plan. Various agencies must collaborate to ensure that all students needs are being met ("The Why" p. 84), which would require transition teams and written protocols for students who will transition to the next learning environment.</p>	
<p>Current Practices</p>	<p>Future Practices</p>
<p>Issue invitations to participate in an Early Childhood Coalition (See Building Block I) to representatives from agencies and/or organizations ("The How" p. 3)</p> <p>Provide links to educational and helpful sites for parents and early childhood professionals and parents ("The How" p. 3)</p> <p>Establish a system of communication for sharing information with all partners (e.g., e-mails, newsletters, Web site) ("The How" p. 3)</p> <p>Rockdale County Public Schools has designated a person to convene and lead an early childhood coalition ("The What" p.5)</p>	<p>Provide participants in the Early Childhood Coalition with GELDS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre- Kindergarten to ensure that all have a common understanding of the task ("The How" p. 3)</p> <p>Conduct a community needs assessment to document available resources and to identify areas of need in the development of early literacy ("The How" p. 4)</p> <p>Collaborate within communities to support the literacy plan as part of existing community activities (e.g., add a family literacy opportunity during scheduled events of other community organizations) ("The How" p. 3).</p> <p>Develop a brochure or chart mapping community resources to be provided to families of young children ("The How" p. 3)</p> <p>Establish a regular calendar of Early Learning Coalition meetings and engage stakeholders from as many entities as possible ("The What" p.5).</p> <p>Develop a one-stop website to assist parents with</p>

	<p>contact information for available services and programs ("The How" p. 3)</p> <p>Identify/develop funding for projects such as: creating mini-libraries at public housing properties, creating literacy kits for use by local child care centers, creating neighborhood reading groups, create a directory of screening resources for identifying early learning disabilities, and assisting local child care centers by providing learning opportunities for early learning staff and directors ("The How" p. 4)</p>
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- B. An early childhood coalition for literacy through which professionals from many organizations affecting young children and other stakeholders may meet to learn from and support one another is active.

<p>The Why?</p> <p>Various activities must be included in a district's literacy plan. The district will work to accomplish transition support that includes the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create, distribute, and provide training on pre-literacy transition support guidelines for children moving from infant to toddler programs.</li> <li>2. Utilize the Pre-K Standards Study to implement recommendations for changes to better align all standards in Georgia for children birth to third grade (language and literacy).</li> <li>3. Create, distribute, and provide training on pre-literacy transition support guidelines for children moving from toddler to preschool programs.</li> <li>4. Expand the summer transition program to include a pilot program serving children ages three and four identified as at risk who will be transitioning into a Georgia's Pre-K Program. ("The Why" p. 33)</li> </ol>	
<p>Current Practices</p>	<p>Future Practices</p>
<p>Identify opportunities for children and their families to visit the next learning environment ("The How" p. 5)</p> <p>Develop contacts with appropriate personnel in next learning environments (e.g., Pre-K or K teachers, elementary principals or family engagement staff, etc.) ("The How" p. 5)</p> <p>Create a transition team within the Early Childhood Coalition ("The How" p. 5)</p> <p>Implement transitional activities to prepare students for the next learning environment, including common</p>	<p>Develop a yearly calendar of transitional activities for children ("The How" p. 5)</p> <p>Maintain the focus on transition planning by incorporating the transition activities into the annual calendars of each of the various agencies ("The How" p. 5)</p> <p>Establish written protocols and transition plans that include"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team members from community stakeholders</li> <li>• School visitation to visit the next learning environments</li> <li>• Parent Education ("The How" p. 5)</li> </ul>



rituals and routines ("The How" p. 5)	
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C. A plan is in place to connect families to schools and childcare entities.

<p>The Why?                  Implementation of the Georgia Early Development Standards (GELDS) will establish a clear development expectation for students ages birth-5. Professional Learning and community collaborative planning meetings will help to streamline expectations for early learning centers. ("The Why" p. 34)</p>	
Current Practices	Future Practices
<p>Identify points of contact within the community for distributing these materials to families ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Plan school events and activities to include families in their child's care and education ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Distribute materials to parents with guidance on supporting their child's early literacy development ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Plan activities to help families learn how to support their child's early literacy development ("The What" p. 6)</p>	<p>Plan opportunities for families to learn about the expectations for the next learning environment and how to support their child's transition ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Create brochures, videos, and a website for communication and communicate developmental milestones and ways to prepare their children to meet milestones ("The What" p. 6)</p> <p>Develop mechanisms to inform parents how to prepare their child for upcoming transitions ("The What" p. 6)</p> <p>Design learning opportunities for parents to inform them about developmental milestones and ways to prepare their children to meet milestones ("The What" p. 6)</p>

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

<p>The Why?                  All stakeholders, including educators, media specialists, and parents of PreK, primary, adolescent, and post-secondary students, are responsible for promoting literacy. The community should be connected to the schools and the Literacy Task Force will be the vehicle to make this connection and procedures to strengthen relationships between communities and schools. ("The What" p. 6) The district will work to design and distribute age appropriate brochures, design a website, and intentionally create opportunities to showcase the work and benefits of early learning. ("The Why" p. 33)</p>	
Current Practices	Future Practices
<p>Assist families in accessing services needed for the transition ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Continue collaboration between community resources and instructional programs to assist families in</p>	<p>Identify community leaders and organizations to become involved in ensuring coordinated services for early childhood population ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Strengthen relationships between preschool providers and the receiving kindergartens by:</p>

<p>accessing services ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Strengthen relationships between communities and Whools ("The What" p.6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing joint workshops between Pre- K and Kindergarten staff on interpretation of assessment data and consistency of goals</li> <li>• Sharing student information between Pre-K and Kindergarten</li> <li>• Holding Kindergarten registration at the pre- k site</li> <li>• Ensuring that staff and PreK and K schools are aware of the alignment of the Pre-K Content Standards with CCGPS ("The How" p. 7)</li> </ul> <p>Facilitate collaboration between community resources and instructional programs ("The How" p. 6)</p> <p>Develop a plan mapping community strengths and needs to identify information such as family demographics, assets, etc. ("The What" p.6)</p> <p>Create a contact list for community leaders and organizations to support early learning ("The What" p.6)</p>
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E. A plan is in place to improve access for families to resources for developing early literacy in their homes.

<p>The Why?</p> <p>Parents now have access to web resources that are aligned with GELDS. Additionally, the community is actively involved in promoting literacy in our youngest learners, as evidenced in the commitment from our local Rotary Clubs to sponsor the Parents as Teacher population with Ferst Foundation memberships. ("The Why" p.33)</p>	
<p>Current Practices</p> <p>Enroll in programs to increase the number of children's books and reading material in homes (e.g., Reading is Fundamental, Ferst Foundation, Reach Out and Read). ("The How" p. 7)</p> <p>Provide literacy trainings in which children and families can engage in activities together, i.e., Even Start model ("The How" p. 7)</p> <p>Provide for families whose first language is not English to engage in trainings (e.g., translator, providing training in the specific language). ("The How" p. 7)</p>	<p>Future Practices</p> <p>Research available grant opportunities to support local literacy efforts ("The How" p. 7)</p> <p>Foster communication with local education agencies, early care and education providers, and other established organizations to advertise opportunities for families to engage in literacy- based activities ("The How" p. 7)</p> <p>Provide specific literacy trainings for families minimizing logistical challenges (e.g., transportation, childcare, times offered, settings ("The How" p.7)</p> <p>Use social media to inform families about literacy opportunities (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) ("The How" p.</p>

<p>Provide substitutes for early care and education professionals to attend literacy training. ("The How" p7)</p> <p>Families receive support through community- based family literacy training ("The What" p. 6)</p> <p>Families of small children receive children's books and reading material in their homes as a result of community efforts (e.g. Ferst Foundation) ("The What" p. 6)</p>	<p>7)</p> <p>Collaborate with community organizations to support the literacy plan as part of existing community activities (e.g., include a family literacy segment to scheduled events of other community organizations) ("The How" p. 7)</p> <p>Community organizations partner to research available grant opportunities ("The What" p. 6)</p> <p>Using train-the-trainer model, train parents as co-facilitators to assist in providing early literacy training for families ("The How" p.7)</p>
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**Building Block 3: Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments**

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

<p>The Why?</p> <p>The school system must establish a method for the use of screening and diagnostic assessments. This is to include community-based access to training and screeners, and to develop consistency in administration of screenings (e.g. ASQ, Ready to Read, ELSA, and WSO). The personnel and technical infrastructure must accommodate the need for all pre-k and upcoming kindergarten students to be screened. ("The Why" p.36) A recent partnership with Great Start Georgia will provide screening and assessment protocols for all students to determine with specific screenings are needed and the will be reviewed by the Early Learning Literacy Task Force ("The What" p. 6). The district will use the First Steps framework to ensure that parents are being referred to the appropriate resources.</p>	
<p>Current Practice</p> <p>Inform families and caregivers of services available through Georgia Department of Public Health e.g., Babies Can't Wait for children 0-3 yrs. <a href="http://health.state.ga.us">http://health.state.ga.us</a>. ("The How" p. 9)</p> <p>Share results of screening and diagnostic assessments with parents and caregivers to inform decisions about instruction and interventions ("The How" p. 9)</p> <p>Analyze child screening and diagnostic data with caregivers and families to assist in setting learning goals and monitoring progress toward those goals ("The How" p. 9)</p> <p>Ensure that screening and diagnostic assessment occurs regularly to inform parents and families of children's progress and to comply with programmatic</p>	<p>Future Practice</p> <p>Read and discuss statements from National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Academy of Sciences on appropriate assessments for young children ("The How" p. 9)</p> <p>Continue to inform parents of their children's progress and collaborate with them to strengthen positive outcomes ("The How" p. 9)</p> <p>Implement procedures for transferring child data from one learning environment to the next to ensure continuity of services and instruction ("The How" p. 10)</p> <p>Appropriate screening and diagnostic instruments for monitoring growth and development have been</p>

regulations (e.g., Head Start 45-day screening regulation, state and federal regulations) ("The How" p. 9)  Procedures are in place for ensuring that parents are connected to appropriate resources ("The What" p. 6	research and identified and protocols are in place to see when specific screening is needed ("The What" p. 6)
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- B. The results of formative assessments are used to adjust intervention to meet the needs of children and students.

<p>The Why? Formative assessments should be used to adjust interventions to meet the needs of children. These assessments identify student strengths and weaknesses, match instruction to learning through effective instructional design, and monitor student progress towards learning goals ("The Why" p. 96). For early learning, this assessment must be aligned with GELDS. District protocols address training, implementation, and analysis of data results.</p>	
Current Practices	Future Practices
Administer assessments according to established timelines. (Bracken, ASQ, Ages and Stages) ("The How" p. 9)  Use child assessment data to individualize instruction and monitor progress ("The How" p. 9)  Celebrate children's ongoing development with families and peers ("The How" p. 9)  Schedule assessments to allow results to be available for parent conferences ("The How" p.10)  Share results at parent conferences ("The How" p. 10)  Assessments are administered according to established timelines ("The What" p.7)	Ensure consistent collection and analysis procedures through professional learning on administration of assessments using protocols for examining data (e.g. Data Teams) ("The How" p. 9)  Utilize developmental or progress monitoring and screening tools that are aligned with GELDS (e.g. Ready to Read, Ages and Stages, ELSA) ("The What" p. 10)  Continue to provide ongoing professional development on the administration of consistent data collection, analysis, and accurate recording ("The How" p. 9)  Instruction is adjusted based on assessments ("The What" p.7)

- C. Use summative assessment to determine effectiveness of instructional program.

<p>The Why? Summative assessments must be used to determine program effectiveness. Summative assessment data measures established learning targets and the attainment of program and learning goals. The assessments indicate areas in which additional instruction is needed and are only effective if they are followed by effective instructional responses or appropriate feedback ("The Why" p. 98).</p>	
Current Practices	Future Practices

<p>Monitor program effectiveness with the following tools: IQ Guides and CLASS (“The What” p. 7)</p> <p>Report results to parents and other stakeholders in a timely and easily interpreted manner (“The How. P. 11)</p> <p>Allow teachers and caregivers opportunities to visit exemplary programs (“The How. P. 11)</p> <p>Share results of data with appropriate stakeholders (“The How. P. 11)</p>	<p>Select and assessment tool prescribed by the Striving Reader Grant (e.g. Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Checklist, Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised, Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised, Family Child Care Environment Scale-Revised, Classroom Assessment Scoring System; or a curriculum “fidelity-of-implementation” checklist aligned to program goals to measure the quality of the early literacy environment and classroom interactions (“The How” p. 12)</p> <p>Using approved trainers, provide professional development for all staff, including principals and/or directors, on the program evaluation tools and methods of administration, and interpretation of results (“The How” p. 12)</p> <p>Determine follow-up professional development based on data (“The How” p. 11)</p> <p>Measure improvement in settings and educational experiences using data (“The How” p. 11)</p> <p>Review systemic issues related to program quality across all settings to determine policy and funding needs (“The How” p. 11)</p>
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D. Use literacy screenings to assess readiness of individual children for reading and writing

<p><b>The Why?</b> Data must be easily accessible to school personnel in order for it to drive decision making. Educators and instructional support personnel must be able to sort, aggregate, and/or scan in sufficient time for data analysis and collaborative decision-making to occur. ("The Why" p. 96)</p>	
<p><b>Current Practice</b></p>	<p><b>Future Practice</b></p>
<p>Screenings instruments include ASQ, Ready to Read and WSO ("The How" p. 12)</p>	<p>Results are used to solicit funding and volunteer efforts from the community ("The How" p. 12)</p>
<p>Pre-K and K teachers receive professional learning on the use and interpretation of selected instruments ("The How" p. 12)</p>	<p>Data is used to inform instructional to make programmatic evaluations ("The How" p.12)</p>
<p>Assessments are administered at designated times ("The How" p. 12)</p>	<p>Data is used to determine the need for further professional learning for individuals and for groups ("The How" p. 12)</p>
<p>Data is collected and distributed in a timely manner</p>	<p>Utilize the Early Literacy Skills Assessment (ELSA) to measure the emerging literacy skills (comprehension,</p>

<p>("The How" p. 12)</p> <p>Results are interpreted and shared with parents</p> <p>("The How" p. 12)</p>	<p>phonological awareness, alphabetic principles, concepts about print) of children ("The What" p.7)</p>
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- A. Ensure that instructional design and implementation are clearly and consistently aligned with GELDS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre-Kindergarten.

<p>The Why?</p> <p>Bright from the Start conducted an alignment study that served to better align all standards in Georgia for young children. The GELDS is a training document that clearly identifies and aligns development protocols and expectations for students ages birth-5 ("The Why" p, 78)</p>	
<p>Current Practices</p>	<p>Future Practices</p>
<p>Provide exemplar lesson plans that reflect the GELDS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre-K for all faculty/staff ("The How" p. 13)</p>	<p>Provide professional learning in age-level appropriate practices for differentiation based on assessment and age-level learning standards ("The What" p.7)</p> <p>Ensure that administrators document use of standards as the foundation for instruction and that standards are referenced and differentiation is evident in all lesson plans ("The How" p. 13)</p>

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

<p>The Why</p> <p>The goal of professional learning is to support viable, sustainable professional learning, improve teacher instruction, and ultimately promote student achievement. Professional learning is organized to engage all teachers in ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded, sustained, collaborative learning. Effective professional learning is linked to higher student achievement. This includes the utilization of highly trained professionals in the field of Early Learning. (The Why p. 141)</p>	
<p>Current Practices</p>	<p>Future Practices</p>
<p>Identify research-based instructional strategies for developing oral language in children birth-to-five ("The How" p.13)</p> <p>Provide professional learning in research-based instructional strategies for developing oral language for children birth-to-five ("The How" p. 13)</p>	<p>Ensure that researched-based instructional strategies for developing oral language are implemented in birth-to-five classrooms ("The How" p.13)</p> <p>Develop tools for monitoring implementation and ensure they are being used consistently ("The How" p.13)</p> <p>Use data to plan for professional learning based on teacher needs ("The How" p.13)</p>

	Provide professional learning in research-based instructional strategies and the development of oral language and pre-literacy skills (“The What” p.8)
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- C. High expectations, grounded in developmentally-appropriate practice with a focus on student interest for all learners, are consistently evident

<p><b>The Why?</b>                  Educators must strive to identify and promote instructional methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children’s daily activities, supported by professional learning, inclusive of families, and connected to specific, beneficial purposes. Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) is a series of trainings that provide practical guidance to preschool special educators on how to improve outcomes of children with disabilities (3-6) by implementing Developmentally Appropriate Practices that support state standards in the areas of social-emotional; acquisition of knowledge (early literacy, communication, and language); and adaptive skills. (The Why" p. 135)</p>	
<b>Current Practice</b>	<b>Future Practice</b>
Use GELDS to develop instructional strategies and assessment protocols that are developmentally appropriate (“The How” p. 14)	Choose curricular resources that align with GELDS which provide guidance in developmentally appropriate practice (“The What” p. 8)  Develop curriculum maps that align with GELDS for Georgia pre-k and curricular resources (“The How” p. 14)  Provide access for all stakeholders to curriculum maps and unit organizers or other curricular supports (“The How” p. 14)  Provide professional learning for teachers to support implementation of all curricular resources (“The How” p. 14)

**Building Block 5: System of Tiered Intervention**

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

<p><b>The Why</b>                  Response to Intervention (RTI) is a technique of tiered layers of interventions for students needing support. Implementation of RTI requires a school-wide common understanding of the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS), assessment practices, and instructional pedagogy. Data-driven decision making must be available at the classroom level. It is important that providers understand the process and benefit of tiered intervention for early learners (“The Why" p. 125)</p>
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Current Practice	Future Practice
<p>Provide small-group instruction in pre-literacy skills ("The How" p. 15)</p> <p>All classrooms are literacy-rich environments ("The What" p. 8)</p>	<p>Become familiar with the tiered intervention model (e.g., Exemplary Model of Early Reading Growth and Excellence (EMERGE) <a href="http://tec.sagepub.com">http://tec.sagepub.com</a>) ("The How" p. 15)</p> <p>Develop resources for tiered Intervention that are accessible to all staff. ("The How" p. 15)</p> <p>Provide professional learning opportunities for teachers in the use of intervention strategies and supports. ("The How" p. 15)</p> <p>Protocols are followed for tiered intervention and for referrals to the process, including all learning domains ("The What" p. 8)</p> <p>Ensure that all domains are considered in the tiered-intervention process ("The What" p. 8)</p> <p>Initiate a tiered-intervention model in pre-k classrooms addressing child screening and progress monitoring, exposure to research-based curriculum, literacy-rich classroom environments, and professional learning and training ("The What" p. 8)</p>

**Building Block 6: Professional Learning and Resources**

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

<p><b>The Why?</b></p> <p>It is essential to form relationships with community partners that benefit students. The primary purpose of this relationship is conduct staff development. Staff development should target early learning practices and improve the learning of all students. The following is essential for effective professional learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district</li> <li>• Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.</li> <li>• Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration ("The Why" p. 143)</li> </ul>	
Current Practices	Future Practices
<p>Implement Family and Child Together (FACT) or Parent and Child Together (PACT), (see Why document) times in natural occurring early care and education environments (Pre-K classroom) or</p>	<p>Evaluate and catalog the knowledge and skills of community partners to contribute to family literacy (e.g., librarians' knowledge of excellent children's literature; public health providers' knowledge of</p>



<p>at alternate times (in the evening at the public library or in the school setting) ("The 1 low" p. 16)</p> <p>Model best practices for early literacy with families (e.g., librarian provides a story time session with families that is developmentally appropriate and emphasizes aspects of early lit 'racy' concepts) ("The How" p. 16)</p> <p>Provide family literacy opportunities in locations that families can access ("The How" p. 16)</p> <p>Barriers to providing professional learning for early care and education are acknowledged and being addressed ("The What" p. 9)</p> <p>Applicable program standards are available to educators and caretakers ("The What" p. 9)</p>	<p>physical and safety needs necessary for early literacy development) ("The How" p. 16)</p> <p>Continue a public awareness campaign regarding GELDS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre-Kindergarten. ("The How" p. 16)</p> <p>Provide opportunities and access to early care and education providers to earn continuing education credits ("The How" p. 16)</p> <p>Community partners pair with early care and education providers to develop trainings and materials to support family literacy ("The What" p.9)</p> <p>Use multiple forms of media to engage families in early literacy experiences with their families ("The How" p. 16)</p>
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B. In-service personnel receive professional learning in the development of early literacy

<p>The Why?</p> <p>Process standards in in place to evaluate the effectiveness of all professional learning. Process standards include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement</li> <li>• Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate the impact</li> <li>• Prepares educators to apply research to decision making</li> <li>• Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal</li> <li>• Applies knowledge about human learning and change</li> <li>• Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate ("The Why" p. 143)</li> </ul>	
Current Practices	Future Practices
<p>Provide opportunities for staff to participate in professional learning activities offered by district, region, and/or state that address identified needs and early learning guidelines and standards ("The How" p.17)</p> <p>Utilize resources in the professional library as a vehicle to encourage ongoing "professional talk" about current research and best practices in early childhood literacy development ("The How" p. 17)</p>	<p>Collect and analyze a variety of data (e.g., student assessments, teacher needs assessment, teacher observations, professional training) to determine needs for professional development ("The How" p. 17, "The What" p, 9))</p> <p>Provide professional development based on children and teacher needs in meeting early learning standards ("The How" p. 17)</p> <p>Meet in collaborative teams to study data and plan curriculum and literacy strategies effectively ("The</p>

<p>Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate ("The Why" p. 143)</p> <p>Build a professional library that includes research-based books, journals, magazines, and videos for ongoing professional growth ("The How" p. 18)</p>	<p>How" p. 17)</p> <p>Provide professional development and resources that support differentiated learning opportunities for all students, including those with exceptionalities and those whose home language is not English ("The How" p. 18)</p> <p>Use results of evaluations of professional development to make adjustments and determine next steps ("The How" p. 18)</p> <p>Partner experienced teachers with pre-service and beginning teachers ("The How" p. 18)</p> <p>Involve administrators in literacy trainings to learn how to promote change in practice and how to provide specific feedback aligned with early learning guidelines and standards ("The How" p. 18)</p> <p>Provide training that is aligned to early learning standards ("The What" p. 9)</p> <p>Design protected time for teachers and caregivers to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on practice ("The What" p.9)</p>
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Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

Rockdale County Public School's Early Learning Department used the analysis of applicable data along with the literacy needs assessment to develop the goals and objectives identified in the Project Plan section.

Rockdale County Public School's Early Learning has utilized Bracken screening data and results from the locally developed screener to analyze kindergarten readiness for students enrolled in Rockdale County pre-k classrooms. Prior to school year 2014-2015, formal WSO data was not analyzed to determine professional learning needs and trends in student learning. Beginning this school year, teachers are required to report student performance on selected numeracy and literacy domains in the fall and spring of the year.

Rockdale County pre-k and preschool teachers utilize Work Sampling Online and Galileo to determine strengths and weaknesses for individual students and plan small and large group activities according to student needs.

**A. & B. Student Data****Pre-k Demographic Data**

<b>School (number of students served)</b>	<b>F/R Lunch</b>	<b>IEP</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Native American</b>	<b>Pacific Islander</b>
Barksdale (22)	50%	0	5%	55%	45%	0	0
C.J. Hicks (40)	68%	30%	20%	78%	3%	0	5%
Flat Shoals (22)	50%	0	9%	73%	14%	0	5%
Honey Creek (22)	59%	0	9%	64%	18%	0	9%
Hightower (22)	50%	0	23%	50%	27%	0	0
J.H. House (22)	91%	0	55%	0	45%	0	0
Lorraine (22)	32%	0	0	59%	41%	0	0
Peek's Chapel (22)	77%	5%	5%	77%	14%	0	5%
Pine Street (22)	91%	0	45%	50%	5%	0	0
Rockdale Career Academy (92)	75%	10%	50%	36%	14%	0	0
Shoal Creek (22)	82%	5%	9%	68%	23%	0	0
Sims (22)	73%	5%	18%	77%	5%	0	0
<b>District Totals</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1%</b>

**Percent of pre-k students scoring average or above average on the Bracken assessment, indicating Kindergarten readiness:**

<b>Bracken Test Data</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>
<b>Pre-test</b>	82%	84%	80%
<b>Post-test</b>	98%	96%	94%

**Percent of Students meeting/exceeding Kindergarten Readiness standards on locally developed Kindergarten Screening instrument (all incoming kindergarten students assessed):**

Locally developed Kindergarten screening instrument (aligned with EIP indicators for the state)	2012-2013	2013-2014 *Screener was re-normed in alignment with EIP expectations
ELA	93%	69%
Math	97%	68%

**C. Identified Strengths and Weaknesses**

**Strengths**

Rockdale County students enrolled in pre-k consistently score high on the spring administration of the Bracken assessment, indicating Kindergarten readiness. Rockdale County has an established pipeline for early learning, including *Bright from the Start* classrooms, READY personnel and self-contained classrooms for students with special needs, inclusion classrooms, a locally-funded Early Learning Center that serves three and four-year old students, and a Parents as Teachers program that serves students birth-five. All programs currently offered through the school system have an extensive waiting list. The fiscal commitment in place and community response to offered services is evidence that the Rockdale County community places a high value on early learning.

**Weaknesses**

When analyzing results from locally developed screener and comparing them to Bracken results, it is evident that students not enrolled in Rockdale County pre-k classes do not score as well on Kindergarten readiness assessments. This indicates a need to expand the existing pre-k program and collaborate with local centers to enhance instruction. The teacher turnover rate in the *BFTS* classrooms is higher than the turnover rate at the early learning center. This can be attributed to a lack of training for instructing young children. The district has adopted *High Scope* curriculum, though it is not widely used or understood by teachers in the district. Additionally, the needs of students have changed with new technologies and resources prominent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The screening tools used to monitor progress and evaluate students are sporadic, and the county would benefit from prescribed data points. This would allow for better instructional planning and differentiation for all students. A large majority of Rockdale County families are economically disadvantaged, which is often in concert with a lack of higher education. Parents need training to best support their child's learning.

**D and E. Teacher Data**

Data reported below represents all pre-k classrooms and site directors.

		Administrators	Paraprofessionals	Teachers
Personnel	Full-time	13	22	17
	Part-time	0	0	0
Gender	Male	3	0	0

	<b>Female</b>	10	22	17
<b>Race</b>	<b>Asian</b>	0	0	0
	<b>Black</b>	6	6	7
	<b>White</b>	7	12	10
	<b>Hispanic</b>	0	4	0
	<b>Multi-racial</b>	0	0	0
<b>Certificate Level</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	1	NA	11
	<b>Level 5</b>	4	NA	3
	<b>Level 6</b>	6	NA	3
	<b>Level 7</b>	2	NA	0
<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>&lt;5 years</b>	2	9	6
	<b>4-19 years</b>	9	12	9
	<b>&gt;20 years</b>	2	1	2

Teacher Retention Data

<b>Department</b>	<b>&lt;1 Year</b>	<b>1-4 years</b>	<b>5+ years</b>
Pre-K Staff	6%	3%	11%
Early Learning Center Staff	3%	9%	22%
Site Directors	4%	2%	20%
Pre-K Paraprofessionals	4%	3%	13%

**G. District-Prescribed Data**

At this time, the Bracken assessment is the only standardized assessment tool prescribed by the district. Teachers use Work Sampling Online or Galileo to report individual student progress. These assessments are curriculum-embedded authentic performance assessments used to assess children’s development in multiple domains. These assessments are based on observations, photos and work samples. The Rockdale County District Literacy Coalition recognizes a need to implement multiple measures to report student achievement and progress. This grant will allow the district to purchase assessments and provide the professional learning required to implement such assessments with fidelity.

**F. Goals and Objectives**

<b>Goal 1: Provide current, meaningful, research-based professional development involving language and literacy strategies to all</b>	<b>Goal 2: Provide training in collection, analysis, utilization of data to align and adjust instructional decisions (“The What” p. 9)</b>	<b>Goal 3: Establish early childhood coalition for literacy with professionals from organizations affecting young</b>	<b>Goal 4: Provide current updated hardware and software for literacy instruction and</b>
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stakeholders (“The What” p. 7)		children (“The How” p. 1)	student practice (“The How” p. 35)
<b>Objective 1:</b> Administer research-based assessments to all students in order to adjust, inform, and develop instructional practice (“The How” p. 2)			
<b>Objective 2:</b> Provide continual professional development on screening and diagnostic assessments (“The How” p.9)			
<b>Objective 3:</b> Develop a literacy coalition that will increase stakeholder awareness of early learning expectations			
<b>Objective 4:</b> Identify technology platforms to support instructional practice			
<b>Objective 5:</b> Provide training in research-based practices for literacy			

## H. Professional Learning

All teachers participate in monthly pre-k collaborative meetings. All GA Pre-K teachers and paraprofessionals participate in mandated training offered by *Bright from the Start*. All administrators participate in the district Instructional Support Team, which provides administrators and district staff (such as curriculum coordinators) with monthly professional learning. Administrators also attend monthly principal meetings where they engage in and lead professional learning with principals from all over the district. Teachers and administrators attend annual district-wide professional learning days which provide individualized options for various grade levels and subject areas. Participation in school and district collaboratives are required of all teachers.

Teachers and administrators need professional learning to gain strategies to assist them with connecting language and literacy across all curricular areas including mathematics, science, social studies, the arts and personal and physical development. Teachers need additional resources and training to implement curricular resources with fidelity. The Striving Reader Grant will assist in purchasing new curriculum and training teachers to utilize all aspects of curriculum resources.

Pre-k personnel need additional technology training that provides them strategies to utilize available tools to maximize language and literacy instruction.

In addition to training RCPS staff, we will invite community centers and all stakeholders to attend and participate in trainings provided by RCPS program specialists to support the feeder pattern in the community.

Project Plan, Procedures, and Goals, Objectives, and Support

**A, B, and C: Implementation Plan**

Rockdale Early Learning goals, objectives, and tasks are informed by the research and Building Blocks in the “What” and “Why” documents. Staff development must improve learning for all students, use disaggregated data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement (“The Why” p. 143). Effective classrooms promote student engagement through the use of innovative technology that prepares them to compete in a global society (“The Why” p. 56). Multiple measures of ongoing, frequent diagnostic monitoring tools are needed to plan for instruction and data must be understood by school personnel in order for it to drive instruction (“The Why” p. 95). Research proves that early detection and correction of reading problems is far more efficient than remediation (“The Why” p. 101).

<p><b>Goal 1: Provide current, meaningful, research-based professional development involving language and literacy strategies to all stakeholders (“The What” p. 7)</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 2: Provide training in collection, analysis and utilization of data to align and adjust instructional decisions (“The What” p. 9)</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 3: Establish an early childhood coalition for literacy with professionals from organizations affecting young children (“The How” p. 1)</b></p>	<p><b>Goal 4: Provide current updated hardware and software for literacy instruction and student practice (“The How” p. 35)</b></p>
<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Administer research-based assessments to all students in order to adjust, inform, and develop instructional practice (“The How” p. 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 1: Purchase Assessments needed to properly assess language and literacy in young children (i.e. Ages &amp; Stages and Ages &amp; Stages SE, Get Ready to Read, Work Sampling System, Galileo, DPT-pre-k, PPVT4, DAP-3, etc.)</li> <li>• Action 2: Develop a timeline for administering formative and summative assessments (“The How” p. 12)</li> <li>• Action 3: Ensure that appropriate technology and/or other resources are available to input and organize formative assessment data (“The How” p. 11)</li> <li>• Action 4: Use child assessment data to individualize instruction and monitor progress (“The How” p. 10)</li> <li>• Action 5: Provide professional learning for 0-5 providers in effective parent/teacher conference strategies for sharing results of assessments (“The How” p. 11)</li> <li>• Action 6: Develop protocols for ensuring parents are connected to appropriate resources as a results of screenings and assessment (“The What” p.6)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Provide continual professional development on screening and diagnostic assessments (“The How” p.9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 1: Develop protocols for reviewing and analyzing assessment results (Ex. Data Teams Protocols) (“The How” p. 10)</li> <li>• Action 2: Provide professional learning for all faculty/staff in age-level appropriate practices for differentiation based on assessment results (“The How” p. 13)</li> <li>• Action 3: Use a variety of data to determine needs for professional learning (“The What” p. 9)</li> <li>• Action 4: Use results of summative assessments to plan professional learning for the upcoming year (“The How” p. 11)</li> </ul>			

<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Develop a literacy coalition that will increase stakeholder awareness of early learning expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 1: Design and distribute brochures that address literacy needs of birth to age five, including special needs and non-English speaking children (“The Why” p. 33)</li> <li>• Action 2: Identify and train literacy coaches/resource persons in the district (“The Why” p. 33)</li> <li>• Action 3: Schedule a monthly meeting day for the literacy coalition (“The How” p. 6)</li> <li>• Action 4: Collaborate with Early Childhood Coalition and other interested community partners to develop a plan to address logistical barriers to participation in community-based family literacy training (e.g., language, transportation) (“The How” p. 10)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4:</b> Identify technology platforms to support instructional practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 1: Develop a series of computer-based/electronic literacy professional learning courses to be distributed to preschool teachers across the district (“The Why” p. 35)</li> <li>• Action 2: Develop a series of computer-based/electronic pre-literacy professional learning courses to be distributed to infant and toddler teachers across the state. (“The Why” p. 35)</li> <li>• Action 3: Increase use of technology in the classroom using computer applications that are relevant to student learning</li> <li>• Action 4: Utilize the <i>Read Right from the Start</i> training modules offered by the Atlanta Speech School</li> <li>• Action 5: Purchase and use adaptive software to build student skills in language/literacy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 5:</b> Provide training in research-based practices for literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action 1: Purchase any necessary assessment materials and train teachers to administer any new assessments (i.e. DAP-3, DPT-pre-k, PPVT4)</li> <li>• Action 2: Train teachers in the use of seven habits of an effective reader as an instructional tool (“The Why” p. 42)</li> <li>• Action 3: Provide training regarding the acquisition of code-related skills, early vocabulary and oral language skills (“The Why” p. 60)</li> <li>• Action 4: Target teacher learning to include instruction in key elements significant to later academic success: Oral Language, Phonological Awareness, Alphabetic Knowledge &amp; Print Awareness (“The Why” p. 63)</li> <li>• Action 5: Purchase high quality curriculum materials for early learning teachers</li> </ul>

As stated in our goals, standardized assessments, authentic assessment and observations, and classroom observations will be the summative measure of our plan. Implementation will be formatively monitored and measured as summarized below:

Formative Measures	Goals	Summative Measures for Students	Goals
CLASS	1, 4	BRACKEN	1,2,3,4
BRACKEN	1,2,3,4	WSO	1,2,3,4
READY TO READ	1,2,3,4	GALILEO	1,2,3,4
ASQ	1,2,3,4		
ASQ SE	1,2,3,4		
TKES	1,2,4		
WSO	1,2,3,4		
Galileo	1,2,3,4		



**D and E: Tiered Instruction and RTI Model**

Rockdale Early Learning’s existing work has identified the need to develop an RTI model as identified in Georgia’s Literacy Conceptual Framework for Birth-to-Grade 12 (“The Why” p.122). Rockdale County has developed an RTI task force to examine best practices to achieve success in this model, and how early learning fits into the existing state structure for RTI. Currently, the system does not have a formalized time frame required for student response to intervention or movement throughout the tier system. In Pre-K classrooms, program specialists and *Bright from the Start* consultants offer strategies as needed for Tiers 2-4. Building administration and district support are available for additional strategies and resources as needed.

**F: Inclusion of all Teachers and Students**

Our School Literacy Plan will include all early learning teachers, students, Parents as Teachers participants, and community referred students from all of Rockdale County. All students will receive age-level core literacy instruction and appropriate interventions.

**G: Practices Currently in Place**

Currently, all Pre-K students are screened at the onset of the school year using the Bracken assessment. Additionally, teachers complete developmental checklists for all students in the WSO system. Parent conferences are required for all pre-k students. Interventions and instructional strategies are in place, but are not consistent between or across schools and age bands.

Students enrolled in pre-k at Rockdale Career Academy are not assessed in WSO, but receive similar instructional reports using the Galileo software system.

Students enrolled in Parents as Teachers are assessed using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Again, interventions and instructional strategies are in place, but are not consistent between or across schools and age bands.

**H: Goals Funded with Other Sources**

Pre-K funds will continue to pay for formative and summative assessments utilizing WSO software, which will support our goals and objectives. Decal does not charge to assess randomly selected classes with the CLASS observation tool. No charges to the grant will be made for in-place instructional materials or district-wide professional development. District funding of ESPLOST technology funding will support our plan.

**I: Sample Schedule**

Pre-K classrooms use the required IQ Guide when developing a classroom schedule.

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Refer to the <i>FAQ for Daily Schedule</i> for an explanation of the various schedule components. This IQ Guide should be completed whenever a teacher/program makes changes to the daily schedule throughout the year.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6.5 hour written daily schedule with times is posted <b>inside</b> the classroom. <i>Note: If the school year is shortened, equivalent numbers of hours must be documented on the school calendar, posted schedules, and in lesson plans.</i>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large Group Time/Opening Activity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Daily Large Group Literacy Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Two Teacher-Planned Story Times
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Phonological Awareness Activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Group Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	60 minutes of uninterrupted play in centers. Clean up should be clearly defined and is in addition to the minimum one full hour block of time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music with Movement Activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rest Time (scheduled for a maximum of one hour)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor Play
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Closing Activity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A schedule for children is posted at children's eye level and is manipulated by children to facilitate knowledge of the daily routine and time/sequence concepts. This schedule must include pictures.

Additional technology, software, literacy materials, and professional development are needed to support all Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards and all district early learning classrooms. Stipends or substitutes to release teachers for professional development will also be needed.

**J: Reference Research-Based Practices in “What” and “Why”**

See references in Section A: Implementation Plan

Assessment/Data Analysis Plan**A. Current Assessment Protocol**

Rockdale County Public Schools uses the Bracken assessment to screen children at the beginning of the pre-k year. Get Ready to Read is administered to three-year-old students that are enrolled in the Early Learning Center. The information that is obtained from these normed assessments allows teachers to individualize instruction.

As referenced in the Literacy plan, Work Sampling Online and Galileo offer an example of how performance assessment is used in early childhood settings. Assessment for young learners should be holistic in nature, involving all domains specified in the GELDS curriculum. In each of these data collection tools, indicators are rated weekly and parent reports are generated and communicated a minimum of 2 times per year.

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is used primarily for children enrolled in the Parents as Teachers program. The ASQ screening is also used as a tool to screen community children, birth to age-five, as requested. The purpose of this screening to assist families in making appropriate and timely referrals for children with particular needs.

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Grade Level Assessed</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Skills Assessed</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>CLASS</b>	Pre-k	T-S interactions	Classroom	Yearly, as selected
<b>BRACKEN</b>	Four-Year Olds	Screening, Progress Monitoring, Outcome	Alphabet Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Concepts of print, and Oral Language	2 times per year
<b>READY TO READ</b>	3 year-olds	Screening, Progress Monitoring, Outcome	Alphabet Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Concepts of print, Oral Language, Alliteration and Rhyming, oral Language, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension	2 times per year
<b>ASQ</b>	Birth-Five Year-Old	Screening	Development & Function (physical, adaptive, Social-emotional,	2 times per year

			cognitive, communication)	
<b>ASQ SE</b>	Birth-Five Year-Old	Screening	Development & Function (physical, adaptive, Social-emotional, cognitive, communication)	2 times per year
<b>TKES</b>	Certified Teachers	Teacher Quality	Classroom	6 times per year
<b>WSO</b>	Pre-k	Screening, Progress Monitoring, Outcome	Alphabet Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Concepts of print, Oral Language, Alliteration and Rhyming, oral Language, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension	On-going
<b>Galileo</b>	Pre-k and preschool	Screening, Progress Monitoring, Outcome	Alphabet Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Concepts of print, Oral Language, Alliteration and Rhyming, oral Language, Vocabulary, and Reading Comprehension	On-going

**B. Comparison of Current Assessments to SRCL Assessments**

RCPS uses the Bracken assessment to measure student achievement in the following areas: Alphabet Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Concepts of Print, and Oral Language. The PPVT4 and PALS-Pre-k provide this same data to teachers, and the tests are available in digital format. The district will continue the use of CLASS to monitor student-teacher interactions, and will seek to have additional classes evaluated each year.

TKES will continue, as this is a measure of teacher quality that is required for all certified teachers in Georgia. The district will continue using the ASQ and ASQ-SE with the Parents as Teachers families, as this is a requirement for model fidelity. The DP-3 will replace the Ready to Read screening in

the three year old classes and will be administered to community children who request screenings, ages birth-five years.

There will be no change in the reporting software and the district will continue to use WSO and Galileo.

**C. Implementation of New Assessments into Current Assessment Schedule**

With the implementation of the grant, our school will follow the schedule for literacy assessments as listed below.

Assessment	Grade Level Assessed	Persons Responsible	Frequency
DP-3	Birth to Five-Year Olds	Classroom teacher, Parent Educators	2 times per year
PALS – Pre-k	Pre-k	Classroom teacher	3 times per year
PPVT4 Form A/B	Pre-k	Classroom teacher	2 times per year
CLASS	Pre-k	DECAL	1 time yearly
Bracken	Pre-k	Classroom teacher	2 times per year
Ready to Read	3-year olds	Classroom teacher	2 times per year
ASQ	Birth-five	Parent Educator	2 times per year
ASQ-SE	Birth-five	Parent Educator	2 times per year
TKES	Pre-k	School Administrator	6 times per year
Galileo	All district funded 3 and 4-year-old classes	Classroom Teacher	Ongoing
WSO	GA Pre-K classes	Classroom Teacher	Ongoing

**D. Assessments that may be discontinued as a result of SRCL Implementation**

We will discontinue Bracken and Ready to Read. We will continue to implement ASQ, ASQ-SE and CLASS. We will expand CLASS observations to include more classrooms each year.

**E. Professional Learning for Teachers for Assessment Implementation**

Teachers will need professional learning on the DP-3, PALS-Pre-k, PPVT4 Form A/B, and CLASS. In order to fully utilize these assessments, teachers will need training in administration and scoring of each evaluation. Additionally, teachers will need to be trained in each of the CLASS domains. All teachers will be CLASS trained by TEACHSTONE personnel, and all schools will receive additional on-site support. The training for administration will be redelivered by trained personnel within the school district.

**F. Presentation of Data to Parents and Stakeholders**

Parents/guardians receive information about system data at the Literacy Coalition Meetings. School specific information will be provided at School Council meetings and the required Title I Annual Meeting each fall. In addition, individual student data points are shared with families through a minimum of two parent conferences each year. The Rockdale County Public School District compiles data summaries on assessment results of each school to report to the media.

### **G. Data Used to Develop Instructional Strategies**

Data will be used to inform and guide instruction in the classroom. Teachers will use data to select strategies to be used to differentiate instruction with the classroom. Data will also be used to determine small groups, select instructional strategies, and to monitor effectiveness of interventions. Data will be used to inform students and parents of progress toward goals and to adjust goals based on student progress ("Why," p. 96).

### **H. Assessment Plan and Personnel**

In summary, pre-k teachers will administer the PPVT4 Assessment in the fall and spring of each school year. The PALS-Pre-k will be administered in the fall, mid-point of the year, and spring. The data will be reported to the Early Learning Coordinator. All enrolled three-year-old students will be assessed using the DP-3 in the fall and spring of each year.

Teachers will update WSO and Galileo weekly and provide parents with student narratives in the fall and spring of each school year at mandatory parent conferences.

Each pre-k teacher will be assessed using the CLASS evaluation each year. Additionally, certified teachers will be evaluated using the TKES model each year.

Parent Educators will assess all students on their caseload two times yearly using the ASQ and ASQ-SE screening. Results will be documented in Visit Tracker and reported to the Early Learning Coordinator.

Assessments and protocols for assessments will be overseen by the Early Learning Coordinator in conjunction with the school testing coordinator at each school.

Resources, Strategies, and Materials

**A. Resources Needed to Implement the Literacy Plan**

Pre-k teachers use the GA Pre-K Instructional Quality Guide for the Learning Environment to purchase resources for their classroom. The district has recently purchased classroom bundles of 10 iPads for each three and four-year-old classrooms. The resources will enhance instruction in all Tiers of RTI by individualizing learning activities for all students. In order to implement the proposed Literacy Plan, the following resources are needed:

- Research-based literacy instructional materials
- Professional learning –consultant fees, stipends, or release time (subs), and materials
- Literary and informational texts on various levels (specific focus on student interests) for classrooms and parent center
- Updated reading materials for classrooms
- Travel expenses for conferences and training
- Training on the analysis and administration of required assessments
- Research-based intervention materials and/or software with necessary professional learning
- Grant administrator/district-based literacy specialist
- Family involvement activities
- Community literacy event resources
- Stipends for summer literacy programs
- Classroom computers
- Networkable printers and scanners
- Resources to purchase appropriate applications for iPads
- Online databases to support and enhance student data collection and analysis
- Electronic books and headphones

**B. Activities that Support Literacy Intervention Programs**

- Dedicated scheduled time for intervention
- Flexible, needs-based grouping
- Formative assessment to assess student progress
- Use of data to drive instruction

- Research-based intervention materials
- Professional learning on strategies for teaching academic content vocabulary
- Parent education through family academic night
- Community literacy events that involve all stakeholders

### **C. Shared Resources**

Each classroom has access to a school media center with various types of books and resources. Each school houses a minimum of one computer lab that can be used by students. All pre-k classrooms have an Active Board. GA Pre-K classes have access to printers and cameras that are used to track and report student data.

### **D. Library Resources**

Library resources vary by school, depending on the location of the program.

### **E. Activities that Support Classroom Practices**

- Formative and summative assessments
- Vocabulary instruction in all content areas
- Technology-enhanced lessons
- Collaborative grade-level and subject-level planning including resource staff (school-wide and county-wide)
- Building level professional learning at faculty meetings

### **F. Strategies Needed to Support Student Success**

- Strategies for increasing student engagement
- Interpretation of data and access to data
- Effective use of flexible grouping based on formative data
- Purchase of writing materials aligned with pre-k standards
- Writing strategies for early learners
- **Professional Learning in the following areas:**
  - Reading strategies
  - Writing instruction
  - Strategies for student engagement and motivation
  - Integration of technology in instruction
  - Literacy across a variety of topics



- Effective data usage for planning instruction, implementing interventions, and monitoring student progress
- Interventions for all tiers of RTI
- Differentiation and small group instruction

**G. List of Current Classroom Resources**

Each classroom is required to have the items listed below (per DECAL).

- Books for all children (fantasy, nonfiction, wordless, repetitive, informational, rhyming, predictable, familiar, sequence, repetitive phrase, multicultural)
- Books that reflect current learning units
- Display racks that are attractive and well organized
- Props to develop phonological awareness (puzzles, alphabet display, word cards, alphabet games, letter dominoes, interlocking letter cubes, wooden alphabet blocks)
- Props to promote language development (Puppets, telephones, walkie-talkies, cell phones, magnet stories, flannel board stories, dramatic play areas)
- Listening Station (CD player with headphones, iPads, books and recorded stories)
- Various writing supplies and areas (envelopes, order forms, cards, note pads, stationary, address books, phone books, white boards, pens, pencils, markers, chalk, crayons, pencils, colored pencils, lined paper, unlined paper, journals, drawing paper, tablets, easels)
- Vocabulary cards with words and pictures
- Names of children in classroom with pictures
- Labels throughout classroom
- Stocked block area (labels, accessories, various materials, books, writing materials)

**H. Alignment of SRCL Funding with District Funding**

<b>Resources, Strategies, and Materials</b>	<b>SRCL will fund...</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>
<b>Professional Learning</b>	Literacy specific PL costs—consultant fees, stipends, materials, and travel costs	Title II funds will be used to provide district-wide professional learning
<b>Instructional Technology</b>	Literacy specific technology—electronic books, electronic texts, instructional applications	ESPLOST funds will be used to upgrade school computers and wireless connectivity and to purchase tablets for the 1-to-1 initiative according to district schedule
<b>Instructional Materials</b>	Explicit literacy materials, such as informational and literary texts	District funds will continue to be used to purchase district-supplied materials, such as textbooks
<b>Literacy Assessments</b>	Professional learning in the analysis of data provided by universal screeners	District and <i>Bright from the Start</i> funds will continue to be used to purchase universal

		screeners that are currently in place
<b>Family Literacy Materials</b>	Literacy materials to be used during family/parent workshops and to be checked out by parents	Grants currently funding early learning will continue to purchase materials for enrolled families to attend parent workshops
<b>Extended Day/Year Activities</b>	Provide stipends to teachers for extended day activities and to provide literacy activities during non-school times	District funds will be used to pay for extended day personnel related to the regular activities of the school

Professional Learning Strategies**A. Past Professional Learning**

<b>Topic/Focus</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Facilitator/Provider</b>	<b>Delivery Format</b>
Conscious Discipline	August 2014-May 2014	All Early Learning Center Teachers, Parent Educators, Selected GA Pre-K Teachers	Early Learning Coordinator	6/1-hour sessions
Best Practices lead Teacher Training: GA Pre-K Assessment Training	August 2013-May 2014	All GA Pre-K Teachers	Bright from the Start	8-hour-session Ongoing trainings
Good Behavior Game Training	April 2014	All GA Pre-K teachers and Early Learning Center personnel	Rachel Long, RCPS	1/1-hour session
Read Right from the Start Introduction	September 2014	All GA Pre-K teachers and Early Learning Center personnel	Early Learning Coordinator	1/ 2-hour session
GELDS	August 2013	All GA Pre-K teachers, special needs teachers, and Early Learning Center personnel	Jennifer Dineen	1/ 8-hour session
WSO for New Teachers	July-November 2014	All GA Pre-K teachers	Bright from the Start	1/8-hour session
Leslie Fisher iPad Training	November 2014	All GA Pre-K teachers, special needs teachers, and Early Learning Center personnel	Leslie Fisher	1/4-hour session
CLASS Teachstone – Language and Literacy	August 2014	All GA Pre-K teachers, special needs teachers, and Early Learning Center personnel	Early Learning Coordinator	1/3-hour session
SLO Training/Data Collection	August 2014	All GA Pre-K teachers	Early Learning Coordinator	1/3-hour session

GELDS Community Seminar – Literacy	October 2013	Community Service Providers and Parents	Parent Educators	1/3-hour session
GELDS Community Seminar –Math Rocks	November 2013	Community Service Providers and Parents	Parent Educators	1/3-hour session
GELDS Community Seminar – Social Studies	February 2014	Community Service Providers and Parents	Parent Educators	1/3-hour session
GELDS Community Seminar – Music and Movement	March 2014	Community Service Providers and Parents	Parent Educators	1/3-hour session

### B. Percentage of Staff Attending Professional Learning

100% of instructional staff and some invited community members attended assigned professional learning.

### C. On-Going Professional Learning

<b>Topic/Focus</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Facilitator/Provider</b>	<b>Delivery Format</b>
Reggio-Emelia Environment	August 2014- May 2015	Early Learning Center Staff	Director of Early Learning Center	Face-to-Face, ongoing
Technology Integration in Classroom	November 2014- May 2015	All GA Pre-K teachers, special needs teachers, and Early Learning Center personnel	Leslie Fisher, Digital Learning Specialist @ RCPS	Face-to-Face, ongoing; web- based, ongoing
Read Right from the Start	October 2014	All GA Pre-K teachers, special needs teachers, and Early Learning Center personnel	Early Learning Coordinator	Face-to-Face, ongoing; web- based, ongoing
GELDS	August 2014-May 2015	All GA Pre-K teachers, special needs teachers, and Early Learning Center personnel	Early Learning Coordinator	Face-to-Face, ongoing

Parent Seminars – GELDS	January 2015-May 2015	Community Service Providers and Parents	Community Partners	Face-to-Face, ongoing
Inclusion and Co-teaching	August 2014-May 2015	All GA Pre-K teachers, special needs teachers, and Early Learning Center personnel	Early Learning Coordinator, Lead Teacher for Compliance	Face-to-Face, ongoing
Best Practices lead Teacher Training: GA Pre-K Assessment Training	August 2013-May 2014	All GA Pre-K Teachers	Bright from the Start	8-hour-session Ongoing trainings

**D. Professional Learning Needs**

- Understanding GELDS
- Core Curriculum
- Interpreting and using assessment data
- Differentiating instruction
- CLASS Domains
- Vertical alignment to Kindergarten (CCGPS)
- Literacy-Rich Environments

**E. Evaluation of Professional Learning**

- Participants provide feedback on PL sessions via survey
- Formative and summative assessment data, along with district walkthrough data
- Teacher lesson plans and TKES observation data

**F. Professional Learning Plan**

**Goals:**

1. Improve literacy instruction through professional learning
2. Curriculum training on new curriculum purchased for all early learning providers or a curriculum update if the current curriculum is decided to be adequate
3. Screening, SRG identified assessment training, formative, and summative assessment training including data interpretation and analysis for all early learning providers
4. PL to be conducted by Rollins Center for Atlanta Speech School for the Read Right from the Start
5. Provide training in effectively integrating technology in literacy instruction to motivate/engage all learners

Topic	Objectives	Effectiveness Measure
WSO and Galileo Training	<p>Teachers will learn to input data, analyze reports, and access curriculum housed within student data systems (WSO and Galileo).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Bright from the Start Training</li> <li>*Galileo Training</li> <li>*Release time for Professional Learning</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher Lesson Plans</p> <p>Observations</p> <p>Work Sampling Data</p> <p>Galileo Usage Reports</p> <p>Student Achievement Data</p>
Literacy Training	<p>Faculty and staff should follow research-based practice in the development of pre-literacy and oral language (“The What” p.8) The system will partner with the Atlanta Speech School and utilize Cox Campus Online and train teachers in Teachstone CLASS model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Establish partnership with Atlanta Speech School</li> <li>*Release time for teachers for professional learning</li> <li>*Observe teacher classrooms and provide feedback</li> <li>*Pair teachers with experts</li> <li>*CLASS training</li> </ul>	<p>Surveys from professional learning</p> <p>Observations</p> <p>Mentor Assignments</p> <p>Student Achievement Data</p> <p>CLASS Observation Data</p>
GELDS Professional Learning	<p>All teachers will receive professional learning in age-appropriate standards (GELDS) (“The What” p. 7).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Provide GELDS Professional Learning</li> <li>*Provide exemplar lesson plans for GELDS</li> <li>*Vertical teaming to discuss GELDS for birth-five year old students</li> <li>*Community training offered</li> </ul>	<p>Lesson Plans</p> <p>Observations</p> <p>Training evaluations</p> <p>Surveys after planning and professional learning meetings</p> <p>Student Achievement Data</p>
Curriculum Professional Learning	<p>Focus on components of the Opening or the World of Learning (OWL) program, including philosophy, research for teaching strategies to all students, daily schedule, classroom routine, assessment, and family connection.</p>	<p>Lesson Plans</p> <p>Observations</p> <p>Student Achievement Data</p>

	<p>All early learning personnel will receive professional training in application of new curriculum (OWL)</p> <p>*Purchase new curriculum *Train all teachers in the use of new curriculum</p>	
Data Team Training	<p>GA Literacy Plan states best practice provides all students appropriate screening and diagnostic instruments for monitoring growth and development have been researched and identified (“The What” p. 6)</p> <p>*Provide data team training to all staff members and stakeholders</p>	<p>Observations</p> <p>Student goals/objectives</p> <p>Intervention Data Review</p> <p>Professional Learning Evaluation</p>

**G. Effectiveness of Professional Learning**

The ultimate measure of the effectiveness of professional learning will be student achievement data because effective professional learning is linked to higher student achievement (The Why, p. 7). It may take time to see significant growth in student achievement. Therefore, we plan to include additional measures for determining the effectiveness of professional learning. Those measures are listed below:

- Observe teachers using the CLASS observation tool
- Create and implement a professional learning rubric aligned to goals and objectives.
- Use teacher data (surveys and observations) to identify key areas for professional learning.
- Use teacher data (surveys, observations, and lesson plans) to monitor effectiveness of professional learning.

## Rockdale County Public Schools Early Learning Sustainability Plan

While RCPS Early Learning created its literacy plan, careful thought was given to aligning our literacy goals with the district strategic plan. Our focus as we developed our literacy plan was centered on building content knowledge through developing a deeper knowledge of best practices for early learners regarding literacy instruction. While developing our literacy plan, sustainability was at the forefront of our minds.

### **a. Clear Plan for Extending Assessment Protocols**

Formative and summative assessments will be administered beyond the grant period through district funding. Funds will be continued through a combination of Title 1 and district funds for year 6 and beyond. We will seek a combination of funding sources to provide the subscription for standardized assessments, including local funding (both school and district), Title 1 and grant funds.

### **b. Plan for Developing Community Partnerships and/or Other Sources to Assist With Funding**

RCPS Early Learning actively seeks the support of the greater community to support learning at our school, forming partnerships with local businesses and community organizations. The work of our Parent Educators reaches beyond the schools to engage families and the community. We will seek out additional grants in order to sustain our literacy plan beyond the funding of the Striving Readers Grant.

### **c-f. Extending the Training to New Teachers and Maintaining Technology**

RCPS Early Learning teachers and administrators will receive professional development by way of district personnel and consultants. We will use the train the trainer model. The literacy team members and selected teachers will be responsible for training new staff on these approaches. Additionally, we will have master teachers who will model instructional practices for new teachers.

RCPS Early Learning will enlist the support of the Digital Learning Specialist, Media Specialists, and Instructional Technology Support Specialists at each pre-k site to ensure the software programs and technology are running effectively and to support teachers in monitoring students' progress.

### **Sustaining the Literacy Plan**

We will review the goals and expectations of the grant, as well as the School Literacy Plan, annually with all staff. We will continue to utilize formative and summative assessments to monitor students' literacy levels and growth through the use of PALS, PPVT4 and DP-3. Because the district is dedicated to supporting a 1-to-1 technology initiative, any technology purchased through the SRCL grant will be subsumed under the district's technology replacement plan. We will allocate money from the Title I and school-level budgets to replace literacy resources as needed. We will analyze student data, teacher feedback, and TKES



observations to finalize which materials and professional learning are not having the desired effectiveness on student learning.

**g. Expanding the Lessons Learned through the SRCL Grant**

By continuing to be active members in the district collaboratives, RCPS Early Learning will be able to expand the lessons learned through the SCRL grant by sharing struggles and successes with stakeholders throughout our district. Through quarterly meetings with the District Literacy Team, we will share best practices with all schools in the district, not just those that receive the SRCL grant. We will encourage our teachers to present at district professional learning days, during New Teacher Orientation, and at district collaboratives. By videotaping master teachers, we will be able to share the instructional strategies implemented using SRCL grant funds to all schools in the district.

### Budget Summary

As a result of a comprehensive review of literacy efforts at Rockdale County Public School's needs have been assessed and identified, data and available resources have been analyzed, and plans have been made to utilize funding from the Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy Grant. Based upon the Fall 2014 enrollment of GA Pre-K, Students with Disabilities Inclusion classes, Early Learning Center, and Parents as Teachers student count of 488 students and an estimated award of \$1,025 per student, the total funds received over a five year time frame are anticipated at \$500,200.

Literacy needs to be funded through the grant are outlined below:

**Curriculum Needs (20%):** In order to meet students' literacy needs across the curriculum, grant funding will be used to purchase the following items:

- Fiction and non-fiction texts for classrooms and media center across all content areas
- Consumable materials
- New curriculum aligned with GELDS standards
- Instructional Technology Applications aligned with GELDS standards

**Professional Learning Needs (50%):** Professional learning is key to providing students with effective literacy instruction. Staff members, including teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators, must be have adequate training in order to effectively provide and monitor literacy instruction. While initial training is imperative to the successful implementation of any new initiative, follow-up training to support new staff is also vital in the sustainability of initiatives.

- Consultant fees
- Instructional materials for training
- Stipends for off-contract training
- Funding for substitutes

**Response to Intervention (15%):** Rockdale County Public School System recognizes a lack of uniformity in the implementation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process across the district. Consistent and effective use of data to inform instruction and the application of intervention strategies to improve student learning must be a constant effort. In order for the RTI process to truly impact student learning and achievement, teachers and interventionists must be provided ongoing professional learning and support.

- Screening and assessment tools— DP-3, PALS-Pre-k, PPVT4 and CLASS
- Intervention resources, materials, and programs
- Progress monitoring tools

**Personnel Needs (5%):** In light of recent financial constraints and the impact that has had on the number of personnel employed by the district, using grant funding to pay stipends for early learning literacy specialist for the district would be beneficial.

**Technology Needs (10%):** While the SRCL grant is not a technology grant, the innovative use of technology will promote student engagement and motivation while also enhancing instruction. Rockdale County Public School System is committed to providing students with 1-to-1 technology, but the technology plan spans multiple years, with several schools and students not receiving individual devices for several years. Because RCPS is using ESPLOST funds to purchase 1-to-1 technology for every student in the district, we are not requesting technology funds for computers or tablets. However, the SRCL grant will allow Rockdale County Public School's Early Learning Department to provide students with access to technology to support and enhance literacy instruction and to increase student engagement.

- Electronic Texts
- Online databases
- Software (such as online reading programs)
- Instructional Technology Applications aligned with GELDS standards