

School Profile

Created Friday, December 05, 2014

Page 1

School Information

System Name:	Washington County
School or Center Name:	T.J. Elder Middle School
System ID	750
School ID	0199

Level of School

Middle (6-8)

Principal

Name:	Manzie T. Broxton
Position:	Principal
Phone:	478-552-2007, ext. 5297
Email:	mbroxton@washington.k12.ga.us

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

Name:	Anne Jones
Position:	Instructional Facilitator
Phone:	478-552-2007, ext 3207
Email:	ajones@washington.k12.ga.us

Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

6-8

Number of Teachers in School

45

FTE Enrollment

653

Grant Assurances

Created Friday, December 05, 2014

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
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

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

-
- Yes
-

Preliminary Application Requirements

Created Friday, December 05, 2014

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
-

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

[SRCL Scoring Rubric-Cohort 4](#)

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

-
- Yes
-

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

[SRCL Required Assessments Chart](#)

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

-
- Yes
-

Assessments

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

-
- I Agree
-

Unallowable Expenditures

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

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

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

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

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

Advertisements, Promotional or Marketing Items

Decorative Items

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

Land acquisition

Capital Improvements, Permanent Renovations

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

Dues to organizations, federations or societies for personal benefits

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

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

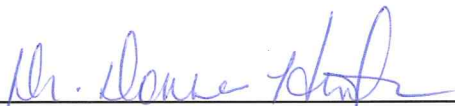
Upon approval by the State Board of Education, sub-grantees will be required to submit electronic budgets through GaDOE Consolidated Application Portal. All budget requests must be made in accordance with the use of funds for the SRCL project and must meet the requirements in EDGAR and OMB circulars.

• I Agree

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)

Dr. Donna Hinton

Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head and Position Title

December 5, 2014

Date



Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

Mr. Manzie T. Broxton

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

December 5, 2014

Date

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

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

Date (if applicable)

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.

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: Dr. Donna Hinton

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

Address: 501 Industrial Dr.

City: Sandersville, GA Zip: 31082

Telephone: (478) 552-3981 Fax: (478) 552-3128

E-mail:

dhinton@washington.k12.ga.us



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

Dr. Donna Hinton

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

December 5, 2014
Date (required)

District Narrative

Washington County School District is governed by a five-member diverse Board of Education with members elected to four-year terms with the option for re-election. The district is under the leadership of a board appointed superintendent. The system's mission statement is: *"Washington County Schools – Building Community Success...One Child at a Time."* Discussion groups were held among teachers, administrators, parents, community representatives, and board members to establish the focus for student success in the school district. The current vision statement was developed *"Washington County Public Schools District – where students acquire knowledge and skills to provide the link between being an early learner and becoming a self-supporting citizen, filling all the needs within a community."*

Washington County Schools is comprised of four separate schools – Ridge Road Primary School, Pre-K – 2; Ridge Road Elementary School, 3 – 5; Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School, 6 – 8; and Washington County High School, 9 – 12. With the exception of the high school, all schools operate a school wide Title I program. This school wide focus allows implementation of a systematic instructional program across schools. Specific strategies and instructional techniques will vary between schools, but the curriculum does not.

Washington County is a rural impoverished area located in east middle Georgia. In the past, Washington County's economy relied heavily on agriculture and the kaolin industry. With the decline in both industries during the 1990s, Washington County was forced to pursue new businesses and diversify the industrial base. To compound the problem our population continued to increase while our employment opportunities decreased. The combined circumstances had an adverse effect on the economy in Washington County causing our unemployment rates to rise between 1990 and 2013 from 2.9% to 10.8%.

System Demographics

The information below demonstrates the need for professional development and additional resources to fill gaps in meeting the needs of all of our students.

Free/Reduced Eligible Students					
82.53%					
Total Student Population					
3124					
2013 Graduation Rate					
81.5%					
2012 Graduates Requiring Remediation Entering TCSG/USG					
TCSG/14.3% USG/31.9%					
Race/Ethnicity		Gender		Instructional Level	
Black or African American	65.3%	Male	50.4%	Gifted	8.5%
White or Caucasian	29.9%	Female	49.6%	Special Education	10.7%
Two or more races	3.0%			English Language Learners	0.9%
Hispanic/Latino	1.3%				
Asian	0.4%				

Data from U.S. Census Bureau	Georgia	Washington County
Persons below poverty	17.4%	24.7%
Median household income	\$49,604	\$31,441
Adults over 25 with a Bachelors degree or higher	27.8%	10.9%
Adults over 25 with a high school diploma or higher	84.4%	76.7%
Unemployment rate (2013)	7.9%	10.8%
Population (est)	9,992,167	20,676

Current Priorities

The focus of the 2014-2015 bi-weekly school based Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) has been implementation of CCGPS and CCRPI with an emphasis on close readings that result in deep understanding of the text and evidence based writing as well as developing lessons and questions that are on the same DOK levels as the guiding standards. Additional priorities include: development of student learning objectives, group meetings to address AdvancED standards, Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) and revising high school pathways – Career Clusters.

Strategic Planning

Washington County uses a balanced score card to set goals, and plan performance strategies, measures, and benchmarks. The goals and strategies as related to literacy instruction are as follows: 1) Develop a competent workforce by developing a variety of professional development opportunities for certified staff by content and by delivery method, 2) Prepare for GA Milestone Assessment through differentiated instruction, and 3) Close achievement gaps using flexible grouping, co-teaching models, and writing across the curriculum.

Past Instructional Initiatives

2013-2014 – PLCs focused on Implementation of CCGPS and CCRPI with an emphasis on reviewing curriculum maps, report cards, units, essential questions and big ideas, Piloted the implementation of Teacher and Leader Keys Effectiveness System which entailed ongoing leadership and teacher training with an emphasis on TKES performance standards and rubrics. Additional priorities included: development of student learning objectives, studying new science standards, beginning SACs group meetings/planning, Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) and revising high school pathways – Career Clusters.

2012-2013 – PLC meetings focused on depth of knowledge and writing assessments, RESA consultants provided DOK training, Implementation of CCGPS, Implementation of CCRPI Index, Implementation of Health Career Cluster (WCHS), Using Instructional Frameworks, and Updated Units, Big Ideas and Essential Questions.

2011-2012 – Departments completed the 5 Step Protocol with all Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, Participated in all state training webinars/GPB, Reviewed materials on DOE website, Up-dated curriculum maps, Differentiated Classrooms, Co-Teaching Strategies, Student work with commentary, Reviewed/up-dated School Improvement Plans, Reviewed existing resources-identified needs

Literacy Curriculum

Washington County provides literacy instruction that aligns with Common Core Standards and addresses all subgroups in the areas of English, reading, and writing across content areas. Reading instruction at the primary and elementary schools includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension.

The literacy curriculum at the middle and high school levels includes vocabulary, text comprehension, and writing using grade level novels. Literacy permeates both school curriculums. Reading is taught both separately and in conjunction with all content areas at the middle school level. In addition to core classes, remediation/enrichment classes are provided during and outside the regular school day for struggling students. Teachers apply the standards using a variety of instructional practices to meet the needs of the individual students.

District Wide Literacy Assessments

Grade Level	Universal Screener
K-2	STAR Reading Test – AR Book Assignments and Leveled Readers
K-2	DIBELS 6 th Edition (all components)
3-5	DIBELS - Next
3-5	STAR Reading Test – Determines Lexile Levels and Guided Reading Groups
6-8	STAR Reading Test
9-12	STAR Reading Test
K-12	Lexile Scores - AR

During the 2012-2013 school year the literacy teams researched and identified a universal screener to effectively implement the goals and strategies in our literacy plan. Various baseline data, for example: unit tests, semester tests, benchmark tests, mock writing tests, Phonemic Awareness Inventory (grades 3-5 for struggling readers), Early Literacy Development – 1st course ½ and Focus on Phonics – 2nd course ½ are used throughout the system. SRCL grant funds will aid the district in acquiring a consistent vertical universal screener for the middle and high schools.

Need for a Striving Reader Project

According to the SRCL Needs Assessment Survey results, the system's demographic data, and the representative 2014 assessment data in this section, there is a need for an intensive literacy initiative. Literacy focus across the curriculum and professional development

in identifying and delivering the appropriate interventions is a common thread among all surveys. The data demonstrates a definite need for additional resources to address the identified areas of concern.

Students Scoring Below Lexile Cut Points

Grade	Lexile Cut Point	% Below Lexile Cut Point
Grade 6	950	47
Grade 7	1000	44
Grade 8	1050	28
Grade 9	1100	35
Grade 11	1150	41

Close to one half of our students in grades 6, 7, and 11 scored below grade level in the chart above and although the percentages were smaller, almost one third of 8th and 9th grade students scored below grade level.

Achievement Gaps between Ethnic and Gender Groups

Test	Grade	% Does Not Meet				% Exceeding			
		Black	White	Female	Male	Black	White	Female	Male
Reading CRCT	8	8	3	3	9	29	61	41	43
American Literature	11	15	2	8	17	15	32	23	14

On both assessments, in the category of “Does Not Meet”, there is a significant achievement gap in both ethnic and gender groups. The achievement gap in the “Exceeding” group is more than doubled according to ethnicity. Although the difference is smaller, there is an achievement gap between female and male students who exceeded on the American Literature EOCT.

District Management Plan and Key Personnel

All grant participants have been involved in the research and design of the school literacy plans and grant initiatives. The District Literacy Team consists of the superintendent, principals, and instructional supervisors. The writing of the grant goals and initiatives and the school literacy plans have been incorporated into the already established meeting schedule. The superintendent holds regular meetings, principals – monthly and Instructional Facilitators (IFs) – bi-monthly, in which they discuss curriculum and instructional issues – including grant goals and initiatives. PLCs are discussed, planned, and then implemented by the IFs at their respective schools weekly. Professional learning, which is a large part of the SRCL grant, is discussed in depth at these meetings. Our goal is for our school-based literacy teams to become active, integral parts of our faculty. Constant collaboration and discussion results in knowledgeable participants with a deep understanding of the goals and objectives, as well as, the implementation plan.

The budget and performance plans were developed by all grant participants in the above mentioned meetings. Participants attended a GaDOE awareness session for this grant to gain a clear understanding of its scope. First the needs assessment was completed and results analyzed by the grant recipients. The identified areas of need were correlated with the CCGPS literacy standards; then brainstorming began to identify ways to meet these needs. Through research and discussion, the participants refined these lists and reached consensus on the Striving Readers goals and objectives, performance plans and budget. Once developed, the budget and plans were approved by all recipients. The grant, included in the district strategic plan, will be implemented and measured according to the district balanced score card.

Individuals Responsible for the Day to Day Grant Operations

Position	Duties and Responsibilities for SRCL
Superintendent: Donna Hinton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees the expenditures • Coordinates grant requirements with the technology department • Plans professional learning activities funded through the grant • Aligns instructional and technology resources • Aligns grant initiatives with CCGPS rollout
School Improvement Specialist: Susan Binion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for overall management of the grant at the district level
Director of Finance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees the requesting and allocating of grant funds

Sandra McMaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees purchasing of resources • Oversees auditing of grant • Submits regular financial reports to superintendent
Directors of Technology Instruction and Network Director: Jennifer Tatum Charles Allen Beth Spratt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends and requests purchase of technology resources • Installs, tracks, supports, and maintains equipment
School Principals: Manzie Broxton, TJEMS Allen Gray, WCHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for overall management of the grant at the school level • Requests purchase orders • Documents receipt of the resources • Ensures staff participation in PLC activities and grant initiatives • Conducts walkthroughs to monitor effectiveness of grant implementation • Leads school literacy teams in ongoing analysis of benchmark literacy assessments to gauge effectiveness of grant implementation on student learning
Instructional Facilitators: Anne Jones, TJEMS Audra Gilbert, WCHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists principal in selecting and purchasing resources • Receives training and assists in training faculty in CCGPS literacy standards and new technology programs • Secures outside consultants for PLC training • Conducts walkthroughs to monitor effectiveness of grant implementation
Media Specialists: Stephanie Sellars, TJEMS Amy Brantley, WCHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends professional learning • Assists principal with selecting and requesting reading materials to be housed in the Media Center as well as the classrooms
School Literacy Teams: Listed in School Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies school needs • Recommends solutions to meet the needs • Ensures proper implementation of grant initiatives.
Faculty and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends additional professional learning as prescribed by grant • Implements grant initiatives

Experience of the Applicant

The following table exhibits the state and federal funding for the past three fiscal years. During this time period, the school system has had no state or federal funds audit findings. The Finance Department follows a strict internal control process for requisitions on all federal funds.

CFDA#	Program Name	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	TOTAL ALL YEARS
10.553	Food Services - School Breakfast Program		438,399.48		438,399.48
10.555	Food Services - National School Lunch Program		1,599,361.72		1,599,361.72
66.039	ARRA - National Clean Diesel Emissions Reduction Program	231,246.03			231,246.03
84.010	Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	1,493,822.42		1,316,307.96	2,810,130.38
84.027	Special Education - Grants to States	702,741.37			702,741.37
84.173	Special Education - Preschool Grants	11,664.40			11,664.40
84.318	Education Technology State Grants	11,926.95			11,926.95
84.386	ARRA - Education Technology State Grants	872,773.73	462,410.27		1,335,184.00
84.389	ARRA -Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies	436,129.06			436,129.06
84.391	Special Education - ARRA Grants to States	244,144.79			244,144.79
84.392	Special Education - ARRA Preschool Grants	939.00			939.00
84.410	Education JOBS Funds	625,319.00			625,319.00
	TOTALS	4,630,706.75	2,500,171.47	1,316,307.96	8,447,186.18

Controls for Spending Grant Funds

- 1) School or Board level individuals complete a paper requisition form for a purchase and forward it to a pre-determined Board Office Personnel to input in the Accounting System.
- 2) Designees at Review Level 1 and Review Level II MUST examine and approve requisitions in the Accounting System for all requisitions being charged to grant funds. PO review will be indicated by the initials of both reviewers. If a reviewer does not approve, he/she will request an adjustment or deletion of the requisition. Requisitions not approved by Review Level II cannot be converted to a PO in the Accounting System.
- 3) Approved requisitions will be forwarded to the Purchasing Manager who will print the PO which will required the signature of the Superintendent, Grant Program Director, and Finance Director.
- 4) The PO will be routed to the vendor.

Washington County Schools have received grants in the past that have required the system to sustain the initiative past the life of the grant. The most recent example of such an initiative was the awarding of the Title II Part 2 ARRA Grant. This grant was intended to provide net books for all high school students and training for teachers to use these tools in their daily instruction. Using local funds, the district continues technology use training for teachers, to purchase net books for all incoming 9th graders, and provide two portable labs containing thirty net books each for the middle school students. Our local board of education approved these funds in a three-year technology plan. Community support for sustaining district initiatives is evident in the 2013 approval of an ESPLOST which incorporates facility construction and renovation as well as funding for technology needs to sustain and support this initiative. The question of sustainability drives the district's decision as to whether or not we will apply for such grants. Research and investigation lead us to believe that the SRCL Grant will help infuse our district with best practices in literacy from grades 6-12.

Community resources are utilized to provide additional instructional support services to our teachers. The district coordinates within its RESA area, utilizing the strengths of the RESA staff to provide support structures for instruction. This type of support allows us to benefit from specialists in their field areas throughout the state. Also, we have a strong relationship with our local Fall Line Technical College as well as Georgia College and State University.

The district has instituted several initiatives which have received no outside funding support. Our expansion of the fine arts department has greatly impacted our students. Students were given the opportunity to participate in the following additional courses: dance

instruction in grades 3-12; theater instruction in grades 3-12; and violin and guitar instruction. Even though these areas are not QBE funded, these programs have been added over the last nine years and sustained by the district.

The literary magazine "Spilled Ink" was developed with the idea that every home in our district should have at least one book. "Spilled Ink" includes student writings and artwork from grades K-12. Once it is published, an Author's Tea is held in May to recognize all contributing students and their accomplishments. This exciting event has grown and developed over the last six years, sustained using local funds.

School Narrative

T.J. Elder Middle is a sixth through eighth grade Title I school located in Sandersville, Washington County, Georgia, a 680 square miles area. As a result of the down turn of the economy, the unemployment rate of 10.8% is above the state average resulting in almost 24.7% of Washington County's population living below the poverty level (2010 census). Our school is a Provision II school where 100% of the students eat free breakfasts and lunches.

Not only do six-hundred, forty-three students (66% black, 30% white, 1% mixed) attend academic classes in grades six through eight, but they also attend a plethora of diverse connections classes. The staff consists of the following teachers: twenty-eight regular content, five special education, two alternative school, two physical education, and one teacher for each of the following areas: gifted, reading/technology/drama, chorus/music, band/strings, art, health, agriculture and technology. Other personnel are: Classroom Paraprofessionals, Nurse, Counselor, Media Specialist, Instructional Facilitator, Assistant Principals, Bookkeeper, Office personnel, Principal, Law Enforcement Officers

Elder Middle School has a history of excellence having received the School of Excellence Award in 1992, 1994, 1996 as well as being named a Reading Renaissance Model School for three years. There have also been years of struggle. Our middle school was on the state's needs improvement list for seven years. Once we found ourselves in the needs improvement status, many research-proven initiatives were put into place. In 2010, T.J. Elder was officially taken off the needs improvement status.

We provide Common Core Standards based instruction that addresses the areas of English, reading, and writing across all content areas. Our Professional Learning Community (PLCs) goal is to find ways to close gaps in writing assessments as well as content areas for SWD, black, and male students while raising the percentage of students in the "Exceeds" category. We aim to accomplish this by aligning the rigor and Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels of our teaching and assessments with that of the standards being taught, to study and implement close reading and evidence based writing, and to refine our understanding and implementation of the ten TKES standards

- **Administrative and Teacher Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team (Principal, three Assistant Principals, and Instructional Facilitator) work very closely with the School Instructional Leadership Team (SILT), School Organizational Leadership Team (SOLT) and Literacy Team to guide and support the RTI process, analyze data, and revise, refine, and monitor the School Improvement Plan and to ensure cohesiveness throughout the school.

- **Past Instructional Initiatives**

EMS is constantly working to strengthen the implementation of Georgia's curriculum. In order to do so, the school has implemented several initiatives over the past few years. We have:

- Implemented:
 - Writing to Win program, Dr. Warren E. Combs
 - Accelerated Reader
 - Thinking Maps
 - Rigor and Relevance strategies
 - Differentiation strategies
 - Marzano's Instructional Strategies

- **Current Instructional Initiatives**

During the current school year, Elder Middle School is:

- Implementing/continuing:
 - TKES Implementation
 - Data Based Questioning (DBQ)
 - Georgia's Common Core Georgia Performance Standards
 - Writing to Win
 - GaDOE units of study
 - Accelerated Reader
 - STAR Assessments
 - Thinking Maps
 - Writing in all content areas
 - Developing and implementing Pre-tests for all units of study
- studying Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* levels (DOK)
 - revising instruction and assessments to elevate and align Depth of Knowledge in instruction and assessments with standards and element
 - curriculum maps by 9-weeks with emphasis on integrating writing
- Administering benchmark assessments twice a year

- Georgia On-line Assessment System (OAS)
- STAR
- Mock Writing assessments
- DIBELS for struggling readers
- Creating common assessments using CCGPS (through Oconee RESA)
- Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) - ongoing study and implementation
- Teacher Keys Effectiveness System
- TAPS videos

Professional Learning Needs

In order for student growth rates to be proficient on the Ga. Milestones, close the gaps with SWD and black male students, strengthen the RTI process, and prepare our students to be fully literate on a college and career ready level we will need professional learning in areas of:

- Using a Universal Screen and data from the screener to guide instruction
- Foundational language skills
- Teaching struggling students who have only basic concept and who have weak comprehension skills
- Rigorous differentiation strategies
- Classroom management training to enhance and support differentiated instruction
- Developing challenging, engaging lessons
- Management in the time-limited differentiated classroom
- Co-teaching
- Digital age technology to improve student engagement and literacy skills
- Integrated challenging literacy skills in all areas of the curriculum

Need for a Striving Readers Project

The demands of our literacy curriculum are changing in complexity as well as the way literacy is acquired, developed, and used. Elder Middle School is a school with many “traditional” classrooms where desks are in straight lines, teachers are at the center of the classroom imparting knowledge, and students are receivers of information. In areas of literacy, the CRCT results have been acceptable but are slowly declining in ELA. The “traditional way” of teaching (most prevalent method at EMS) is not preparing our students for the rigorous demands of Ga. Milestones nor the 21st century. We must prepare not only our teachers to teach in new and different ways, but prepare our students to think, read, write, and perform differently. This is a monumental task that will take time, preparation, dedication, guidance and support in a focused effort to create strong literary foundations.

In spite of presently having high literacy pass rates on the CRCT, we have a small number of students in the ‘exceeds’ category, and a large number of students who are ‘at risk’. On the 2014 CRCT, 25% of our students scored within a 15 point range of not meeting standards in language arts. Technical reading is even more difficult with 49% of our students in science and 44 % of social students scoring within 15 points of not meeting the standards. Twice as many black males as females did not meet reading standards. Our data parallels the data from a Piere, Grigg, & Donahue, 2005 study (The Why, p. 65) which suggests that students who minimally meet state standards are not equipped with sufficient reading comprehension skills to handle much of the grade-level instructional material. (The Why, p. 30) As the cut scores continue to climb, many of our students are at risk of neither passing the grade level nor graduating from high school. Those statistics are not acceptable! The only acceptable goal is for every student to “exceed” on state assessments. SRCL funds will help provide the Professional development needed to close gaps in our subgroups, create relevant lessons and rigorous formative and summative assessments, meet the needs of every student through differentiated strategies, guide our students to become prolific readers and writers in all genres, and monitor and address our students in each level of the RTI process.

A large component of the Common Core State Standards is informational and technical writing that is correlated with research, justification, and support of claims. Having needed resources with which to work is essential for our students to be college and career ready. *During the four years between 1997 and 2002, the amount of new information produced in the word was equal to the amount produced over the entire previous history of the world* (Darling-Hammond et al. 2008). It is essential that our students have access to that information in real time, to know how to access the information, and have the essential equipment and materials with which to work.

We believe that the SRCL funding will provide the needed professional development to ensure that our students become world-wide competitors as well as life-long problem solvers and will provide diverse and current informational materials and technological tools needed to produce positive and systemic change in the lives of our TJEMS students, preparing them for success in colleges and careers.

Needs Assessment, Concerns, Root Cause Analysis

Using the research as our guide as we prepared the Striving Reader Grant application, Elder Middle brainstormed, collected, examined, and analyzed information and data to determine the factors that affect literary excellence in our school. This systematic process drilled down to the roots of our strengths and weaknesses and guided us as we planned for improved student achievement through the implementation of the Striving Readers Grant. As a result of the examination of our data, professional learning, monitoring of instruction and assessments, instruction of explicit reading and writing, diversity of materials and tools, and effective disciplinary literacy throughout the curriculum were identified as needs. The Striving Reader grant will assist us as we fill those gaps and better achieve the rigorous academic challenges of the Common Core Performance Standards so that we can better prepare our students for college, careers, and successful futures.

A. A description of our NEEDS ASSESSMENT process follows:

1. Clarity of Purpose
 - a) Why are we conducting the assessments?
 - b) What do we already know and what do we want to find out?
 - c) How will we use the information?
2. Who will be surveyed?
 - a) Teachers
 - b) Administrators
 - c) Media Specialist
3. Types of Surveys
 - a) Computer – Needs Assessments
 - b) Paper – Professional Learning/College Course Assessment
4. Verification of Participation
 - a) Sign-off sheets
 - b) Completion during PLCs
5. Data Analysis
 - a) Identify strengths
 - b) Identify weaknesses
 - c) Identify concerns & gaps
6. Determine root causes of strengths and weaknesses
7. Results
 - a) Determine goals
 - b) Develop a plan

B. & D.

To begin the process of determining our literacy needs and concerns at TJEMS, the entire school staff (all content, connections, & SPED teachers, paraprofessionals, Media Specialist, EL teachers, and administrators) participated in a brainstorming session to determine possible root causes for: (1) “not meeting” CCGPS standards as determined by CRCT (2) “meeting” standards, and (3) “exceeding” on CCGPS.

Next, the literacy team conducted several needs assessments, gathering and analyzing data. Two types of surveys were used to gather data: paper and computer. Based on the Needs Assessment provided by the state, an electronic survey was created as a way to determine concerns and root causes.

The additional materials that provided guidance were:

Lexile Scores	Readability levels and grade level equivalency
T.J. Elder Middle School Improvement Plan	Focus for the year
AIMS Web – Tier 2 and Tier 3	Tracking of students
CRCT Assessments	Determining trends, weaknesses, gaps, Lexiles
STAR	Readability levels/progression of levels
Local school assessments	OAS benchmarks School developed benchmarks Writing assessments Unit Tests Summative Assessments
State 8th Grade Writing Assessment (eliminated Jan. 2015)	Writing based on state standards

C.

Areas of Concern	Root Causes
Data isn't used to drive instruction	<p>Summative assessments have been the only required means of assessing learning</p> <p>There has been no follow-up on the impact of data analysis to drive instruction.</p> <p>Teachers have not been held accountable</p> <p>Lack of quality Universal Screener to diagnose reading problems</p>
All students are not achieving at an acceptable rate	<p>Limited professional learning sessions on classroom management</p> <p>Limited follow-up and feedback on classroom management.</p> <p>Time and budget restraints.</p> <p>Teachers do not have sufficient classroom management strategies.</p> <p>Knowledge of different strategies is limited.</p> <p>Matching strategies to specific needs is very time consuming.</p> <p>Lack of time to plan.</p> <p>Few texts on subjects of interest to males, especially black males.</p> <p>Lack of quality Universal Screener to diagnose reading problems</p> <p>Screener doesn't indicate specific foundational gaps</p> <p>Tutorials are not 'focused' on lacking foundational needs.</p> <p>Teachers are not trained on teaching foundational literacy components</p> <p>No leveled readers</p> <p>Differentiation doesn't occur in all classrooms</p> <p>Most books are oriented to females.</p>
<p>Most teachers use 'traditional' methods of instruction, teaching to the whole group.</p> <p>There are consistent gaps between black and white, male and female, SWD and non-SWD students.</p>	<p>Little training on using data to guide differentiated lessons</p> <p>Limited professional learning and resources on types and purposes of differentiation.</p> <p>Limited training on management of differentiated classroom</p> <p>Limited training has occurred on text dependent reading & writing.</p> <p>Lack of professional learning on <i>how</i> to plan quality disciplinary units or lessons.</p> <p>Lack of time to collaboratively plan quality units</p> <p>Teachers have not been trained how to integrate</p>

	writing into their crowded content standards
Students are apathetic.	<p>Limited resources for planning and implementing engaging and challenging lessons.</p> <p>Budget restraints, limited wireless capabilities, limited numbers of computers, no hand-held devices</p> <p>A literacy & technological-<i>anemic</i> environment</p> <p>Computers are only available in media center and reading classrooms (4 each). No hand-held devices available.</p> <p>Most books in media are traditional in format.</p> <p>Leveled text sets not available – budget restraint</p> <p>Few resources to support content areas – budget restraint</p> <p>Limited trips outside local county-cost restraint</p> <p>Lack of materials and professional learning on integration of technology into classrooms</p>
Students are not able to read/comprehend on grade level text	<p>Minimum materials and resources for: basic word identification, fluency, multi-syllabic words, fluency, scaffolded materials, vocabulary development, multiple meaning words, Greek and Latin roots and affixes</p> <p>Limited time to teach literacy – for small groups in content area literacy instruction</p> <p>Lack of professional learning on specific interventions for struggling readers</p>

D. Included with ‘B’.

E. Specific Age, Grade Levels, and Content Areas of Concern

Differentiated instruction was found to be very weak in all three grade levels as well as connections classes with the exception of seventh grade math, eighth grade science, and the reading-drama classes. The lack of engagement is evident in all grades because of the limited number of computers and electronic devices. Students are very engaged in technology-drama class where they use diverse learning strategies, choices, and technology. All grades and classes are beginning to use data to drive the instruction; however, sixth grade math constantly uses the data from all assessments to determine the lessons needed. Black males are engaged in science in all three grade levels, but data indicates that they are not as engaged in reading and language arts.

F.

Concern	Steps School HAS Taken	Steps School HAS NOT Taken
Data isn't used to drive instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data notebooks are required – test data is analyzed and interventions are planned to address needs • Walkthroughs monitor the implementation of interventions • Pre-tests are required for each unit or 9-wks period with assessments being analyzed and instructional plan based on results • Required that pre and post tests be submitted to administration prior to administering to monitor DOK levels with standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased a Universal Screener to determine weaknesses in reading foundations • Monitoring to make sure that plans based on pre-tests are being used with fidelity • Developed quality, complex assessment questions • Routinely studied data after each assessment period
All students are not achieving at an acceptable rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged GLRS and RESA to provide training on differentiation strategies • Looked at data at the beginning of school to determine gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned lessons, units, and materials for different learners and levels • Planned different types of assessments – very traditional • Provided diverse literacy materials and delivery methods • Identified specific reading problems for students with low Lexiles who are not in RTI process • Trained teachers in classroom management skill for diverse classrooms
Teachers feel comfortable keeping the classrooms 'traditional.' CRCT scores have been relatively good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeled different strategies • Peer observations • Training in DBQ (Data based Questioning) • Required open-ended questions on assessments • Found websites to support ideas • Required weekly writing throughout the curriculum • Administrators plan with teachers every two weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeled the DBQ outside of the PLC. • Monitored the implementation of DBQ type lessons and questions • Correlated assessment data with diverse lessons and learning •
Students are apathetic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun to make lesson relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed highly engaging

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun giving students choices • Begun to use materials other than textbook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> units • Used electronic devices to engage students • Used leveled text in most classes •
Students are not able to read/ comprehend grade level text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have purchased and use vocabulary development and Greek and Latin root development in limited classrooms • Limited classroom use of fluency passages and assessments • Some differentiated lessons are occurring • Provided co-teaching to support struggling readers • Provided a 6th g. reading resource class for struggling readers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased materials for school-wide vocabulary and root word development • Found/purchased materials for basic word identification • Provided professional training in basic foundational reading diagnostics, interventions, and skills • Have not purchased a screener that determines gaps in foundational skills

We will continue to implement reading and writing throughout all content and connections areas (The What, p. 4) Professional learning will continue to refine the understanding, depth of knowledge, and level of application that the standards require. Release time will be provided to work with peers and content teams to develop focused, engaging lessons as well as observe peers. Assessments and data are a driving force in the curriculum (The What, p. 8). With the help of the SRLC grant a universal screener will be used to diagnose causes of reading difficulties. Professional learning will be provided to train teachers in diagnosing and addressing reading difficulties. Learning styles inventories will continue to be given at the beginning of school to enhance differentiated lessons to meet the needs of as well as engage all students. “Formative assessments are effective only if they are followed by effective instructional responses or appropriate types of feedback” (*Torgesen & Miller, 2009, p. 24*). We will develop and refine formative and summative assessments and use the data to direct our instruction. Benchmarks will

be given in all subjects, including mock writing. We will collaboratively evaluate instruction based on data analysis of assessments and use the data to drive instruction. Teachers will continue to analyze assessment data, determine and implement interventions and keep documentation in data notebooks. Based on the data, we will refine and strengthen our understanding and implementation of differentiated instruction. After walkthrough observations, we will compile data and discuss the results at PLC meetings. We will create a plan for studying and implementing best practices in explicit in literacy (The What, p. 9) as well as monitoring the implementation of those practices. Engaged Leadership is essential for learning (The What, p. 5). Time will be protected for planning, collaboration, and implementing quality, high-level, engaging instruction. The administration will routinely monitor making sure that they are aligned with our school goals.

School Literacy Plan

T.J. Elder Middle School students represent the lower economic status of rural Washington County. Due to economic hardships, our larger industries have either cut hours or completely shut down. As a result, 100% of our students participate in a free lunch program. Our poverty stricken students need a safe haven where they can prepare for successful futures; however, too often, many students aren't academically successful, drop out, and continue the cycle of poverty.

In order to inhibit that cycle from becoming perpetual and to prepare all of our students to be college and career ready, our literacy team has determined that all students must possess solid literacy foundations and teachers must understand literacy, its components and value, consistently implement and assess literacy components throughout the school by creating a literacy rich environment that motivates all students to become highly literate as well as provide professional learning to ensure a solid foundation that is needed by students. (Why, p. 26) To clarify and enhance our understanding of a good literacy plan, our team studied the WHAT, WHY, and HOW documents as well as a plethora of research in order to define what is needed at T.J. Elder Middle School.

The Georgia Literacy Task Force (*The Why, p. 26*) defines literacy as the ability to speak, listen, read, and write, as well as to view print and non-print text in order to achieve the following:

- To communicate effectively with others
- To think and respond critically in a variety of settings to a myriad of print and non-print texts, and
- To access, use, and produce multiple forms of media, information, and knowledge in all content areas by the Georgia PreK-12 Literacy Task Force, 2009.
- T.J. Elder has many components of a good literacy plan in place. We:
 - Routinely disaggregate data
 - Write units for CCGPS and GPS
 - Write in all content areas
 - Have professional learning on a bi-weekly basis
 - Have leadership teams (School Instructional Leadership Team – SILT and School Organizational Leadership Team - SOLT)
 - Implement school wide and county wide focus walks
 - Vertically team (K-12)
 - Develop pre and post unit assessments
 - Give local benchmark assessments (Online Assessment System) OAS twice each year
 - Have an active RTI process in place

- Provide Extended Learning Time (ELT) for all students (25 minutes each day) to address specific content needs

Although we have many essential components in place, through the Striving Reader grant process, we have become aware that we have not developed a comprehensive, focused, research-based literacy plan that encompasses all content areas in the delivery of explicit reading and writing instruction for all students. We also realized that many components need refinement of focus, consistency, and use of research-based instruction. This lack of refinement may be an indicative root cause of our gaps in performance (as indicated by our data). The Striving Reader Grant will help us address those gaps in ways that will enable all students to become college and career ready. The SRLC grant will provide the professional learning resources and materials that are needed for student success in this advancing, technological age. It will provide the consistency and reliability in the initiatives that we have in place and help provide those needed in order to close the identified gaps at T.J. Elder Middle School.

The research-based key components listed in *The What* (pp. 1-2) provide the foundation of a comprehensive literacy plan. The SRLC grant will be essential in promoting reliability and consistency in initiatives at T.J. Elder that are presently in place or that will be implemented in the future. T.J. Elder's literacy activities and strategies will be closely aligned with those key components as indicated below:

Key Components	Strategies and Activities that are in place or will be implemented
Standards (The What, p. 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue with implementation of Common Core Georgia Performance Standards in ELA (reading, writing, speaking, viewing) throughout all content and connections areas. ○ Professional learning will continue to refine the understanding, depth of knowledge, and level of application that the standards require. ○ Release time will be provided to work in vertical and content teams to develop high level materials and assessments that are clearly aligned to the content standards ○ Release time will be provided to perform peer observations

Components Unique to birth to five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ N/A
Ongoing Formative and Summative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A universal screener will be used to diagnose causes of reading difficulties. ○ Learning styles inventories will continue to be given at the beginning of school.
Assessments (The What, p. 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will continue to develop and refine the formative and summative assessments and use the data to direct our instruction ○ We will more closely analyze and use the data from the assessments ○ Benchmarks (mock writing and OAS assessments) will be given in all subjects twice a year. ○ We will collaboratively evaluate instruction based on data analysis of assessments and use the data to drive instruction. ○ Teachers will continue to analyze individual assessment data, determine and implement interventions and keep documentation in data notebooks. ○ We will refine and strengthen our understanding and implementation of differentiated instruction based on data.
Response to Intervention (The What, p. 11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue weekly RTI meetings at each grade level ○ Continue to develop a plethora of strategies and resources for interventions ○ Continue to search for root causes of problems as well as interventions ○ Continue to use teacher-leaders in each grade level team to oversee the RTI process. ○ Ensure the RTI process is an integral part of EMS by developing expectations for implementation and providing professional learning. ○ Provide professional learning on differentiation of content and implementation of differentiated lessons and assessments ○ Monitor implementation of RTI strategies and processes.

<p>Best Practices in Literacy Instruction (The What, p. 9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implement a universal screener to determine who needs interventions, areas of weaknesses and strengths, and to develop specific intervention plans for struggling readers. ○ Create a plan for studying and implementing best practices in explicit teaching of reading, writing, and for monitoring the implementation of those practices. ○ Adopt a core program that will be used to engage students in direct, explicit reading instruction. ○ Develop a system to guide and monitor writing instruction through all content areas. ○ Protect instructional time to allow a minimum of 120 minutes of literacy instruction each day. ○ Create a plan to engage all students in literacy instruction.
<p>High Quality Teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will increase the sustainability and expertise of qualified reading and writing teachers by creating a cadre of experts in the explicit reading and writing instruction throughout the curriculum. ○ These experts will train and support colleagues through professional learning activities. ○ Instruction will be monitored through focus walks using the Ga. Literacy checklist and the county-wide observation form.
<p>Engaged Leadership (The What, p. 5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Time will be protected for planning, collaboration and sustained literacy instruction through all content areas. ○ Consistency in teaching writing as well as consistent expectations will become an integral part of every class. ○ The administration will routinely monitor standards-based instructional practices, professional learning agendas and activities, and protect teacher's collaborative planning time. ○ RTI implementation will continue to be monitored to ensure continuity and fidelity. ○ Extended Learning Time (ELT) planning and implementation will be adjusted to provide more focus on literacy tutorials as well as math (which is presently the focus) ○ All school personnel will participate in the implementation of the Striving Reader Grant.

<p>Clearly articulated Plan for Transitions and Alignment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing pervasive and consistent best practices will be the primary focus. ○ Explicit reading and writing across the curriculum will become the standard. ○ We will develop a systemic protocol for developing, analyzing, and implementing formative and summative assessments. ○ We will continue to monitor the RTI process. ○ Cross-disciplinary teams will be developed to support continuity of instruction. ○ School-wide writing rubrics will be developed and implemented. ○ All content teachers and staff will receive literacy training.
<p>Intentional Strategies for Maintaining Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coaching and monitoring of instruction will be provided for teachers and new staff when weaknesses are identified. ○ Methodical professional learning will continue to occur. ○ Teacher experts and others will provide initial and follow-up instruction in best practices in explicit reading and writing instruction and assessment. ○ <i>Spilled Ink</i> (an annual book that showcases student writing and art which is given to every student in our school system) will continue to be published. ○ Technology will be used to engage parents, stakeholders, and students. ○ Continue to provide protected time for routine professional learning. ○ Continue to use walkthroughs, data collections, and TKES protocol to monitor implementation of scientifically based strategies. ○ Teacher leaders, Instructional Facilitator, administrators will continue to support personnel in data analysis, instructional practices, and professional learning.

As a result of surveys, discussions, and studying the key components that provide the foundation of the comprehensive literacy plan (The What), the following needs have been identified and goals have been developed. These goals will be the focus of our SRCL grant. More details about our project goals and objectives will be given in the Building Blocks.

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	
Identified Gaps and Needs	Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No protocol for diagnosing causes of reading difficulties ▪ Professional training on diagnosing and intervening in reading difficulties is limited ▪ Present Universal Screener doesn't identify gaps in reading foundations ▪ There is gap between white, female readers and black male readers as well as SDWs. ▪ Types and frequency of formative assessments are limited 	<p>Goal 1 Uses appropriate diagnostic, formative, and summative strategies to systematically gather, analyze, and use data to measure progress, inform instructional content and methods.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessments indicate that students do not read on grade level ▪ Teachers don't feel equipped to help struggling readers. ▪ There is gap between white, female readers and black male readers as well as SDWs. ▪ Differentiation practices sporadically implemented in classrooms, and limited in scope ▪ Students don't understand what they are reading in the textbooks. ▪ Whole-group teaching permeates the school 	<p>Goal 2 The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of explicit reading and writing strategies is limited and inconsistent ▪ Comprehension, text structure and vocabulary strategies are implicitly taught. Explicit teaching is inconsistent. ▪ Teacher preparation for teaching reading and writing is limited ▪ Teachers vertically and horizontally lack content knowledge of literacy standards 	<p>Goal 3 Teachers will have an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technological production, research, and publication is limited ▪ Students are not able to answer complex questions ▪ Media choices are limited, lack diversity ▪ Informational books are limited ▪ Limited curriculum support materials ▪ Very few classroom have leveled text sets ▪ Students have few self-selected choices of literacy ▪ Technology is limited ▪ Wireless access is very limited ▪ Supplemental and intervention materials are limited ▪ Correlation of DOK levels between the standards, lessons, and assessments is inconsistent. ▪ There is limited exposure to different types of literacy throughout our school 	<p>Goal 4 The teacher will create student-centered, academic environments in which teaching and learning occur at high levels.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discipline referrals and classroom with traditional classroom methods of engagement are correlated ▪ Students are apathetic ▪ Student engagements is limited 	<p>Goal 5 Teachers will plan and implement effective lessons that are research based and that are relevant to the content in order to engage students in active learning</p>

The Plan:

The National Council of the Teachers of English (NCTE, 2006) stated that students must have strong literacy skills in order to compete in the global society (The Why, p. 46). The T.J. Elder Middle School literacy team was activated to develop a literacy plan that will be implemented as well as sustained to increase student achievement for *all* our students and prepare them for success in their future world. The needs assessments were completed by all certified staff and the results along with walk-through data, student data, and teacher input were used to determine the areas that have not been implemented or are emerging as indicated in the *why, what* and *how* documents.

The results of the data indicated inconsistencies throughout the components of the building blocks. In order to strengthen our inconsistent literacy program, Elder would use the Striving Reader Grant

monies to clarify protocols in the areas of creating a literacy rich environment where all students are engaged and motivated, ensuring a consistent literacy focus throughout all content areas and classes, providing best practices and literacy training to all content area teachers and support staff, and monitoring and strengthening ongoing formative and summative assessments. To address these needs, profuse and extensive professional learning in all areas will be required. We will bring in outside resources as well as develop experts within our school by sending teachers and staff to conferences. They, in turn, would support their colleagues by redelivering information, modeling, and coaching to insure continuity and fidelity. Each classroom will become standards-based where every learner's needs will be met through differentiated instruction. Students who are not successful will be addressed through the RTI process. These students will also receive reading support during Extended Learning Time (ELT) time and connections classes. Different technologies, materials, and methods as well as motivational and incentive programs will also be used to accelerate all readers and writers.

Reading Next (2J. of Extended Time for Literacy) states, "Literacy instruction for adolescents should extend beyond a single language arts period and be integrated in subject area coursework." (Biancorosa & Snow, 2006, p. 20 [The Why, p. 58]) It is imperative that Elder provides a minimum of two hours of explicit instruction in reading and writing across the curriculum and content areas. All students receive one period of language arts, one period of reading, and some students receive ELT tutorials in reading. Below one will find an example of our present schedule for 7th grade (times will vary by grades but format will be the same):

School Schedule of Classes		
<i>During connections time, teachers have PLCs on Tuesday, RTI meetings on Wednesday, and collaborative planning on Thursdays</i>		
6 th , 7 th 8 th grades	7:45-8:00	Homeroom
6 th & 7 th g.	8:00-8:55	1 st period – content classes (8 th g. connections)
6 th & 7 th g.	8:55-9:50	2 nd period – content classes (8 th g. connections)
All students	9:50-10:20	ELT time
7 th & 8 th g.	10:20-11:15	3 rd period – content classes (6 th g. connections)
8 th g.	11:15-11:45	Lunch
6 th & 7 th g.	11:15 – 12:10	4 th period – content classes
6 th g.	12:10 – 12:45	Lunch
8 th g.	11:45-12:45	4 th period – content classes
7 th g.	12:10-1:05	5 th period
6 th & 8 th g.	12:45-1:40	5 th period – content classes

7 th g.	1:05-1:40	Lunch
6 th & 8th	1:40-2:30	6 th period – content classes (7 th g. connections)
6 th & 8th	2:30-3:25	7 th period – content classes (7 th g. connections)

Building Block 1: Engaged Leadership

The goal of Georgia’s Literacy Task Force is to educate students who will be able to communicate effectively with others, think and respond critically in a variety of settings to a myriad of print and non-print text, and to access, use, and produce multiple forms of media, information, and knowledge in all content areas. (*The Why*, p. 26) In the research of Biancorsa and Snow, 2004, we found that leaders and teachers need to have a solid understanding of how to teach reading and writing to the full array of students presented in schools. According to the CCGPS document, (*The Why*, p. 27) the responsibility of that education should be shared within the school.

With this information in mind, our leadership and staff examined the components of our program. We have studied and are presently implementing the CCGPS in English, language arts and math. Professional learning is routinely established with bi-weekly meetings that include all staff as well as administrators. Our schedule includes weekly time for collaborative planning; however, in actuality, this time is sometimes interrupted by unexpected events or parent conferences. We have faculty leadership teams (School Instructional Leadership Team - SILT and School Organizational Leadership Team - SOLT) that meet as needed to discuss needs and concerns. The administrative team participates in routine walk-through observations for TKES. The data is compiled, disaggregated, charted, and reviewed on a quarterly basis. The charts are posted, but due to time restraints, are not used to guide curriculum as often as they should.

Our classes are 50-55 minutes in length with our students receiving both ELA and reading classes as well as ELT tutorials. Based on research, extended literacy time is crucial for academic success. The striving reader grant will be instrumental in preparing teachers throughout the content areas to address the components of adolescent literacy (*The Why*, p. 26), gain deep knowledge of teaching explicit reading and writing, and share the responsibility of guiding our students to become competent in literacy skills. Although we have many strong

literacy components in place, there are still many gaps and weaknesses due to funding, time restraints, professional learning needs for teachers, and availability of accessible experts.

BUILDING BLOCK 1: Engaged Leadership

1A. Action: Administrator demonstrates commitment to learn about and support evidence-based literacy instruction in his/her school. (*The What*, p. 5)

The administrator meets regularly with the leadership team, keeping personnel abreast of upcoming webinars, conferences, RESA trainings, and state updates. The administrator regularly monitors implementation of the standards.

The administrators will continue to:

- Monitor data notebooks and lesson plans
- Work with teachers during collaborative planning
- Send e-mails to continuously update state offerings and information
- Meet regularly with teachers and staff to share information
- Guide book studies
- Complete walk-through observations
- Provide mentoring, training for new teachers
- Use Leadership teams to interview and make decisions on new hires

Evidence:

Administrators demonstrate commitment by the following:

- Sign-in sheets of meetings, agendas, and minutes of meetings
- Implementation of strategies from book studies
- Conference registrations, notes from conferences
- Documentation of walk-through observations
- Collaborative planning notes

1B. A school literacy leadership team organized by the administrator or other leaders in the community is active. (*The What*, p. 5)

The literacy team has been developed. Through our electronic surveys, the team evaluated our current practices and determined our needs.

The literacy team will continue to:

- Collect and study data to determine our practices, needs, and successes
- Communicate with parents via parent portal, Facebook, Remind 101, electronic billboard
- Attend conference, training

The literacy team will:

- With peers, share ideas and information learned from meetings and conferences

Evidence:

- Focus walk data, classroom observations
- Sign-in sheets
- Data analysis
- Literacy observation checklists
- Feedback from electronic communication strategies
- Data notebooks

1C. The effective use of time and personnel are leveraged through scheduling and collaborative planning. (*The What*, p. 5)**What we will do:**

- Agendas and minutes from collaborative planning time will be required
- Dedicated time for weekly collaborative meetings through grade level content areas as well as connections teachers will be scheduled
- Vertical collaboration will be initiated
- Scheduled audit will be implemented to identify inefficient use of time and to readjust schedule

What we will continue:

- Scheduling and collaboration will allow all students to receive 2-4 hours of literacy instruction each day
- Connections teachers as well as content teachers will be used for Extended Learning Time (ELT) tutorials each day
- Literacy standards and planned implementation indicated on lesson plans

Evidence:

- Minutes from collaborative planning
- Collaboration schedules
- Schedule indicating time for literacy instruction
- Lesson plans
- Schedule audit results and action plan

1D. A school culture exists in which teachers across the content areas accept responsibility for literacy instruction as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

(*The What*, p.6)

What we will do:

- During PLCs, teachers and staff will share research-based literacy strategies, ideas that have been successfully implemented in their classrooms
- Closely monitor lesson plans and instruction to ensure instruction in writing and reading

What we will continue:

- All staff participates in targeted, sustained professional learning on literacy strategies within content areas.
- Continue to work with students, families, and *Communities in Schools*

Evidence:

- Professional learning communities (PLC) sign-in sheets
- PLC agendas and schedules
- Schedule of school and county-wide walkthroughs
- Electronic data from walkthroughs
- Repository of successful strategies used in classrooms
- Parent brochures, pamphlets on Ga. Milestones prep, Facebook page, Parent portal, teacher webpages, Remind 101

Persons responsible:

- Administrators
- Instructional Facilitator
- County administrators

1E. Literacy instruction is optimized in all content areas. (*The How*, p. 26, *The What*, p. 6)**To ensure that literacy instruction is optimized in all content areas we will:**

- Examine student work to identify strengths and weaknesses, to develop goals for improvement
- Monitor instruction to ensure consistent use of effective practices, disciplinary literacy, active student engagement
- Plan tiered tasks to support CCGPS
- Identify and implement appropriate strategies that support English Language Learners
- Develop, implement, and monitor a systemic approach to teach academic vocabulary
- Use the GA Literacy checklist to support and improve literacy instruction
- Identify students who need intervention
- Plan and schedule intervention tactics
- Plan targeted, sustained professional development on literacy strategies and deep content knowledge
- Study current research and use online resources to stay abreast of effective strategies
- Share ways for teachers to guide students to focus on their own improvement
- Use a school-wide writing rubric that is aligned with CCGPS
- Require writing as an integral part of every class

We will continue to:

- Celebrate good writing through the publication of *Spilled Ink* (a publication of student Authors and Artists in Washington County Schools)
- Host ELA parent night

Evidence:

- Professional Learning agendas, sign-in sheets, schedules
- Compilation of walk-through data
- ELT plans, ELL plans, RTI rosters and minutes
- GA Literacy checklists results
- Unit and lesson plans
- Documentation of observations
- Database of online resources and current research
- School wide writing rubric
- *Spilled Ink* publication
- Student writing samples
- Parent night sign-in sheets and agenda

1F. The community at large supports schools and teachers in the development of college-and-career-ready students as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards , (*The What*, p. 7)

The community helps develop college and career ready students by:

- Serving on the Elder Middle School literacy Team
- Providing speakers during career day, emphasizing the need to be highly literate
- Working with students on projects – i.e. Junior Solar Sprint, DAR Essays, Science Fair Projects
- “Adopting” our school and providing support in many areas
- Providing Tutorial support through First Love Kids, Boys and Girls Clubs, Church organizations
- Providing school information, events, and successes in the two local weekly newspapers
- Providing “Activities of the day and week” each morning on the local radio station
- Modeling successful careers through Veterans Day activities
- Attending and participating in School Council meetings
- Collaborate with the county library to provide access to reading materials and literacy-related programs

Evidence:

- Literacy Team Rosters, agendas, sign-in sheets
- Career Day programs
- Pictures of Junior Solar Sprint
- DAR certificates
- Veteran’s Day Agenda
- Pamphlets, publications, agendas
- Newspapers, Radio moments
- School council agendas and sign-in sheets

BUILDING BLOCK 2. Continuity of Instruction

T.J. Elder strives to provide continuity of instruction through use of active literacy initiatives that are aimed at school improvement and focus on teacher training in literacy. The efforts include, but are not limited to implementation of Data Based Questioning (DBQ), Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC), CCGPS aligned formative assessment tasks, Georgia on-line assessments (OAS), collaboration with GLRS, GPB, Oconee RESA, Rosa M. Tarbuton Memorial Library, as well as research-based book studies (*The Why*, pp. 158-162).

“The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school” (CCGPS introduction, GADOE document) Elder Middle is continually working toward that goal and has many strategies in place that support continuity of instruction. For example, collaborative teams are established and time is scheduled each Thursday for them to plan lessons and units; however, the planning sessions are sometimes absorbed by other priorities. Although minutes are required, follow-up and accountability is not always implemented. A lesson plan format is in place that requires the standards, essential question, materials, vocabulary, opening, teaching strategies, differentiation, and formative or summative assessment. Units from CCGPS are used as guides. There is no protocol in place for examining student work.

Writing occurs in all classes during the week; however, there is no consistency in quality or expectations. Writing is often inconsistently implemented due to a lack of training and ownership in the responsibility of teaching writing across the curriculum. Although our teachers want to embrace technology, our school has struggled. We have three different types of white boards in use, which results in lack of continuity of usage. We have one desk top computer lab and have recently inherited two sets of six-year old netbooks from the high school. Research and publication of writing is limited. The Striving Reader Grant would provide training for literacy based instruction as well as the technology necessary for students to use in their classrooms.

As a result of book studies, our teachers have embraced (although inconsistently) many research based strategies to support student learning. Although a thirty minute tutorial (ELT) occurs each morning, the amount of time for intervention that is necessary for many of our students to be successful is limited. Academic vocabulary is provided on a haphazard basis. The SRCL funds will provide professional learning and a variety of media and genre needed for effective instruction.

2A. Active collaborative teams ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum (See Engaged Leadership, Building Block 1. C, D) (*The What*, p. 7)

To achieve this we will:

- Model and monitor collaborative planning
- Schedule peer observations of effective literacy implementation
- Study formative assessment results to guide instruction

To achieve this we will continue to:

- Provide weekly collaborative planning meeting
- Provide weekly cross-disciplinary professional learning meetings
- Provide vertical team meetings during in-service days
- Use SILT (school instructional leadership team) to guide and support literacy instruction
- Establish cross disciplinary teams for literacy instruction

Evidence:

- Sign-in sheets, agendas of meetings
- Peer observation notes
- GA Literacy Checklist results
- Unit and lesson plans, student work
- Schedule of peer observations
- Collaborative plans

2B. Teachers provide literacy instruction across the curriculum. (*The What* , p. 7, *The How*, p. 30)

To achieve this we will:

- Develop and use a school-wide writing rubric based on CCGPS
- Use peer observations to strengthen observers' implementation of strategies
- Teach academic vocabulary in all content areas
- Provide a variety of media and genres in both reading and writing Teach explicit reading and writing strategies
- Develop clear learning targets based on Georgia's literacy standards
- Monitor use of instructional strategies to improve literacy

- Allow and encourage students to read varied genres
- Integrate varied comprehension strategies throughout subject areas
- Write in every class, every day
- Use CCGPS writing standards to guide our writing
- Share creative ideas to infuse literacy throughout the curriculum

Evidence:

- Writing rubric with student work
- Clear learning targets posted for each lesson and reflected in lesson plans
- Peer observation schedules, note pages, feedback forms
- Lesson plans
- Media center check-out logs
- AR reports
- Expanded repertoire of media and genres
- Writing samples
- Expanded vocabulary used in writing
- Increase in comprehension scores
- Post writing samples on the school social media site

2C. Out-of-school agencies and organizations collaborate to support literacy within the community. (*The What, p. 7, The How, p. 32*)**To achieve this we will continue to:**

- Work with *Communities In Schools* and *Family Connections*
- Host a plethora of guest speakers during our annual Community Career Day
- Work with Washington EMC (Solar Sprint), local Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR writing contest), local Veterans (Writing contest and student readers for the program annual Veterans Day program)
- Work with Fall Line Technical College (college tours, science fairs)
- Work with Georgia College and State University (hosting pre-service teachers and science experiments, guest speakers, and 'science night' activities)
- Work with Oconee RESA for professional learning and guidance
- Work with Washington County's *Literacy Is For Everyone (L.I.F.E.)* program
- Work with the local county library
- Work with local newspapers

We will:

- Provide tutoring, mentoring, and Saturday school as funds allow
- Provide a comprehensive program to strengthen motivation in our at-risk population
- Use and expand technology to communicate and engage parents and stakeholders

Evidence:

- Sign-in sheets
- Rosters, timesheets, schedules

- Parent conference logs
- Reading incentive program
- Copies of e-mails
- Website information
- Website hits and data collections
- agendas
- newspaper articles, pictures

BUILDING BLOCK 3. Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments

Accountability is a cornerstone of the Georgia Literacy Plan and assessment accountability, both formative and summative, serves as the foundation for PreK-12 literacy (*The Why, p. 105*). By detecting problems early, teachers can design and implement specific instruction for students who are at risk. Assessments must be ongoing, frequent, and provide multiple measures that can be used as diagnostic and monitoring tools to plan instruction. The data from both formative and summative assessments must be easily accessible in order to drive the instruction. (*The Why, p. 96*)

At Elder Middle, teachers use multiple choice, short essay, and formative assessments each nine weeks in each subject to assess student progress. In November and February, Georgia's Online Assessment System (OAS) is given. These assessments are aligned to the standards taught as indicated on the curriculum maps. The data from these tests are analyzed for strengths, weaknesses, and gaps and struggling students are identified. Interventions are then developed and implemented.

Prior to the beginning of school, our administrative, leadership, and literacy teams meet, analyze county-wide and school-wide data, and look for trends, gaps, and root causes as well as possible interventions. During pre-planning, the teams share the findings with the faculty and staff who refine the causes and interventions and develop goals. Also at the beginning of each school year all students are given a learning styles inventory that will be used to differentiate the instruction. Although Elder exhibits many components of a good assessment plan, more could be done. Formative assessments are only effective if they are followed by effective instructional responses

or appropriate types of feedback.” (Torgesen & Miller, 2009, p. 24) There is a five day turn-around on assessments being graded and posted on the parent portal, but a protocol for monitoring this procedure is not in place. While teachers at Elder Middle are diligently developing formative and summative assessments, professional training is needed on clearly aligning those assessments to the standards while addressing the rigor that is indicated by the standard. Teachers will need training and release time to create rigorous, clearly aligned, balance assessments.

The recommendations in *The Why* document (pp. 120-121) indicate that data should be a part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement; students should be taught to examine their own data and set learning goals, and that we should establish a clear vision for school-wide data use. Professional development and collaborative planning time will be needed to develop that ongoing cyclical instructional improvement plan. Empowering students to take ownership of their own learning will prepare them for successful futures. A paradigm shift in this area is beginning to occur at Elder Middle. Students are beginning to analyze their own data and set their own learning goals based on the analysis. This process must not only continue but expand. Professional learning, guidance, and modeling will be needed as we guide students to examine their own data, develop their own learning goal,s and set a clear vision for school-wide data use.

According to the *Center on Instruction 2009*, there are three crucial times for assessments: at the beginning of the year, throughout the year, and at the end of the year. (Torgesen & Miller, 2009, p. 16) (*The Why*, p. 97). Professional learning about and development of assessments that are used to guide instruction is needed.

CCGPS demands rigor and relevance in our curriculum. Through an analysis of test items on recent 9-weeks assessments, 73% of the items were on level 1 of Webb’s Depth of Knowledge chart. Professional development is needed to guide our teachers as they develop more rigorous and relevant lessons and assessments so that our gaps on CRCT (Ga. Milestones) will be decreased, our levels of students who “exceed” will increase, and students will be prepared for careers or college.

Work will also be needed to strengthen our RTI process and implementation through the use of more available technology, professional learning for teachers on the administration of progress monitoring, and use of data. This work will help teachers provide interventions that will be tailored to students' academic needs.

3A. An infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments is in place to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. (*The What, p. 8*)

To achieve this we will:

- Select effective screening and diagnostic tools
- Develop assessment calendar for literacy screenings
- Develop protocol for literacy screenings
- Develop timeline for administering screenings, as well as analyzing and disseminating data
- Define process for selecting appropriate interventions for struggling readers
- Develop consistent literacy expectation across classrooms and teachers
- Evaluate the effectiveness of instruction
- Determine the need for and the intensity of interventions
- Locate and use intervention materials aligned with students' needs
- Model and guide students to graph their own progress and set goals
- Provide professional learning to ensure that teachers understand the purpose for and use of formative and summative assessment
- Develop and administer common CCGPS-based pre-tests in all subject
- Locate or develop common mid-course assessments
- Develop procedures and expectations for staff collaborative planning activities
- Monitor administration of formative and summative assessments, disaggregation of data, and use data to guide instruction

Evidence:

- STAR data, benchmark reports, progress monitoring charts, data notebooks, individual student records, AIMS web charts
- Protocols, Norms
- Screening and diagnostic tools
- Assessment calendar
- Timeline
- Process for interventions
- Assessments
- Professional learning schedule, agendas, sign-in sheets
- Student graphs of progress
- Pre and post tests
- Differentiated assignments and activities, lesson plans, unit plans

- ELT rosters

3B. A system of ongoing formative and summative assessments is used to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. (*The*

What, p. 8)

To achieve this we will:

- Continue implementation of school-wide mock writing assessments twice a year
- Continue routine data analysis to re-group ELT groups every six weeks
- Monitor data notebooks & progress monitor data once a month
- Continue to add buffer days to lesson plans to allow for interventions and re-testing
- Provide professional learning and monitoring to ensure appropriate administration of assessments and accurate data recording
- Analyze test data and develop intervention strategies for at least two tests during each nine-week period

Evidence:

- Assessment calendar
- Mock writing assessments, data, intervention groups, attendance rolls
- ELT rosters, plans, attendance
- Progress monitoring notebooks, data analysis, interventions, and commentary
- Lesson plans indicating buffer days
- Professional Learning agendas, sign-in sheets
- Differentiated assignments for acceleration and remediation

3C. Problems found in screenings are further analyzed with diagnostic assessment.

(*The What, p. 8*)

To achieve this we will:

- Develop protocol to make sure identified students receive diagnostic assessment
- Identify component skills needed for mastery of literacy standards

Evidence:

- Protocol and procedures for implementation
- Flexible groups instruction based on specific needs

3D. Summative data is used to make programming decisions as well as to monitor individual student progress (*The What, p. 9*)

To achieve this we:

- Indicate on assessment calendar a specific time to disaggregate and analyze previous year's CRCT data

- Review and study analyzed data in PLCs in order to identify needed programs and instructional strategies
- Adjust curriculum maps based on data and weights on CRCT (Ga. Milestone) assessments for the present year
- Disaggregate and monitor data to ensure progress of subgroups
- Adjust subgroups as needed
- Adjust Extended Learning Time (ELT – tutorial groups) rolls
- Teachers give detailed feedback in a timely manner to allow students to graph their own progress

Evidence:

- Curriculum maps
- Meeting agendas and sign-in sheets
- PLC agendas
- Graphs of data
- Student developed graphs

3E. A clearly articulated strategy for using data to improve teaching and learning is followed. (*The What, p. 9*)

To achieve this we will:

- Develop a testing and analysis calendar including pre-tests, mock-writing assessments, benchmarks, reading assessments, and Ga. Milestones
- Analyze test data and develop interventions and accelerations
- Use data to adjust ELT groups every six weeks
- Develop interventions for students with low Lexiles
- Use SLDS (students longitudinal data system) for data collection, resources, differentiation, Lexile levels
- Develop testing window within which teachers administer tests and input grades
- Involve students in self-assessments

Evidence:

- Progress monitoring sheets – test analysis and interventions
- ELT rosters, lesson plans
- Reading intervention groups
- Resource files developed in SLDS
- Mock writing scores and intervention groups
- Parent letters concerning test results

BUILDING BLOCK 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

The leadership team at the county level as well as TJEMS has the dedication to lead the system in solid, research based practices that prepare all of our students for college and career success. *Reading Next* and *Writing Next* reported the efficacy of writing to improve reading

comprehension. Rigorous research found that writing produced a significant impact on comprehension, outperforming all of the traditional approaches like simply reading the text, reading and rereading it, reading and studying it, reading and discussing it, and receiving reading instruction (*Graham & Herbert, 2010*) (*Biancorosa & Snow, 2006*) (*The Why, p. 45*).

Georgia's goal is for all students to become self-sustaining, life-long learners and contributors to their communities (*Georgia PreK-12 Literacy Task Force, 2009*) and good writing is a major life-line to career opportunities. According to the National Council of Teachers of English, writing is a critical need for workers. Because of changing demands and cultural shifts, writing is more important than ever. The way we write often predicts academic and/or job success, creates opportunities, maintains relationships, and enhances critical thinking. (*NCTE, 2008, p. 1*) The Washington County Board of Education understands the power of writing and validates student work by funding *Spilled Ink*, an annual county-wide publication and celebration of K-12 student writing and art. At our formal tea, parents and stakeholders watch as the published authors and artists receive their books from our superintendent. After the tea, all students throughout the county receive a personal copy. Even with this wonderful project in place, we must still expand and strengthen our writing program. We must learn to write for varied and authentic purposes, foster collaborative writing processes, include writing formats of new media, employ consistent assessment measures, and write extensively throughout our curriculum.

A large component of the Common Core State Standards is informational and technical writing that is correlated with research as well as justification and support of claims. Having needed resources with which to work is essential for our students to be college and career ready. "During the four years between 1997 and 2002, the amount of new information produced in the word was equal to the amount produced over the entire previous history of the world." (*Darling-Hammond et al. 2008*). Our surveys show a glaring need of access to current, informational materials throughout the school. Out of the 18,852 book collection, only 38% is informational with an average age of our informational collection being 25.6 years old. Due to state and national cuts in funds over the past few years, our schools have not had monies to update our present school media center's book collection nor develop classroom libraries that are so desperately needed to prepare our students for success on high school graduation assessments or be ready for college or a career.

It is essential that our students have access to information in real time, to know how to access the information, and have the essential equipment and materials with which to work. Our goal is to empower our teachers by allowing them to determine the types of texts that are most needed (text sets, texts that support units, etc.) in their classroom. The literacy team will work closely with the media specialist to choose relevant texts of all kinds to update our media center and classroom collections. We will work closely with professional resources as we develop electronic resource banks and websites that will support implementation of the CCGPS.

The Center for Applied Research in Educational Technology (CARET) found that technology is most effective for low-performing and at-risk students when those students utilize technology applications that address their unique needs, strengths, and weaknesses (*CARET, 2004*).

Presently there is one student computer lab and two 5 year old Netbook carts (inherited from the high school this school year) that are used for research and publication of writing by all 27 content homerooms as well as 8 connections classrooms. Although our school is very limited on wireless accessibility, our county is committed to upgrading the school's wireless connection, supporting literacy that is embraced in the context of technology.

We are committed to making sure that all students have access to the high-quality learning environments, resources, and supports needed for learning. Meeting those expectations requires strong, engaged leadership that is committed to learn about and support evidence based literacy instruction.

4A. All students receive direct, explicit instruction in reading. (*The What, p. 9*)

To achieve this we will:

- Provide professional learning in explicit instruction in reading
- Provide professional learning in selection of appropriate texts and reading strategies
- Purchase appropriate texts and technological programs
- Examine student data to regularly identify gaps and areas of need
- Use the GA Literacy Checklist for classroom observations to determine current practices in literacy instruction
- Support literacy instruction by:
 - Allowing data to drive the instruction
 - Allowing students to participate in text selection
- Study and implement research-based instructional strategies

- Professional learning on differentiation
- Provide and model explicit reading instruction that includes
 - Modeling
 - Guided practice
 - Assisted practice
 - Independent practice

Evidence:

- GA Literacy Checklist results
- Professional learning agendas and sign-in sheets
- Lesson plans / collaborative plan minutes
- Results of student data
- Walk-through data

4B. All students receive effective writing instruction across the curriculum (The What, p. 10)**To achieve this we will:**

- Identify best practices in writing instruction in all areas and provide professional learning to all teachers that reflects those practices
- Develop a vertical and horizontal writing plan that mirrors the CCGPS
- Develop a plan for writing across the curriculum
- Develop and consistently implement a writing rubric that reflects CCGPS expectations
- Provide explicit writing instruction that will include:
 - Modeling
 - Guidance
 - Assisted practice
 - Independent practice
- Purchase appropriate technology for students to complete research and publish writings
- Plan to use technology for production, publishing, communicating throughout the curriculum
- Plan to use technology for research as indicated in the CCGPS

Evidence:

- Agendas, sign-in sheets, artifacts from professional learning
- Vertical and horizontal writing plans
- Agendas, sign-in sheets, artifacts from cross-curriculum planning sessions
- Writing rubric
- Technology hardware
- Lesson plans
- Technology lab sign-up sheets
- Student work/exemplars
- Published writings and artifacts

4C. Extended time is provided for literacy instruction. (*The What, p. 10*)**To achieve this we will:**

- Provide two-to-four hours of literacy instruction across the curriculum
- Monitor and ensure implementation

Evidence:

- School schedules/lesson plans
- Walk-through data

4D. Teachers are intentional in efforts to develop and maintain interest and engagement as students progress through school. (*The What, p. 11*)**To achieve this we will:**

- Provide multiple types of texts that will engage students
- Provide and use texts that are relevant to students
- Design assignments that are relevant to students
- Design assignments that empower students
- Provide opportunities for students to self-select reading materials
- Provide opportunities for students to collaborate with peers
- Provide opportunities for students to use technology in engaging and creative ways
- Use technology to engage and assess students

Evidence:

- Lists of available texts, titles, and software
- Lesson plans
- Examples of engaging assignments
- Technology usage documentation
- Exemplars

BUILDING BLOCK 5. System of Tiered Intervention (RTI) for All Students

T.J. Elder Middle School has the responsibility of implementing scientifically validated intervention methods that efficiently and effectively offer students opportunities to be successful. (*Wright, 2007*) T.J. Elder Middle utilizes the RTI 4-tiered delivery model that was put in place by the school district. The current process for RTI begins with a teacher recommendation. The teacher provides a list of concerns to the RTI facilitator. After reviewing the information, the facilitator contacts other teachers to find out if the learner is having similar difficulties in other subjects. If other teachers convey similar concerns, the facilitator contacts parents and then

schedules the first meeting. Teachers and parents work together to create a plan with various strategies to assist the learner. Our goal is to implement the following RTI model:

Tier 1 – *Standards-Based Classroom Learning*

All students participate in general education learning that includes:

- Universal screening to target groups in need of specific instructional and/or behavioral support.
- Implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards through a standards-based classroom structure.
- Differentiated instruction including fluid, flexible grouping, multiple means of learning and demonstrations of learning.
- Progress monitoring of learning through multiple formative assessments.

Tier 2 – *Need-Based Learning*

In addition to Tier 1, targeted students participate in learning that is different by including:

- Standard intervention protocol process for identifying and providing research based interventions based on need and resources.
- On-going progress monitoring to measure student response to intervention and guide decision-making.

Tier 3 – *SST-Driven Learning*:

In addition to Tiers 1 and 2, targeted students participate in learning that is different by including:

- Intensive, formalized problem solving to identify individual student needs.
- Targeted research based intervention tailored to individual needs.
- Frequent progress monitoring and analysis of student response to intervention(s).

Tier 4 – *Specially Designed Learning*:

In addition to Tiers 1 through 3, targeted students will participate in specialized programs.

5A. Information developed from the school-based data teams is used to inform RTI process (see Section III. E.) (*The What, p. 11*)

To achieve this we will need to:

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

We will continue to:

- Probe students on a weekly basis using AIMS web program
- Schedule RTI meetings every Wednesday in all grades
- Use the protocol that is in place for identifying students in need of RTI services – (there are some students already in RTI that come from 5th grade to EMS – others are identified by looking at failing grades and teacher observations – teachers will refer students to be entered into the RTI process if they see the need – Students that fail a grade, are automatically placed in RTI, if he/she is not already there)
- Monitor interventions are every 3-4 weeks
- Analyze formative assessments weekly to ensure student progress or to adjust interventions as needed.

Evidence:

- AIMS web data
- Minutes of meetings and signatures of participants
- Student data
- Teacher documentation

5B. Tier I Instruction based upon the CCGPS in grades K-12 is provided to all students in all classrooms. (See Sections IV. A & B) (The What, p. 11)**We use:**

- Student data to inform instructional decisions
- Literacy instruction is routinely monitored
- Co-teaching in general education settings
- A systematic understanding of assessment data and anticipated levels of student mastery

We will:

- Need a comprehensive universal screener in place for assessing literacy instruction in each subject area
- Use GaDOE, RESA, and other resources to support and implement SST process
- Provide professional development in direct, explicit instruction strategies in word identification, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing (*Building Block 4.A*)

Evidence:

- Data notebooks
- Walkthroughs
- Lesson plans
- Data from universal screener

5C. Tier 2 needs-based interventions are provided for targeted students. (The What, p. 11) To achieve this we will:

- Provide professional learning for choosing intervention materials, diagnosing difficulties, disaggregating data, and differentiating instruction
- Continue administering routine AIMS probes

We have in place:

- Weekly collaborative planning
- AIMS probes (testing)

We need:

- Professional learning in diagnosing reading difficulties
- Resource bank of intervention strategies
- Professional learning on different types of appropriate interventions available

Evidence:

- Schedule of collaborative planning
- Resource bank
- Data from AIMS probes
- Professional learning schedule and sign-in sheets

5D. In Tier 3, Student Support Team (SST) and Data Team monitor progress jointly. (*The What, p. 11*)**To achieve this we will continue:**

- Maintaining fidelity in the SST process
- To include EL teacher(s) in meetings as needed
- Discussing students in T3 who fail to respond to intervention
- To provide professional learning on Student Support Team processes and procedures as outlined in the GaDOE manual and guidance
- To follow protocol for determining specific reasons for students' lack of progress

To achieve this we will need:

- To consistently meet at least once a month in all grade levels
- Review all data and determine the next step
- Get feedback from all persons involved

Evidence:

- Minutes from meetings
- Folders for each child that contain the probes and results of the probes that have been applied
- AIMS probe data
- AIMS web graphs from compiled data

5E. Tier 4-specially-designed learning is implemented through specialized programs, methodologies, or strategies based upon students' inability to access the CCGPS any other way. (*The What, p. 11*)**To achieve this we will continue:**

- To provide schedules that ensure least restrictive environment (LRE)

- To pair the most highly qualified and experienced teachers with the inclusion teachers to support the delivery of instruction for students with the most significant needs
- To communicate with system administrators for guidance in funding formulas that affects students in special programming
- To include special education, ELL, and gifted teachers in professional learning communities to ensure strict alignment with delivery of CCGPS

Evidence:

- Professional learning agendas and minutes
- Schedules and placement of students
- Inclusion lists and class rosters
- Communication logs

BUILDING BLOCK 6. Improved Instruction through Professional Learning

To prepare our students for an increasingly competitive global economy, our students must have strong literacy skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing. Our instruction must promote critical thinking and higher order performance. Professional learning must focus on ensuring that teachers understand learning as well as teaching. They must make curriculum goals relevant to students (*Darling-Hammond, 2005*). Teachers are the greatest factor in positive student achievement and research shows that the professional development of teachers has the greatest potential to improve adolescent literacy achievement. In fact, money spent on professional development resulted in greater gains on standardized achievement tests than the same amount of money spent on various school improvement initiatives. (*Greenwald et al., 1996*).

Because change is difficult, substantiated academic growth will occur only when professionals receive ongoing, targeted professional learning. (*The Why, p. 142*) Even though we have provided some professional development in the areas of differentiation, writing throughout the content areas, depth of knowledge, and creating rigorous assessments, we will continue our studies of these and other areas such as explicit reading and writing instruction in order to deepen our understanding of the content, process, and context standards. In order to impact instruction, it will be critical for us to follow-up our professional learning by promoting in-class modeling and support (*Bean & Isler, 2008*). All of our professional learning will focus on effective instructional strategies and best practices for literacy.

Our students' Lexile levels indicate that almost half of our students are able to read on grade level.

That is not acceptable. All of our students should be reading on or above grade level. One of our goals is to provide professional learning in teaching explicit reading and writing strategies so that our students will be prepared in the grade level in which they will be tested. (*The Why*, p.116-117) As a cadre of teacher-experts develops, we will seize opportunities for them to provide professional learning at Elder Middle School which will result in continuous support and continuity while enhancing sustainability.

6A. Pre-service education prepares new teachers for all aspects of literacy instruction including disciplinary literacy in the content areas. (*The What*, p. 13)

To achieve this we will:

- Collaborate with Georgia College and State University (GCSU) to meet the needs of pre-service students

To achieve this we will continue to:

- Involve pre-service teachers in professional learning, parent conferences, and afternoon parent events.
- Host pre-service cohort teachers from GCSU
- Model, guide, and engage pre-service teachers in preparing and implementing engaging, literacy instruction
- Give constructive feedback and guidance

Evidence:

- Notes and agendas from GCSU meetings
- Pre-service teacher sign-in sheets
- Professional learning agendas, sign-in sheets
- Lesson plans
- Teacher – Pre-service teacher conference notes

6B. In-service personnel participate in ongoing professional learning in all aspects of literacy instruction including disciplinary literacy in the content areas. (*The What*, p. 13)

To achieve this we will:

- Incorporate continuous, embedded professional learning
- Engage all school personnel in professional learning in explicit teaching of reading and writing strategies, vocabulary
- Provide professional training in diagnosing reading difficulties, determining the root causes, and determining strategies for intervention
- Provide literacy training to all content teachers and support staff
- Schedule and protect collaborative planning time to prepare to implement literacy across content areas
- Provide professional learning that will address needs as revealed by surveys, interest

inventories, and teacher observations.

- Professional learning will be monitored through observations of implementation, sharing in PLCs, feedback from teachers, self-assessment forms
- Use a cadre of experts including personnel from Oconee RESA, Ga. DOE (both virtual and live), GLRS, Washington County BOE, T.J. Elder Middle School Instructional Facilitator, and Elder Middle school experts and others to provide professional learning and support
- Examine student work during professional learning sessions.
- Provide professional learning for teachers to build students' ability to self-assess and develop self-efficacy.

To achieve this we will continue to:

- Schedule and protect time during the school day for all personnel to participate in ongoing professional learning in all aspects of literacy - analyzing data, sharing expertise, studying standards, and reflecting on implementation
- Provide professional development and modeling on text complexity, close readings, and depth of knowledge

Evidence:

- Professional learning agendas, schedules, and sign-in sheets
- Designated time for professional learning sessions and implementation of plans
- Records of training events provided and attended
- List of trainers, indicating area of expertise and contact information
- Data from GA Literacy Checklists and walkthroughs

Literacy is the gate-keeper for the ability to a lifelong learner and contributor to society. Today's global citizens must be able to retrieve and understand information and then to disperse this learning through writing and a growing array of other delivery modes. (*The Why*, p. 118) In order to prepare our students for this task, we must be intentional in what we plan and do.

It is our job to help our students clarify where they are going and how they will determine when they have arrived. By addressing areas of weaknesses and strengths, we must carefully plan instruction that is designed to engage and challenge our students. The SRCL grant will help us saturate our students with the strong literacy skills needed to compete in our global society. It will help us provide up-to-date resources, consistently use best educational practices, and develop and support educators who are trained in best practice to meet those critical needs of our students. Education, through the Striving Reader Grant, is the key to the bright future that our students at T.J. Elder Middle school so deserve.

Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

A.

	2014 ELA		2014 Reading		2013 ELA		2013 Reading		2012 ELA		2012 Reading	
	DNM	Ex	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX
6 th g.	11	18	4	26	10	28	7	31	13	22	7	38
7 th g.	5	32	5	28	9	38	7	25	7	46	6	22
8 th g.	7	34	6	42	4	40	2	39	4	34	5	33
	2014 Science		2014 Social Studies		2013 Science		2013 Social Studies		2012 Science		2012 Social Studies	
	DNM	Ex	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX
6 th g.	52	2	49	14	52	10	42	20	53	5	50	15
7 th g.	29	23	24	31	29	24	26	30	26	25	28	33
8 th g.	34	14	30	21	34	16	34	22	39	8	31	16

B.

TJEMS 8th g. Writing in Percents

Yr.	Male			Female			Black			White			SWD			Gifted		
	DNM	M	Ex	DNM	M	Ex	DNM	M	Ex	DNM	M	Ex	DNM	M	Ex	DNM	M	Ex
2014	35	64	1	25	72	3	37	63	0	17	79	4	100	0	0	7	90	3
2013	23.5	72.5	3.9	16.4	81	2.6	23.5	75	1.4	11.6	81.2	7.2	52.9	47.1	0	2.9	80	17.1
2012	29.7	69	1	7.9	85	7	20.1	78	2	13.6	79	7	83.3	78	2	0	70	29
2011	23.8	74	2	12.1	83	5	21.4	77	1	10.3	82	8	61.5	38	0	0	78.3	21.7
2010	41.2	57	2	22.4	74	4	36.8	61	2	22.1	74	4	71.4	29	0	3.6	78.6	17.9
2009	33.9	65	1	23.1	72	5	34.5	63	2	15.4	80	5	57.1	38	5	4.5	86.4	9.1

DNM = Did Not Meet, M = Meets, E = Exceeds

CRCT Data In Percentages for ELA and Reading

	2014 ELA		2014 Reading		2013 ELA		2013 Reading		2012 ELA		2012 Reading	
	DNM	Ex	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX
6 th g.	11	18	4	26	10	28	7	31	13	22	7	38
7 th g.	5	32	5	28	9	38	7	25	7	46	6	22
8 th g.	7	34	6	42	4	40	2	39	4	34	5	33
Female	4	32	3	34	4	40	3	32	6	39	3	33
Male	11	25	7	30	12	30	8	32	10	28	9	29
SWD	32	6	16	9	34	6	27	6	49	12	27	9
Non-SWD	6	30	5	33	6	37	4	33	6	35	5	32
Black	10	20	7	21	9	26	7	21	9	26	6	21
White	4	46	2	53	5	53	4	51	6	47	5	49
Multi-	0	41	0	47	0	36	0	29	9	36	9	46

racial												
--------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

CRCT Data In Percentages for Science and Social Studies

	2014 Science		2014 Social Studies		2013 Science		2013 Social Studies		2012 Science		2012 Social Studies	
	DNM	Ex	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX	DNM	EX
6 th g.	52	2	49	14	52	10	42	20	53	5	50	15
7 th g.	29	23	24	31	29	24	26	30	26	25	28	33
8 th g.	34	14	30	21	34	16	34	22	39	8	31	16
Female	37	11	30	21	39	12	32	20	28	12	36	18
Male	39	18	36	23	38	20	37	29	41	13	38	24
SWD	79	2	70	4	69	4	82	6	72	2	74	7
Non-SWD	34	15	30	24	36	17	30	26	37	13	34	21
Black	48	7	40	15	48	9	43	15	49	6	44	14
White	16	28	20	36	19	31	17	41	21	24	22	34
Multi-racial	100	0	100	0	50	21	36	29	33	17	50	25

All TJEMS students meet criteria for economically disadvantaged; therefore, no separate category was created. We do not have a subgroup for EL students.

C.

The above data indicates a declining trend in the number of students who are exceeding in 6th grade reading; however the 7th & 8th grade trend is spiraling upwards. With the exception of 2013 for 7th g., that trend in ELA is either stagnant or slowly declining.

On the 2014 CRCT, 25% of our students scored within a 15 point range of not meeting standards in language arts. Technical reading is even more difficult with 49% of our students in science and 44 % of social students scoring within 15 points of not meeting the standards.

There is a large gap between the male and female subgroups in ELA and Reading and an even larger gap between the black and white learners. (Twice as many black males as females did not meet reading standards.) The data also indicates that in Science and Social Studies that the males had greater percentages exceeding than the females. The largest gap is between the SWD and non-SWD groups.

The writing scores show a consistent decline in the 'did not meets' as well as the 'exceeding' categories in most sub-groups. Once again, the areas of concern are the black males and the SWD groups. As indicated in the chart for the STAR assessment, black and males are reading below the class average with the exception of 8th grade males.

As indicted on the Universal Screener (section D) there is a discrepancy in the reading levels indicated by CRCT and STAR. Checked-out media materials are based on STAR reading

levels. There is indication of a gap between content grade level materials and reading abilities. Growth of GE reading levels between 6th and 8th g is not adequate.

D.

Self-contained Special Education Teachers information is listed below

Out of 3 possible points the average % of achievement is listed below:

	Fidelity to standard	Context	Achievement/progress
ELA	2	3.4	2.8
Math	2	3	2.4
Science	2	3	2
Social Studies	2	3	2.25
Generalization	4		

The Media Specialist maintains our STAR program which along with CRCT is our Universal Screener.

	CRCT Lexile Level with GE	GE (Grade Equivalent)	IRL (Independent Reading Level)	% of check-out below 25 % RL	% of check-out 25 th -49 th % RL	% of check-out 50 th -74 th % RL	% of check-out 75 th & above % RL
6 th g all demographics	930 (6.1 GE)	4.9	4.1	54.2	22.4	14.9	8.5
6 th white		5.7	4.7	33.3	30.4	20.3	15.9
6 th black		4.4	3.8	66.4	18.9	10.7	4.1
6 th female		5.5	4.7	40.4	23.4	25.5	10.6
6 th male		4.2	3.7	66.4	21.5	5.6	6.5
7 th g all demographics	958 (6.2 GE)	5.0	4.2	64.6	20.6	10.6	4.2
7 th white		6.1	5.1	36.2	31.9	21.3	10.6

7 th black		4.5	3.9	74.8	17.0	6.7	1.5
7 th female		5.7	4.8	50.6	27.2	13.6	8.6
7 th male		4.3	3.7	75.0	15.7	8.3	0.9
8 th g all demographics	1013 (6.7 GE)	5.6	4.6	64.8	21.6	9.4	4.2
8 th white		6.7	5.7	44.4	27.0	19.0	9.5
8 th black		5.0	4.3	74.5	19.7	4.4	1.5
8 th female		5.6	4.7	66.0	25.5	6.6	1.9
8 th male		5.6	4.6	63.6	17.8	12.1	6.5

E.

At T. J. Elder Middle School we have good teacher retention rates as indicated in the table below. The retention % indicated includes 5 teachers who have retired during the last three years.

Teacher Data

Retention Rates		Experience		Education	
2013-2014	96%	Less than 1 year	6%	T-4	13
2012-2013	98%	1-3 yrs.	6%	T-5	21
2011-2012	96%	4-10 yrs.	35%	T-6	9
		11-20 yrs.	22%	T-7	2
		20 + yrs.	31%		

F. Develops goals and objectives based on formative and summative assessments

Elder Middle school administers formative and summative assessments. The data from the formative and summative assessments are monitored and tracked with the use of our data notebooks and data forms.

We systematically choose and implement a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative

assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and students and use the gathered data to measure progress, inform instruction content and delivery, and provide timely and constructive feedback.

We provide challenges to and support for each student's learning by developing appropriate materials, strategies, and implementing them to address individual learning differences

Based on the assessments, we provide professional knowledge in curriculum, content, & pedagogy to enhance and strengthen instruction

G.

Our present Universal Screeners are the CRCT and STAR assessments (sec. D). We give Online Assessments (formative benchmark assessments) in at the end of November and February but have not completed the task this year, so the data isn't accessible for this year.

Scores in chart reflect the 2013-14 SY OAS benchmark scores in % (there are no Level 3 items in OAS for social studies). The first assessment reflected materials taught (summative and formative). The second reflected the entire curriculum (formative). 50% was deemed 'passing'.

	Science		ELA		Reading	
	Nov	Feb	Nov	Feb	Nov	Feb
6 th g	46	47	60	68	49	62
7 th g	55	57	62	66	55	66
8 th g	63	56	63	70	65	72
6 th g	36	42	34	58	38	37
7 th g	51	57	46	55	42	38
8 th g	50	41	46	61	55	45

The Striving Readers funds will help to purchase and implement a quality reading inventory that will be used as the Universal Screener.

H.

Paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators participate in Professional Learning each Tuesday. There is a 96% participation rate (administrators are sometimes unable to attend due to other responsibilities). Teachers are provided with Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) training and educated on how to incorporate learning targets effectively and help in collecting data and using assessments effectively. The sessions are driven by our School Improvement plan which is developed from the yearly data gathered and the needs identified. Understanding and implementing the components of TKES is also guiding the 2013-14 sessions with emphasis on differentiation, collecting

and studying data to identify gaps and needs, formative and summative assessments, as well as developing lessons and assessments that are on the DOK levels of the standards that are being taught.

Project Plan Procedures, Goals, Objectives and Support

A. The following goals were developed from our needs assessment.

Goal 1

Uses appropriate diagnostic, formative, and summative strategies to systematically gather, analyze, and use data to measure progress, inform instructional content and methods.

Goal 2

The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.

Goal 3

Teachers will have an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.

Goal 4

The teacher will create student-centered, academic environments in which teaching and learning occur at high levels.

Goal 5

Teachers will plan and implement effective lessons that are research based and that are relevant to the content in order to engage students in active learning

B. & C. Implementation and assessment of Objectives

Goal 1

Teacher uses appropriate diagnostic, formative, and summative strategies to systematically gather, analyze, and use data to measure progress, inform instructional content and methods.

	Who	What	When	How to Measure
Objective 1 – Use diagnostic assessments to inform instruction	Teachers	Use of Universal Screener	2 times each year	Analyze results of end assessment to determine growth Lesson plans
Objective 2 – Use formative and summative assessments to inform instruction	Teachers	Formative & summative assessments	Formative –weekly Summative - minimum of every 9-wks	Lesson plans Data Notebooks Observations

Objective 3 – Professional Development in using the Universal Screener to plan for instruction	Reading Teachers	Use of Universal Screener	PLC	PLC agenda PLC sign-in sheets Results of screenings
--	------------------	---------------------------	-----	---

Goal 2

The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.

	Who	What	When	How to Measure
Objective 1 – Differentiated instruction routinely occurs to meet the needs of all learners	Teachers	Flexible grouping for content, process or product Remediation, enrichment, accelerated lessons Varying strategies/ techniques/ assessments	Weekly Weekly Weekly	Lesson plans Observations Student Engagement Test scores Data notebooks Flexible Grouping
Objective 2 – Professional Development in different strategies	RESA Instructional Facilitator Administration	PLCs, Workshops, Conferences, Trainings	Throughout the year, summer	Sign-in Sheets PLC agendas Observations Lesson plans
Objective 3 – Provide leveled texts and explicit reading materials and instruction to struggling readers	Teachers	Daily	Throughout the year	Observations Lesson plan

Goal 3

Teachers will have an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and needs of students..

	Who	What	When	How to Measure
Objective 1 – Professional Development in Foundations of reading	RESA Instructional Facilitator Administration	PLCs, Workshops, Conferences, Trainings	Throughout the year, summer	Sign-in Sheets PLC agendas Observations Lesson plans Data Notebooks Diagnostic screener results
Objective 2 – Professional Development in use of instructional technology	RESA Instructional Facilitator Administration	PLCs, Workshops, Conferences, Trainings	Throughout the year, summer	Sign-in Sheets PLC agendas Observations Lesson plans Data Notebooks Student engagement
Objective 3 Professional Development in creating challenging lessons and units	RESA Instructional Facilitator Administration	PLCs, Workshops, Conferences, Trainings	Throughout the year, summer	Sign-in Sheets PLC agendas Observations Lesson plans Data Notebooks Student engagement

Goal 4

The teacher will create student-centered, academic environments in which teaching and learning occur at high levels.

	Who	What	When	How to Measure
Objective 1 – Professional development on assessing DOK levels in lessons and assessments and	RESA Instructional Facilitator Administration	PLCs, Workshops, Conferences, Trainings	Throughout the year, summer	Inventories of DOK levels of lessons, assessments PLC agendas Observations Lesson plans Data Notebooks Student engagement
Objective 2 – Create lessons/units that are student centered & academically challenging	Teachers	Lessons Units	Summers Pre/post planning	Students goal setting Observations Self-directed learners Lesson plans Unit plans

				Student engagement
Objective 3 Use diverse types of literacy throughout the school	All school personnel	Books, magazines, e-readers, computers, hand-held devices	Throughout the school year	Inventory of materials Inventory of usage of literacy materials Student engagement

Goal 5

Teachers will plan and implement effective lessons that are research based and that are relevant to the content in order to engage students in active learning

	Who	What	When	How to Measure
Objective 1 – Develop lessons/units that are relevant to students	Teachers	Lessons Units	Summers Pre/post planning	Observations Self-directed learners Lesson plans Unit plans Student engagement
Objective 2– Use research-based strategies	Teachers	Lessons Units	Daily	Observations Self-directed learners Lesson plans Unit plans Student engagement Assessment scores
Objective 3 – Integrate technology into the classrooms	Teachers	e-readers White boards Computers Hand-held devices tablets	Daily	Observations Self-directed learners Lesson plans Unit plans Student engagement

D and I:

Middle school students will receive 2-4 hours of tiered instruction through content areas. Students receive direct literacy instruction during the following 55 minute classes - ELA and reading. Addition time for literacy is during the 20 minute Extended Learning Time (ELT) as well as 2 connections classes. A sample schedule for the grade levels including the tiered instructional ELT time:

School Schedule of Classes		
<i>During connections time, teachers have PLCs on Tuesday, RTI meetings on Wednesday, and collaborative planning on Thursdays</i>		
6 th , 7 th 8 th grades	7:45-8:00	Homeroom
6 th & 7 th g.	8:00-8:55	1 st period – content classes (8 th g. connections)
6 th & 7 th g.	8:55-9:50	2 nd period – content classes (8 th g. connections)
All students	9:50-10:20	ELT time
7 th & 8 th g.	10:20-11:15	3 rd period – content classes (6 th g. connections)
8 th g.	11:15-11:45	Lunch
6 th & 7 th g.	11:15 – 12:10	4 th period – content classes
6 th g.	12:10 – 12:45	Lunch
8 th g.	11:45-12:45	4 th period – content classes
7 th g.	12:10-1:05	5 th period
6 th & 8 th g.	12:45-1:40	5 th period – content classes
7 th g.	1:05-1:40	Lunch
6 th & 8 th	1:40-2:30	6 th period – content classes (7 th g. connections)
6 th & 8 th	2:30-3:25	7 th period – content classes (7 th g. connections)

All classes have a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction. As a result, all students will receive at least 2 hours of literacy instruction per day.

E.

T.J. Elder Middle utilizes the RTI model in place by the school district. The current process for RTI begins with a teacher recommendation. The teacher provides a list of concerns to the RTI facilitator. After reviewing the information, the facilitator contacts other teachers to find out if the learner is having similar difficulties in other subjects. If other teachers convey similar concerns, the facilitator contacts parents and schedules the first meeting. Teachers and parents work together to create a plan with various strategies to assist the learner. Our goal is to implement the following RTI model:

Tier 1 – Standards-Based Classroom Learning

All students participate in general education learning that includes:

- Universal screening to target groups in need of specific instructional and/or behavioral support.
- Implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards through a standards-based classroom structure.
- Differentiated instruction including fluid, flexible grouping, multiple means of learning and demonstrations of learning.
- Progress monitoring of learning through multiple formative assessments.

Tier 2 – Need-Based Learning

In addition to Tier 1, targeted students participate in learning that is different by including:

- Standard intervention protocol process for identifying and providing research based interventions based on need and resources.
- On-going progress monitoring to measure student response to intervention and guide decision-making.

Tier 3 – SST-Driven Learning:

In addition to Tiers 1 and 2, targeted students participate in learning that is different by including:

- Intensive, formalized problem solving to identify individual student needs.
- Targeted research based intervention tailored to individual needs.
- Frequent progress monitoring and analysis of student response to intervention(s).

Tier 4 – Specially Designed Learning:

In addition to Tiers 1 through 3, targeted students will participate in specialized programs.

F. The schedule reflects the routine that all teachers and students at TJEMS follow.

G. and **H.**

G. What is in place?	H. How will it be funded?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers meet weekly for professional development. • 	Local and SRCL coordinated funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading teachers have 4 student computers in each classroom. 	Local and SRCL coordinated funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One technology lab (28 computers) 	Local and SRCL coordinated funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveled texts (articles) are being accessed through the internet 	Local and SRCL coordinated funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology components – white boards, wireless connections, Ladybugs 	Local and SRCL coordinated funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Screener (STAR) 	Local and SRCL coordinated funds

Assessment/Data Analysis Plan

A. Assessment Protocol at T.J. Elder Middle School:

- Universal Screener (STAR) is given at the beginning of school, at the beginning of the 2nd 9-wks, and at the end of school. Growth is measured.
- Data from the pre and post-test for each nine-week period is analyzed and interventions are planned.
- When problems are identified, interventions are planned.
- Buffer days (for redelivery) are implemented in some classes.
- Three tests are required each 9-weeks.
- A testing calendar (STAR, benchmarks, mock writing, and 9-wks tests) has been established for our school.

B. Comparison of the Current Assessment Protocol with the SRCL Assessment Plan:

Current Protocol	SRCL Protocol
A Universal Screener is used but is not vertically consistent with the feeder schools. The screener gives a fluency rate but does not determine other difficulties or deficiencies. CRCT Lexile scores are compared to our Screener results but do not correlate well.	A consistent Universal Screener will be used to determine strengths and weaknesses in fluency as well as foundational issues. Weaknesses will be addressed as needed.
A system of pre-assessment tools is beginning to be used throughout the curriculum. The analysis of the data and intervention and acceleration plans are in the beginning stages of development.	Effective screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic tools have been selected, implemented, and results have been used to inform and guide instruction.
Formative assessments are sporadically administered.	A variety of formative assessments will be provided and routinely administered. Lessons/units will be developed based on data collected.
Writing rubrics are inconsistently applied and scored.	A school-wide writing rubric will be routinely applied. Grade-level examination of student writing will become routine. PLCs will be used to determine consistencies of rubric implementation.

Some teachers use data for making decisions to identify the instructional needs of students	All staff members will use data and follow the established protocol for making decisions to identify the instructional needs of students. Lessons will be differentiated to address student needs. Lessons will be monitored for implementation of differentiation.
A testing calendar has been developed.	The school's assessment calendar will be enhanced to include routine monitoring of progress pertaining to reading difficulties.
Assessments must have 1-2 open ended questions.	Assessments will include a variety of formats and will incorporate writing throughout.
Assessments mainly consist of DOK levels 1 and 2.	Most assessment questions will be on DOK levels 2-4 and will be formative in nature. Students will give supporting evidence for many of their answers.

C. How New Assessments Will Be Implemented Into the Current Assessment Schedule:

- Universal Screener will be given three times each year, August, January, and May, gaps will be identified and addressed.
- AIMS Web curriculum probes will be administered to students who are not successful in Tier I standards-based classrooms.
- AIMS Web probes will continue to be given to identified students every four weeks.
- Extended Learning Time groups will be fluid, based on the assessment results and identified needs.
- Common formative and summative assessments will be administered regularly and will be used to guide classroom instruction as well as to develop intervention strategies.

D. Discontinuing Current Assessments:

- Mock writing assessments will no longer be the only writing screener used due to integration of writing on Ga. Milestones assessment.
- Current Universal Screener will be dropped in lieu of new vertically aligned, comprehensive screener.

E. Professional Learning Needed to Implement New Assessments:

- The administration of and using data from the Universal Screener
- Administering and using data from AIMS Web

- Developing and implementing quality formative assessments.
- How to use formative assessment data to inform instruction.
- Identifying strategies for high achieving students as well as struggling learners.
- Modifying and developing assessments to include a variety of formats and DOK levels.
- Applying writing rubrics consistently and with fidelity.
- Formulating and managing flexible grouping and instruction.
- Additional DBQ training

F. How Data Is Presented to Parents and Stakeholders:

Individual data will be made available to parents and stakeholders through a variety of ways such as parent conference days (each 9-wk period); progress reports (each 9-wk period); report cards (picked-up and mailed each 9-wk period)); Infinite Campus Parent Portal; OAS and CRCT or Milestone test-score letters which are mailed to parents; PTO, Open House, School Orientation, and Grade-level meetings; and Reading Night. Data showing trends are shared with school council and school “Adopters” at our regular quarterly meetings.

G. How Data Will Be Used to Develop Instructional Strategies as Well as Determine Materials and Needs:

Data will be used to:

- Formulate flexible groups to address specific literacy ranges
- Determine levels and types of reading materials needed for specific groups, learning styles, interests, etc.
- Guide the purchase of needed supplemental materials.
- Create differentiated assessments.

H. Plan Detailing Who Will Perform the Assessments and How The Plan Will Be Accomplished:

What	Who will perform
Universal Screener	Reading teachers will administer and analyze Students will be flexibly grouped to address literacy needs
Benchmark Assessments	All teachers will give appropriate content benchmarks, will analyzed and determine interventions to be implemented
Formative and Summative	All teachers will administer, analyze, determine interventions to be implemented
Mock Writing	ELA teachers will administer, analyzed, determine interventions to be implimented
Pre and Post Assessments	All teachers will administer, analyze, determine interventions to be implemented
Ga. Milestones	County Assessment Coordinator will determine window for administration
Assessment Calendars	Administration along with the School Organizational

	Leadership Team (SOLT) will determine the assessment calendar during pre-planning
SLOs Assessments	County and School Assessment Coordinators will determine dates for administration Connections teachers will administer the assessments at the beginning and end of the course
AIMS Web	Administered by teachers to RTI students every four weeks

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

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

- **Existing:** Currently the school has
 - one computer shared lab (28 stations)
 - two netbook carts (7 years old – from the high school)
 - Ladybugs in all classrooms
 - White boards in all classrooms
 - Class sets of three different novels (same reading levels) for each grade level
 - Teacher computers
 - 4 student computers for each reading teacher (2 reading teachers per grade level)
- **Proposed**
 - Consultants for some professional development
 - Vocabulary Instruction Program
 - Universal Screener
 - Literacy Diagnostic Tools
 - Data Collection Tools
 - Progress monitoring tools
 - Literacy Intervention Materials and software
 - Leveled texts
 - Informational Texts
 - Literary Texts
 - E-readers
 - Tablets
 - Computer Labs for each grade level
 - Printers for each lab
 - Travel to training and conference
 - Teacher stipends for unit development during summers/after school
 - Teacher stipends for professional training, summer, after school
 - Materials for unit building – notebooks, etc.
 - Software, site licenses, maintenance costs

B. List of activities that support literacy intervention programs

- **Existing:** Currently the school has:
 - one reading support teacher for students who are struggling readers
 - access to leveled articles from the internet
- **Proposed:**

- Protocols for identifying students those who are score well below grade-level on screener or Ga. Milestones, identifying the root causes of the problem, and matching appropriate interventions
- Interventions that are monitored frequently to ensure that they occur regularly and with fidelity
- On-going professional development for teachers
- Development of challenging, differentiated units that are engaging and relevant
- Protocol for monitoring the analysis and frequent use of formative assessments, matching instruction to needs
- Collaborative disaggregation of data
- Building and sharing sets of exemplary lessons, plans, and student work

C. List of shared resources available at each building

- **Existing:**
 - Resources in the media center
 - Technology specialist
 - Technology lab and printer
 - Reading Resource Teacher
- **Proposed:**
 - Universal Screener
 - Strategies, materials for interventions

D. General List of library resources or a description of the library as equipped

- **Existing:**
 - The average age of the collection is 28 years old. The number circulated since the beginning of school this year is 21,153. For the last five years there has been no media center budget to purchase new books with the exception of what is made from the bi-annual book-fair. When looking at the collections, there are 2,405 non-fiction books, 6,656 fiction. The media center has four student computers on which students take AR tests as well as complete research. The media center also has a ceiling mounted projector and screen.
- **Proposed**
 - Add additional information books on different reading levels that will support content and connections classes.
 - Add technology to
 - stay updated with advances in science, technology, and world events
 - access research material
 - dictionaries, thesauruses
 - Additional text sets on differing levels

E. List of activities that support classroom practices

- **Existing:**
 - Elder Middle has an active and engaged leadership dedicated to improving the quality of teaching and learning in the building. The schedule and infrastructure of the school supports active collaborative teams to ensure consistent literacy focus.
 - Peer observations
 - Sharing ideas gleaned in conferences
 - RESA offerings and support
- **Proposed:**
 - Training on implementation of flexible grouping
 - Training on classroom management to support differentiation and flexible grouping
 - Training on reading foundations, explicit reading strategies, and vocabulary instruction
 - Training on diagnosis and interventions of reading problems
 - Training in the use of instructional technology
 - Training on the use of diverse types of literacy in content areas
 - Additional training on:
 1. formative and summative assessments
 2. planning rigorous, engaging units
 3. Correlating the DOK levels of standards with those of lessons and assessments

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

- **Existing:**
 - An RTI facilitator
 - School organizational leadership team
 - School instructional leadership team
 - literacy team
 - SST – student support team
- **Proposed:**
 - Funding for substitutes so that teachers have the opportunities to visit high performing classrooms in other schools

G. List of current classroom resources for each classroom in school

- **Existing:**
 - Textbooks and accompanying teacher resources are located in each classroom. Science and Social Studies books are at least 9 years old. Reading books are newly purchased
 - Interactive boards, although there are three different types of boards in our school due to inheritance from the high school.
 - Each reading teachers has three novel sets

- Ladybugs in each room
- Teacher computers
- **Proposed:**
 - Tablets for each teacher and student
 - Vocabulary programs
 - Text sets (different reading levels) – these could be housed in the media center

H. A clear alignment plan for SRCL and all other funding

The administration and faculty have worked hard to provide a quality educational program by implementing all strategies that would benefit our learners. The SRCL would be used to supplement programs already in place such as the school's ESOL program for which it receives **limited Title III funding** (which mainly funds professional development.) ELs as well as our economically deprived students would use hand-held devices to access materials appropriate for their levels of understanding and ability in English.

I. A demonstration of how any proposed technology purchases support RTI, student engagement, instructional practices, writing, etc.

RTI – Devices will ensure that students are formally traced and monitored. The devices will also allow teachers to be mobile within the school when checking and documenting students' progress. The devices will provide students with countless online resources that will help increase their literacy skills. These devices will also enable students to view instructional videos as well as be used for remediation purposes.

Student Engagement – Technology labs as well as hand-held devices will help provide students with an increased number of high interest reading materials. Students generally read more when they are reading materials in which they are interested. Students will be able (and motivated) to research areas of interest instead of what the teacher assigns from a handout. There are several types of formative assessments that allow students to submit responses and get immediate results and feedback. This would assist learners with evaluating and monitoring their own progress – empowering them to take ownership of their learning.

Instructional Practices – Technology purchases will allow teachers a means for tracking their student data. This ease of tracking will provide teachers with additional time to plan data guided differentiated lessons. Teachers will also have increased access to formative assessment strategies that will assist in providing learners with prompt feedback.

Writing – Technology will also provide teachers with a supplemental means for teaching writing and providing immediate feedback to students. Students will be able to access research materials, not having to wait for the computer lab to be available. Resources, such as dictionaries and thesauruses, as well as spelling would assist with struggling

writers. Technology would also support students who struggle with handwriting. The use of assistive technology will greatly benefit a variety of learners, including Special Needs Learners and EL students.

Professional Learning Strategies Identified on the Basis of Documented Needs

A. & B.

A table indicating professional learning activities that the staff have attended in the past year and the percent of staff attending professional learning

Professional Learning Activity	% of Staff Attending
Implementing CCGPS	100%
TKES orientation and familiarization	100%
SLOs orientation	100%
SLOs In-Depth	20% (connections teacher who developed and will give SLOs assessments)
FIP modules (5)	100%
Creating Webpages	100%
SLDS – with Hubert Bennett from GaDOE	100%
Analyzing CRCT data – determining root causes	100%
Revising Curriculum Maps	100%
Assessing Writing Samples	100%
Determining DOK levels of standards	100%
Close Reading	100%
Data Based Questioning (DBQ)	25% (ELA and Reading Teachers)

C. A list of on-going professional learning

All teacher participate in professional learning on a routine basis. It is the key component that builds a unified, supportive, student focused school. It permeates all aspects of student learning.

- CCGPS and Assessments – RESA has provided sessions that focus on Depth of Knowledge and assessments
- Integrating Technology – BOE Technology Specialist comes once a month to guide and assist with technology needs and training
- FIP – new sessions, sessions for new teachers, and sessions for teachers who need refreshers continue throughout the year
- TKES/TAPS – sessions for new teachers, and sessions for teachers who need refreshers continue throughout the year
- Vertical teaming – Writing and math (K-12) vertical teams continue to meet for professional growth during the year
- DBQ training – will continue to be shared with different content areas
- Assessing student work

D. Programmatic Professional Learning

- The results of the needs assessments that were completed by faculty and staff indicate a need for professional development in the following areas:
 - i. Using Universal Screener for instruction
 - ii. Using diagnostic assessment data for instruction
 - iii. Language Skills
 - iv. Teaching students who understand only basic concepts in text, who struggle to comprehend text at grade level
 - v. Differentiation to address below grade-level students
 - vi. Developing challenging engaging lessons and units
 - vii. Managing time to differentiate lessons (only 55 minute time blocks)
 - viii. Content area literacy instruction
 - ix. Co-teaching

E. Details of the Process to determine if Professional Development was Adequate and Effective

- Implementation of professional learning will be monitored through
 - i. observations of implementation
 - ii. sharing in PLCs
 - iii. feedback from teachers
 - iv. self-assessment forms

F. Professional Learning Plan

Our professional learning will be based on the needs of our teachers as identified in the surveys as well as data gathered from observations, data notebooks, and unit and lesson plans.

Training will address the areas of need in section D of this document as well as those that additionally appear our goals and objectives. All teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators will be involved in the training and implementation of the identified areas. Materials to support the implementation of the different areas will be purchased and training on usage of those materials will be provided to ensure consistent implementation. Monitoring of implementation will be pervasive through observations and documentation. Surveys will frequently occur to communication levels of confidences, needs of materials and/or support, progress being made, or inhibitors that may occur. Celebrations of progress will occur to ensure team building and ownership of progress toward our goal of developing literate students who are able to read and write at a minimum of grade-level proficiency.

Our plan is in much greater detail in the Scientific, Evidence-based Literacy Plan document.

G. Feedback on Training

- As implementation occurs, questions are asked, clarification is requested, and modeling and observations occur.
- Our principal has a PLC session per grading period to get feedback and direction.
- Our SILT (School Instructional Leadership Team) is the ‘go-between’ who often gives feedback on the professional learning session. There is one SILT team member per grade as well as one on the connections hall.
- We don’t feel that this is enough and will look for other ways to find the effectiveness of the training as well as get feedback to improve training.

Sustainability Plan

A. Plan for extending the assessments protocol beyond the grant period

- Elder Middle School expects the Striving Reader assessment protocol to result in increased student achievement in the area of literacy (as well as other content areas) due to ongoing, monitored formative and summative assessments.
- The assessment protocol will be sustained through teacher leaders along with the Instructional Facilitator, who will be used to mentor peers, train new personnel, and act as support personnel.
- Local funds will be utilized to extend the assessment period.

B. Plan for developing community partnerships and/or other sources to assist with the funding of initiatives requiring yearly cost commitment

- Elder Middle will educate parent in strategies they can use to support meaningful reading and writing from home.
- Parent and Community nights will provide communication and buy-in to the activities that are making differences in student learning. Involving the community leaders will allow them to see how technology is preparing our students to become contributing members of the work force and community.
- Our school will coordinate and communicate with the Rosa Tarbuton Memorial Library, the Boys and Girls Club, Communities in Schools (which is housed in our building), as well as the First Love Kids program to share a common focus on books and literacy materials.
- School personnel will be prepared to share with local club the many ways our school is preparing young people to become successful, technologically literate adults.

C. Plans for expanding lessons learned, extending the assessment protocols, training for new system employees, maintaining technology and on-going professional learning practices.

- Through on-going professional learning sessions, teachers will be trained to use screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring data to meaningfully analyze the data and guide instruction.
- Assessment protocols, which ensure accurate data collection, will become the norm for guiding instruction through all subjects. Administration will ensure that the protocols are implemented with fidelity and will continue long after the grant period is completed.
- Each year, teacher leaders, along with the Instructional Facilitator will refresh the faculty on the protocol as well as jointly and intensely training, monitor and guide, and support new faculty member.
- Elder Middle's Technology Specialist will support the maintenance of the technology hard and software.

D. Plan to replace print when necessary.

- It is the Literacy Team's goal to purchase virtual materials whenever there is an option. Print materials will be replaced when necessary using local funds.

E. Plan to ensure new teachers receive relevant professional learning.

- The Striving Reader Implementation Plan will be given to all new teachers. Each section will be reviewed, explained, and modeled in-depth by the teacher leaders in each grade and the Instructional Facilitator. Expectations will be very clear. Each new teacher will be assigned a mentor who will guide the teacher as the plan is implemented. The instructional strategies, materials, and assessments will be emphasized.

F. Details a plan for sustaining technology that was implemented with SRCL funds.

- After the grant funding ends, virtual libraries will continue to be available to students with purchased technology. After the grant funds, the Board of Education will replace tools needed for effective instruction.

G. Details a clear plan for expanding the lesson learned through the SRCL project.

- A team from the district will travel to professional associations and share information on the lessons that have been gleaned through the SRCL project – organizations such as GACE, GAEL, and GACIS. Copies of units and lessons that have been developed through the grant period will be housed in notebooks in the media center or uploaded to be maintained as resources. Elder Middle expects the Striving Reader project to result in increased student achievement in all areas since reading is the foundation to understanding.

In the first year, we will purchase Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), train all teachers in foundational skills of reading, and using diagnostic data to guide instruction.

Year 1

Program	Quantity	Estimated Cost
SRI (Scholastic Reading Inventory)	All students & ELA Faculty	\$25,000
Handheld devices, cases and device accessories (for administrator, teacher, & student use). The devices will be used for the Scholastic Reading Inventory as well as to increase the amount of text read with a differentiated text complexity levels, and provide teachers with a means of administering and analyzing inventories and benchmarks. It will provide administrators a means of conducting observations and teachers with an increased source of differentiated student lessons.	700 handheld devices for administrators, teachers, and students	\$300,000
1 laptop to manage handheld devices	1 – Media Specialist	\$1,099
Set of e-book readers	28 – Media Center	\$14,000
Literacy Consultants to begin training on struggling reader issues	All faculty	\$15,000
Educational Applications	Students, teachers	\$1,000
Charging Carts	24 carts	\$35,000
Extended warranty for hand-held devices		\$5,000
Initial development of units that are challenging and engaging as well as incorporating technology	50 teachers & administrators	\$5,000
Maintenance for handheld devices		\$5,000
Desktop computers for computer lab in 7 th grade hall	30 student computers	\$30,000
Printer for computer lab	1 laser printer & ink cartridges	\$800

Year 2

Program	Quantity	Estimated Cost
Educational applications for handheld device (year 2)		\$500
Consultant for 'content area literacy' training	All faculty	\$15,000
Literacy Consultants – training on language skills	All faculty	\$15,000
Fees and materials for initial development of units that are challenging and engaging as well as incorporating technology	50 teachers & administrators	\$10,000
Repair – replace technology-literacy materials	Targeted students	\$5,000
E-books	Media Center	\$500
Literacy strategies Training – Differentiating to meet needs of struggling readers	Administrators	\$5,000
Staff training for storage and retrieval of data	Administrators	\$5,000
Video equipment to record lessons	All faculty	\$5,000
Desktop computers for computer lab in 6 th grade hall	30 student computers	\$30,000
Printer for computer lab	1 laser printer & ink cartridges	\$800
Data Tracking tools	Administrators & faculty	\$5,000

Year 3

Program	Quantity	Estimated Cost
Educational applications for hand-held devices		\$500
Maintenance for hand-held devices		\$5,000
Training for Classroom Management	All Faculty	\$15,000
Fees & materials associated with summer development of units that are challenging and engaging as well as incorporating technology (continuation from year 2)	50 teachers & administrators	\$10,000
E-books	Media Center	\$500
Training - Addressing Co-	Faculty and administrators	\$5,000

Teaching and EL students		
Data Tracking tools	Administrators & faculty	\$5,000
Desktop computers for computer lab in connections hall	30 student computers	\$30,000
Printer for computer lab	1 laser printer & ink cartridges	\$800
Ink cartridges for printers	2 sets per grade level	\$800
Literacy Consultants – training on language skills	All faculty	\$15,000

Year 4

Program	Quantity	Estimated Cost
Educational applications for hand-held devices		\$500
Maintenance for Hand-held devices		\$5,000
Fees associated with teachers supplements and materials for literacy in content area training	Faculty and staff	\$10,000
E-books	Media Center	\$500
Ink cartridges for printers	2 sets per grade level	\$800
Data Tracking tools	Administrators & faculty	\$5,000
Literacy Consultants – training on language skills	All faculty	\$15,000

Year 5

Program	Quantity	Estimated Cost
Educational applications for hand-held devices		\$500
Maintenance for Hand-held devices		\$5,000
Fees associated with teacher training in	Faculty and staff	\$10,000
E-books	Media Center	\$500
Ink cartridges for printers	2 sets per grade level	\$800
Data Tracking tools	Administrators & faculty	\$5,000