School Profile

Created Monday, December 10, 2012

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School Information

School Information	District Name:	Fulton County Schools
School Information	School or Center Name:	Paul D. West Middle School

Level of School

Middle (6-8)

Principal

Principal	Name:	LaRoyce Sublett
Principal	Position:	Principal
Principal	Phone:	4046698130
Principal	Email:	sublettl@fultonschools.org

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

School contact information	Name:	LaRoyce Sublett
School contact information	Position:	Principal
School contact information	Phone:	4046698130
School contact information	Email:	sublettl@fultonschools.org

Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

6-8

Number of Teachers in School

75

FTE Enrollment

761

Fiscal Agent Memo of Understanding

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

Fiscal Agent/Applicant Required Signatures:

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

Please sign in blue ink.

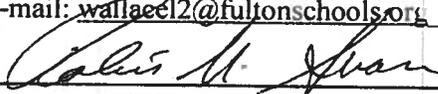Name of **Fiscal Agent's** Contact Person: Larry Wallace

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

Address: Fulton County Schools – 2370 Union Road SW

City: Atlanta   Zip: 30331

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

E-mail: wallacel2@fultonschools.org

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

Dr. Robert M. Avossa

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

12-11-12

Date (required)

Georgia Department of Education
Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy

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

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

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

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

- any person owning more than 20% interest in the Applicant
- the Applicant's corporate officers
- board members
- senior managers
- any employee who is responsible for making a decision or taking an action on this grant application or any resulting Agreement where the decision or action can have an economic or other impact on the interests of a regulated or affected organization.

i. The Applicant shall describe in detail why it believes, in light of the interest(s) identified in (a) above, that performance of the proposed Agreement can be accomplished in an impartial and objective manner.
ii. In the absence of any relevant interest identified in (a) above, the Applicant shall submit in its grant application a statement certifying that to the best of its knowledge and belief no affiliation exists relevant to possible conflicts of interest. The Applicant must obtain the same information from potential subcontractors prior to award of a subcontract.

    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. <u>**Employee Relationships**</u>

    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.

     iv. The Applicant must incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements awarded under this Agreement and must further require that each such subcontractor or consultant incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements at any tier awarded under this Agreement unless GaDOE determines otherwise.

     v. The information as it is submitted must be certified as being true and correct. If there is no such information, the certification must so state.

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

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

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

ANNUAL CERTIFICATION OF DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

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

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

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

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

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

Conflict of Interest & Disclosure Policy

III. **Incorporation of Clauses**

The Applicant must incorporate the clauses in paragraphs A, B, and C of this section into all subcontracts or consultant agreements awarded under this Agreement and must further require that each such subcontractor or consultant incorporate this clause into all subcontracts or consultant agreements at any tier awarded under this Agreement unless GaDOE determines otherwise.
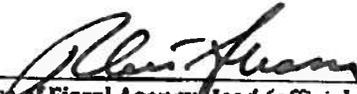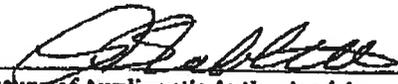
_____
Signature of Fiscal Agency Head (official sub-grant recipient)

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

12-11-12
Date

_____
Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

Dr. LaRoyce Sublett, Principal
Typed Name of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head and Position Title

12-4-2012
Date

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

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

_____
Date (if applicable)

Preliminary Application Requirements

Created Monday, December 10, 2012

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

General Application Information

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

- Yes

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

SRCL Grant Rubric

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

- Yes

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

Assessment Chart

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

- Yes

Assessments

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

- I Agree

Unallowable Expenditures

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

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

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

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

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

Advertisements, Promotional or Marketing Items

Decorative Items

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

Land acquisition

Capital Improvements, Permanent Renovations

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

Dues to organizations, federations or societies for personal benefits

Any costs not allowed for Federal projects per EDGAR, which may be accessed at
http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html.
NOTE: This is NOT an all-inclusive list of unallowable expenses. If you have questions about unallowable expenses please e-mail your questions to jmorrill@doe.k12.ga.us

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

- I Agree

Grant Assurances

Created Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Page 1

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

2007

07-1. Segregation of Duties - Repeat

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2008

2008-1. Restatement of Beginning Fund Balance/Net Assets -Prior Period Adjustments
Finding: Internal controls were not sufficient to prevent material misstatements in the reporting of the School System's financial statements.

2008-2. Timely Recording of Intergovernmental Receivable and Deferred Revenue – 2002 SPLOST Capital Projects Fund and 1997 SPLOST Capital Projects Fund
Finding: The School System's Program Management Director responsible for State Capital Outlay projects and management of the School System did not timely request State reimbursements for capital construction as of June 30, 2007

2008-3. Proper Reconciliations of Cash Accounts – General Fund and Pension Fund
Finding: Management of the School System did not accurately or timely reconcile the School System's bank account in the General Fund and the Pension Fund's bank account at year-end.

2008-4. Eligibility - Title I, School-wide Programs (CFDA 84.010)
Finding: As noted in our testing of the schools in the district operation school-wide programs, one (1) of the thirty-three (33) schools tested did not have all of the required elements to operate a school-wide program.

2008-5. Error in Student Benefit Determination – Child Nutrition Cluster (CFDA 10.553 and 10.555)
Finding: An ineligible student received benefits under the grant and reimbursement for the student's meal was claimed under the grant. Therefore, unallowable costs were charged to the grant. In one (1) instance, the necessary changes were not made to the system when verification documents provided by the student did not support the initial benefit determination.

2009

2009-1. Restatement of Beginning Fund Balance/Net Assets -Prior Period Adjustments
Condition: Internal controls were not sufficient to prevent material misstatements in the reporting of the School System's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2009.

2010

NO FINDINGS

2011

2

2011-01 Timely Recording of Intergovernmental Receivable and Deferred Revenue - 2007
SPLOST Capital Projects Fund

Condition: As of June 30, 2011, documentation from the State regarding approved proceeds from the 2010 application to support the recording of State reimbursements for capital construction projects was not recorded by the School System.

2011-02 Collateralization of Deposits

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

2011—03 . Allowable Costs/Activities - U.S. Department of Education. IDEA, (CFPA #s 84.027, 84.173, 84.391, and.8.4,392)

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

DISTRICT NARRATIVE

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

Current Priorities and Strategic Planning: *As* part of its strategic planning process, FCS examined environmental realities, student needs, and organizational opportunities and identified five major themes based on stakeholder feedback: Advancing Instruction, Enhancing People, Integrating Technology, Ensuring Effective Schools, and Managing Resources. Under each theme, FCS identified its current priorities and built a strategic plan for 2012-2017. The plan focuses on enabling students to graduate college and to be career ready. To hold FCS accountable for the strategic plan, the district has committed to three long-term outcomes: **Graduation Rate**: 90% of Fulton students will graduate on time; **College Readiness**: 85% of

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

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

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

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

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

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

- assessment based planning and student placement;

- modeled, shared, guided, and independent reading and writing;

- explicit skill instruction;

- use of authentic texts across content areas;

- integrated use of technology;

- authentic applications of learning.

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

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

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

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

District Management Plan and Key Personnel

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

EXPERIENCE OF THE APPLICANT

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

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

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

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

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

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

formative assessments and the analysis of student-specific data have enabled teachers to

implement differentiated learning strategies to improve student achievement.

School Narrative

Paul D. West Middle School is located in East Point, Georgia. The school is part of the Central Learning Community and the Tri-Cities feeder pattern. It serves as the middle school for three feeder elementary schools and the feeder for one high school that are included in Fulton County Schools' Striving Reader grant application. Paul D. West has an enrollment of 770 students. Approximately 86% of students are economically disadvantaged and eligible for free and reduced meals. The student population is 2% White, 77% Black, 17% Hispanic, 1% Asian, and 2% Multi-racial. Paul D. West reports 11% of Students With Disabilities (SWD), and 3% are English Language Learners (EL). The mobility rate is 41%.

Despite many successes, Paul D. West has not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for 3 years. Paul D. West host a special facility for severely verbal and non-verbal autistic students. Our adaptive autism eligibility support program consists of three certified teachers and three full-time Para pros. Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) instruction is modified based on basic skills through varying levels. Paul D. West also contains Mild Intellectual Disability functioning ranging students, between an upper limit of approximately 70 to a lower limit of approximately 55. Their adaptive behavior is significant and limits the students effectiveness in meeting standards of maturation, learning, personal independence or social responsibility, and especially school performance

that is expected of the individual's age level and cultural group. Paul D. West also houses a large population of EL and Hispanic students. Currently, 1.5 certified teachers are employed on staff to provide instruction for their learning needs. One of the major challenges with their literacy includes parent inability or deficient levels of speak English. Most of students and families in our community come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Culturally, most of the experiences have been limited due to a lower economic status.

Administrative and Teacher Leadership Team

The school's leadership team is representative of each instructional area within the school. The Administrative Team consists of Dr. LaRoyce Sublett, Principal for three years, and Assistant Principals Duane Roberts and Kenneth Young. The leadership team consists of representatives from each grade level, the exploratory department, the media specialists, counselors, the graduation coach, the math coach, special education chair, and all three administrators.

Past Instructional Initiatives

During the last three years Paul D. West has encouraged students to participate in after school tutoring from Supplemental Educational Services (SES) providers offering double dosing in mathematics and reading. The SES providers use of instructional focus calendars was designed to address students' academic needs as identified in Student Achievement Management System (SAMS) data analyses. Teachers continue to engage students in flexible

skill grouping, to address the specific needs of students as they differentiate instruction by process, product, and content. Teachers model, instruction and maintain student portfolios, which helps with progress monitoring. Our teachers provide classroom management, participate in Data Talks, as well as utilize Reading Across the Curriculum, Thinking Maps, and Book Study.

Professional Development Needs

A detailed list of teacher participation in professional learning communities and other professional development is included in the Professional Learning Strategies section. Through our needs assessment process, teachers identified specific professional learning needs including: implementing reading strategies across content areas; supporting parents to assist their children to become better readers; using Microsoft Excel and data analysis; technology to enhance learning; writing across content areas; and collaborative professional development between 8th grade Reading teachers and 9th grade Literature teachers to identify standards necessary for high school success.

Based on administrative walkthroughs and feedback the literacy team has determined that teachers need professional learning experiences that address comprehension strategies and vocabulary acquisition skills. Teachers also need to be engaged in activities and training that will give them experience in developing higher order thinking skills that engage learners in authentic tasks, some of which are community based. Technology should be woven through all of those processes to extend and add value to learning. Teachers need professional

development in the use of digital storytelling, which combines the power of words, audio, and video with a process that guides students to showcase their creativity.

Many of our student needs can be corrected by providing intensive professional development to our teachers. Professional development empowers teachers by giving the teachers a new skill/technique. The teachers can then apply that skill in the classroom and evaluate their own implementation of that skill.

Need for a Striving Readers Project

At Paul D. West the SWD population has consistently scored lower than the school on the Reading CRCT. Additionally, our deficits continue to manifest in the Math, Social Studies and Science portions of the test. Our weaknesses in comprehension and informational text surface when considering those three content areas. As a whole, our students have not demonstrated a high value of reading outside of school and lack basic foundations in comprehension and overall reading skills. Background knowledge in all classes is not commensurate with instructor expectations nor does it match levels for rigorous instruction without extensive scaffolding. Based on past reading incentive programs, less than 10% of our students participated consistently in a manner that allowed them to be recognized for incentive attainment. Stronger support from home has been a consistent challenge. Despite employing a full-time Parent Liaison, Graduation Coach, and Literacy Coach, the school has not been able to garner the support of a significant number of parents. Parent's surveys and feedback findings have shown that many parents feel uncomfortable or lack the necessary skills in carrying out the

support of their children as outlined by teachers. Paul D. West MS has access to one small public library located in downtown East point.

Paul D. West Middle School's mission is to educate our students to their fullest potential so they will become responsible, productive citizens in a global society. We envision a professional learning community dedicated and committed to building the future one student at a time, bridging the gap between the school and community, and bonding together to achieve our primary goal, which, a positive school climate will guide social and academic growth for all students. The Striving Readers Grant will help us achieve this goal.

School/District Literacy Plan

In developing Paul D. West Middle School's literacy plan, the Literacy Team collected input and feedback from stakeholders including teachers, administrators, parents, and students. The Literacy Team members completed the Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment developed by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). Our literacy plan is informed by the needs assessment data and framed around the six literacy building blocks while incorporating research cited in GaDOE's '*The Why*' document. For each of the building blocks, the Literacy Team reviewed all of the needs assessment criteria and determined an overall rating, e.g. Fully Operational, Operational, Emergent, or Not Addressed. Additionally, we referenced the 'What' and 'How' documents throughout our literacy plan to guide our thinking for implementation planning.

Building Block 1. Engaged Leadership

Research shows that effective education leadership makes a difference in improving learning. Leadership matters. The leadership must set a clear course that everyone understands, establishing high expectations and use data to track progress and performance.

Leadership should help in developing people. High quality leaders develop people by providing teachers and others in the system with the necessary support and training to succeed. Instructional leadership should encourage a focus on improving the classroom practices of teachers in the schools. An engaged leader develops the school as an effective organization that support and sustain the performance of administrators and teachers, as well as students.

The leadership at Paul West is involved in every aspect of the implementation of the literacy plan which will include providing and attending professional development for the school staff that will build the capacity of members by increasing their knowledge of research base

strategies to ensure the success of all students. Research says most important factor-affecting student learning is the teacher. More can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor. (GaDOE, *The What*, 2010)The staff participates in continuous professional development. The building leader monitors the professional development by conducting learning walks and analyzing with staff member's student data, which would determine if additional professional development is needed.

The administration brings in facilitative consultants to help faculty members explore the research, standards, and classroom practices of good instruction. After workshops or demonstrations the consultant assists teaches in installing new practices in the classroom. The building leader will nurture continuing growth of the staff by sending volunteer teachers to workshops, courses, summer institutes, or teachers-training teacher's events.

Literacy Leadership Team

With our new Common Core Curriculum it is important that a literacy team be established. The literacy team consists of the literacy coach, community members, representatives from all content areas and support personnel. This team monitors the implementation of the literacy plan. The team also keeps the faculty members informed by providing updates biweekly at faculty meetings and content area meetings. They solicit input from faculty members during staff meetings. The team will review the data monthly to monitor the effectiveness of the literacy plan and ascertain what additional professional development is needed.

Paul D. West Middle School's Literacy Team

Name	Position	Role
Dr. LaRoyce Sublett	Principal	Chair
Kenneth Young	Assistant Principal	Leadership Team
Duayne Roberts	Assistant Principal	Leadership Team
Bobbi Livingston	Administrative Assistant	Leadership Team
Dr. Lynn Jones	Counselor	Leadership Team
Carol Nesmith	Instructional Coach	Leadership Team
Phyllis Shealey	Instructional Coach	Leadership Team
Stephanie Creech	Parent	Leadership Team
Monica Holloway	Parent Liaison	Leadership Team
Joseph Carroll	Science Teacher	Leadership Team
Brandy Williams	Math Teacher	Leadership Team
Cynthia Jasch	Social Studies	Leadership Team
Dr. Connie Kitchens	Math Teacher	Leadership Team
Kenyatta Refro	Science Teacher	Leadership Team
Toni McLeod	Reading Teacher	Leadership Team
Mr. Pleasant	Band Teacher	Leadership Team
Word of Faith Love Center	Community outreach Program	Leadership Team
Kroger/Target	Community Partner	Leadership Team

Maximize the use of time and personnel through scheduling and collaborative planning

Maximizing academic learning time is a critical tool needed to improve student achievement and requires multiple policies and programs to support great teaching and learning. School districts around the state and country are looking for ways to improve student achievement by increasing instructional time, because simply increasing the school day or year does not guarantee increased academic learning time. In fact, doing so may actually create unintended negative consequences. Regardless of the length of the day or year, there are many ways to support maximizing academic learning time (GaDOE, The Why, 2010)

The administrative team provides the resources teachers need to engage students in meaningful, appropriately leveled learning during the school day. These resources include smaller classes, engaging model lessons, and models of successful programs that relate learning to real-life situations.

Paul D West's Leadership provides sufficient funds for before and after-school learning experiences, staffed by fully certified and well-compensated teachers, to targeted students who need them most. The leadership also ensures that teachers have sufficient planning time to develop engaging, differentiated instruction for all students in all classes will become very necessary. The extended school program is collectively bargained, that educators receive appropriate compensation for their work, and that the extended hours of instruction are utilized in a manner that extends learning time, not just time in school.

It is important that students receive adequate amount of instruction to increase achievement. Teachers should be able to plan collaboratively to ensure that student's needs are met and they are allowing the allotted amount of time for instruction. The leadership team

creates schedules to ensure that teachers are able to plan collaboratively across the content areas. It is important that the leadership hires personnel who are the most capable of meeting the needs of students. Our professional learning communities (PLC) currently meet twice each week and bi-monthly for content planning and professional development. During our PLC meetings, the grade levels collaborate, plan lessons and share best practices. We disaggregate data from assessments to best address differentiation strategies for future lessons of various learners.

School Culture

It is important for the school leader to create a positive school culture. The leadership at Paul West uses multiple student and teacher data sources to develop priorities for improvement. Students that are identified as priorities are targeted for intervention and supports from tutoring, online learning opportunities and extended day programs.

We offer a book study for faculty, staff and families designed to provide increase the knowledge and use of learning supports. Our PLCs offer a supportive environment for staff members to engage in job-embedded practices for personal and professional growth (Donohue, & Patterson 1996). It will promote conversations among staff that will bring them together to collaborate using the latest research as a springboard for the benefit of improving teaching and lead to the application of new ideas in classrooms. Since we have embarked upon the implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, we seek practices that will help the staff to examine and discuss literacy in hopes of increasing buy-in and ownership of our improvement initiatives.

Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas

By successfully integrating literacy instruction across curriculum areas, schools can gain the quality instructional time needed for student achievement. "Content area reading is a matter

of good teaching. When the invisible aspects of content area reading are operating in the classroom, the teacher is able to integrate reading and subject matter learning in seamless fashion..."(GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010) This way, students gain a complete education, one that teaches essential concepts, knowledge, and thinking ability.

Students must be actively engaged in order to construct knowledge. Students read in order to access, interpret, understand, and use information supplied through words, numbers, and images, in print or digital form. "Teachers and researchers have shown that long-term engaged reading can be increased with integrated reading instruction. When students are provided opportunities to connect reading and writing activities to integrated language arts, their engaged reading increases and reading achievement improves... Further, when reading and writing are also linked to content learning in social studies and science, engaged reading is likely to be fostered." (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010)

Paul D. West ensures that students are obtaining the allotted time on literacy instruction across all content areas. The professional development that teachers receive on the Common Core Curriculum will be a constant reminder to them that students must be actively engaged in order to construct knowledge. We provide professional development on incorporating the use of literature in the content areas, text complexity, research projects, use of informational texts and writing instructions. The leadership team also monitors the implementation of professional development through formal and informal observations, lesson plans, and staff walkthroughs.

"Teachers and researchers have shown that long-term engaged reading can be increased with integrated reading instruction. When students are provided opportunities to connect reading and writing activities to integrated language arts, their engaged reading increases and reading

achievement improves... Further, when reading and writing are also linked to content learning in social studies and science, engaged reading is likely to be fostered." (Guthrie, 2002)

It is important to consider the total numbers of students and subjects taught by teachers as well assess the diversity of student's needs. The more students are actively participating in instructional activities the more they learn. The literacy team along with the leadership team will create the schedule and constantly review the plan to ensure that scheduling is appropriate for all students.

Enlist the community

Research has proven that schools with a greater support entity thrive compared to those who do not have such support. (GaDOE, The *Why*, 2010). An effective school leader will find ways to get the community to support the school. Principal Sublett helps teachers communicate with parents proactively by conducting workshops at the school to communicate/articulate the literacy goals and the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

One of the goals of Fulton County is to have 100% of our students who will graduate college-and career-ready. Parents need to be aware of the goals and learn strategies that will assist their students in obtaining this goal. The staff provides workshops that will give parents hands on activities that can be used. We also have a volunteer reading program as a part of our literacy plan where people from the community will come in as often as they like and read books one-on-one with students. This allows volunteers from the community to become involved in schools and allows students to become better at reading and get to know people within the community.

The school also uses social media to communicate and promote the goals of literacy across the curriculum. Social media accounts have been established so that families will always have access to current information regard the literacy goals being implemented in the building.

Building Block 2: Continuity of Instruction

"The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, and language be a shared responsibility within the school" (Common Core State Standards, 2010). A collaborative team is needed to ensure that the literacy focus is consistent across the curriculum. Time and funds play a major part in the availability in a functional team that will be used to accomplish the need and task. The need for this team is great at Paul D. West. There is a lack of professional learning for Science teachers on how to teach and incorporate literacy skills in the classroom to increase student comprehension of science text and concepts. In addition, reading and ELA teachers are reluctant to incorporate science-based texts in their classrooms due to a lack of basic science content knowledge. As a result, students who could otherwise be successful in science are rendered unsuccessful due to deficits in reading and ELA skills. An interdisciplinary teacher team is needed to collaborate in aligning instruction that will facilitate the process of students making connections and transferring skills across curricula.

We have a need to utilize reading as means of making connections across the curriculum. Teachers need to ensure students acquire basic science inquiry skills and to transfer these skills to literacy tasks. Our students struggle with various reading skills, and science and social studies content. They need to build their subject content vocabulary and informational text skills in order to improve performance in these content areas. In addition, all of our students could use additional exposure to key academic vocabulary, informational texts and nonfiction. Paul D.

West Middle School is committed to support literacy to serve a literacy focus across curriculum through the use of collaborative teams. To ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams there will be professional learning for the entire staff to build their capacity to work interdependently within high-performing collaborative teams.

To coordinate curriculum and instruction across subject areas, we will form grade-level teams, form curriculum committees to develop instructional goals that encompass subject areas, develop themes and curriculum-integrated projects that support the themes, and provide time for cross-curriculum planning during the school day. In order to design and implement instruction that uses formal and informal assessment instruments, we will form a cross-functional curriculum team to agree upon common assessment practice, create common rubrics, incorporate performance assessments in classroom instruction, and provide time for cross-functional assessment review. We will establish two literacy demonstration classrooms in each content area by identifying teacher leaders who can provide classroom demonstrations and modeling for their peers, providing professional development to demonstrate classroom teachers, and creating opportunities for classroom visits to observe demonstrations and modeling.

Studies have shown that participation in public library summer reading programs leads to academic success while summer reading participants outscored their peers who did not participate on reading achievement tests given at the start of the new school year (Ebbers, 2011). The benefits of youth services are numerous (Ebbers, 2011). The Youth Services at Georgia Public Library Services (GPLS) provides myriad services to improve the quality of children and families' lives. GPLS plans and implements statewide family literacy programs. GPLS will act as a consultant to a collaborative team, for developing new youth services initiatives for systems

continuing service for parents and children. GPLS will help plan and monitor several statewide training opportunities each year for professional learning. GPLS will also help endorse other professional developments available such as children's literature conferences, COMO?GLA conference, and other trainings of interest to children's and teen services staff (http://www.gadoe.org/sia_as_library.aspx).

Support teachers in providing literacy instruction across the curriculum

Literacy is vital in Georgia's efforts to lead the nation in improving student achievement. Therefore, all teachers are literacy instructors who must manage the development of student's skills in accessing, using, and producing a variety of forms of media, information, and knowledge in all content areas. On-going professional development is critical the Paul West. Teachers participating in improving literacy of instruction will need multiple layers of professional learning, research into literacy, and innovative student engagement and activities. They will attend local collaborative planning meetings, professional development and several sessions of ongoing professional learning each year. Teachers new to PDW middle school will attend on-going professional days of training to explore middle years research and practical literacy strategies for engaged literacy learning. Learning Inquiry projects and Reading to Learn is also an appropriate intervention for at risk literacy learners. To help support teachers in providing literacy instruction across the curriculum there will be an intensive professional learning plan that will include the following trainings: professional learning for RDG/ELA teachers on strategies to teach phonemic awareness, decoding, and comprehension; professional learning for all teachers on instructional strategies to use to teach and support student reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition skills; professional learning on Problem-based

learning for all teachers; professional learning on how to leverage existing data to identify student performance gaps, and methods of monitoring current performance of at-risk students. To activate subject area/grade-level discussions on reading and writing strategies, we will share effective strategies in faculty meetings and include one strategy in each monthly faculty newsletter. We will form a partnership with Newspapers in Education (NIE) to assist in locating and using a variety of texts in various subject areas.

Professional development empowers teachers by giving the teachers a new skill/technique. The teachers can then apply that skill in the classroom and evaluate their own implementation of that skill. To address the difficulty teachers have implementing strategies with fidelity, we will utilize a professional development laboratory session where teachers work with small groups of students while learning how to implement strategies and best practices. The facilitator will model the strategies first, teachers will try out the strategy in a classroom with small groups of students while the facilitator observes the teachers in one classroom, and then they will debrief with the facilitator about how well they were able to implement the strategy or the need for additional support. This will require substitutes and will occur within 3 class periods. This will be an innovative way to deliver professional learning, as teachers will implement the strategies in a classroom with students after seeing the strategies modeled as well as performing those strategies in a coaching environment with a facilitator during the same day. Leaders at all levels identify quality professional development as the key strategy for supporting significant improvements. They are able to articulate the critical link between improved student learning and the professional learning teachers. They ensure that all stakeholders, including the school board, parent teacher organizations, and the business community, understand the link and develop the

knowledge necessary to serve as advocates for high quality professional development for all staff (NSDC, 2011).

Teachers will be given literacy support through targeted professional development and support to improve content-area literacy instruction and successfully implement literacy interventions. School resources that we will use to support literacy instruction across the curriculum will be classroom libraries, parallel curriculum materials at varying reading levels for units of study, beginning all classes with reading relevant to the day's work, scheduled, school-wide sustained silent reading time (3 to 5 times per week), and additional strategic reading classes or reading/writing workshops. The need for extended time for literacy has been recognized in numerous sources including Reading Next, Writing to Read, ASCD, and Center on Instruction, National Association of State Boards of Education (NASCB), and Kappan Magazine as well almost all other state literacy plans. Citing a study done in 1990 titled, "What's all the Fuss about Instructional Time?" by D. C. Berliner, the authors of a report to the NASCB stated, "Providing extended time for reading with feedback and guidance across the curriculum has been well documented and conforms to the extensive literature on academic learning time." This extended time for literacy, anywhere from two to four hours, should occur in language arts and content-area classes (Biancorosa & Snow, 2006, p. 20.)

We have significant technology needs. Our students do not necessarily have computers at home and our computer labs must be used on a rotational basis. Providing students with e-readers or tablets to access the Internet and electronic text will engage students and help support our literacy plan. One way we envision bridging the gap is through the use of digital storytelling. Technology can help support not only our special education students who struggle with reading but would allow all students to work at their own pace in an individualized way. "Many

adolescents are drawn to technology, and incorporating technology into instruction can increase motivation at the same time that it enhances adolescent literacy by fostering student engagement" (National Council of Teachers of English, 2006). Teachers need to integrate technology in order to accelerate students' thinking, learning, and communicating skills. The use of hyperlinks to provide additional support by providing background knowledge, define unknown words, embedded video and animations, and technology that reads texts aloud also shows great promise for struggling readers (Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy, 2010). It is imperative for students to use various digital tools, media, and networks effectively to learn how to communicate and independently express ideas in a new and creative way. In order to better accomplish instructional tasks, teachers should have access to integrate technology to improve learning.

Collaborate with supporting out-of-school agencies and organizations within the community

Family and community involvement in education has long been considered an essential component of children's academic success. Community agencies, business owners, and organizations in the community are an integral part of the community. As community leaders, they contribute to the welfare of the community and its members, as well as understanding the importance of literacy and the challenge of helping everyone learn how to read proficiently and helping to overcome that challenge. We will provide department memberships in professional organizations, research and offering teachers opportunities to attend local, state, and national conferences. To encourage a community of learners, we will provide both online and face-to-face family-focused services and outreach that engage parents and family members in literacy

programs ask local bookstores to donate books to the school, develop a homework hotline staffed by community leaders.

A school-family-community partnership is a collaborative relationship among the family, school, and community designed primarily to produce positive educational and social outcomes for children and youth, while being mutually beneficial to all parties involved. Partnerships allow for a wider set of activities to be performed by a larger set of partners. Within partnerships, planners and organizers create rich, rewarding experiences instead of resorting to a typical set of activities. Collaborating with the community would include sending communications home and conducting training sessions on how to help children learn to read and family volunteering would focus on individualized reading tutoring. To help foster a partnership with the community, areas within the schools (library, computer lab, gym, classrooms, etc.) can be used to host public meetings and adult enrichment courses such as language, reading, computers, arts and crafts, or fitness.

One of the most salient issues raised in Reading Next is that of motivation. Reading Next makes recommendations to help address this area. We must take deliberate steps to promote relevancy in what students read and learn. To facilitate relevance, Reading Next suggests that we coordinate assignments and reading with out-of-school organizations and the community to provide students with a sense of consistency between what they experience in and out of school. In additions, working in partnership with GADOE and other educational partners, our school and teachers will be provided a unique resource to create, produce, and distribute content, as well as have source for online professional learning opportunities. There are professional learning modules created for a variety of face to face and online delivery methods that we will use to train

teachers to the Raising Readers website. This is an online tool for emergent and struggling readers that allow teachers to track the progress of students' literacy skills.

We have a population of homes with limited access to various forms of media (i.e., newspapers, magazines, and books). Parents and families have limited access to our media center. We need to engage all students with access to technology such as e-readers, decoding pens, MP3 players, and tablets to address literacy needs. Our needs include supporting struggling readers with the text to speech features as well as providing access to digital books for ELL students and their parents. Additionally, multiple subscriptions to academic magazines such as Scholastic, National Geographic, Popular Science, and/or books that students could take home would also help engage our families in improving their child's literacy. Furthermore, these materials can also be used to support engagement and instruction in the classroom to create a print rich environment. Moreover, Data Teams will be developed and be comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, and business/community leaders in each school or school district who serve as the driving force for instructional decision making in the building. Quality teaching in all classrooms necessitates skillful leadership at the community, district, school, and classroom levels (NSDC, 2001).

Building Block 3. Ongoing formative and summative assessments

Establish an infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments

Assessment	Purpose	Skills	Frequency
Checkpoints	Monitoring and screening diagnostic assessment for all students	Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	(Pre & post-test) twice each semester
Collaborative dialogue/ Test Talks	Progress monitoring	Reading Comprehension	4 – 8 per year
Common Formative Assessments	Progress monitoring	Concepts of print and Reading Comprehension	Weekly, bi-weekly, or as needed
Common Summative Assessments – End-Of-Unit Test	Outcome	Vocabulary, Informational text Concepts of Print Comprehension	4 per year (pre & post-test)
End of Unit Assessments	Diagnostic assessment for content areas	Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	8 per year (pre & post-test each semester)
Informal Assessments	Diagnostic	Vocabulary and Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	Daily
Online Assessment Results – SAMS & Achievement Series	Diagnostic	Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	4 – 8 per year (pre & post-test)
ITBS	Progress monitoring	Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary	Annually
Renzulli	Interest and progress monitoring and individualized technology	Informational Text and comprehension	As needed
Periodic Fluency DRA II kits Assessments	Progress Monitoring Screening	Reading fluency and Lexile target scores	On-going twice yearly
Student Writing	Screening	Vocabulary	Twice during the semester
Study Island (Social Studies)	Progress monitoring	Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	As needed

Assessment	Purpose	Skills	Frequency
OAS On-line test	Progress monitoring	Concepts of print	As needed
Scholastic Reading Inventory	Progress Monitoring	Comprehension	3x per year

The purpose of formative assessments is to monitor and guide students through a process while learning standards rather than waiting to the end of a unit (Heritage, 2008). Formative assessments will be administered weekly to gage students' mastery of standards covered in class. These assessments will provide feedback for both teachers and students in terms of effectiveness of instruction and comprehension of material (Heritage, 2008). Formative assessments will also be used to determine grouping of students as well as those students who need remediation/enrichment. Examples of formative assessments will be weekly quizzes, projects, authentic assessments as well as tickets out the door.

The primary purpose of summative assessments will be to summarize learning over a given period of time. Summative assessments will be used for diagnostic purposes in order to determine students' strengths and weaknesses. Summative assessments utilized at Paul D. West are Checkpoints (administered four times a year,), End of Unit assessments (at the end of each unit of instruction), Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) (annually), the Criterion Reference Competency Test (CRCT) (annually) and performance tasks. Performance tasks will be used to determine how well students have mastered standards and learned the curriculum taught. Additionally, Performance Tasks will provide authentic learning for students and require them to apply understanding and previous knowledge. Performance tasks will also be used to raise students' self-confidence and allow them to take ownership of their work.

To ensure that teachers understand the purpose for and the use of formative and summative assessments at the beginning of each school year, teachers are given professional development after school hours, or on Saturdays with a provided stipend .The purpose of the professional development will be to ensure that there is development of common curriculum – based assessments across subject areas.

There are additional online training options for staff that will responsible for administering assessments. The main purpose for this additional training is to ensure standardized procedures and accurate data recording. These individuals will also be responsible for making sure there are consistent expectations across classrooms and teachers by identifying and developing common curriculum-based assessments.

After receiving this professional development on the difference between formative and summative assessments, teachers work collaboratively to locate and develop common mid-course assessments for their areas. These assessments include a variety of formats that include multiple choice, short answers, constructed responses and essays. To further ensure continuity of these assessments, rubrics are created for their scoring.

After administering these assessments, student progress data is shared with parents in an easily interpreted user-friendly format. Teachers engage in online collaboration using social media to analyze students' data and to adjust instructional plans. For those who cannot attend the scheduled online session, the collaboration sessions will be recorded.

The data collected from the assessment at Paul D. West will be used to make adjustments to the implementation of the curriculum. Teachers conduct conferences with students to discuss their progress (strength and weaknesses based on the assessment results). Data is posted on classrooms' data walls as well as in the each grade level data room. Dialogue among subject

area teachers will take place on their students' performance as well as what the teachers found to be effective in helping their students master required standards.

Use universal screening and progress monitoring for formative assessment

A universal screener and progress monitor that assesses reading comprehension is administered to every student in the building in order to find students who are not within the appropriate lexile band. This proactive approach recognizes potential student failure at an early point and identifies all students who are in need so that suitable interventions can be administered.

Universal screeners will be administered and reviewed at regular intervals (fall, winter, spring) by trained school personnel throughout the school year. It will be used to identify each student's level of proficiency and progress in target areas and to use this information to adjust instructional models or intervention delivery, and to assist in goal setting for teachers and students, to identify students in need of differentiated instruction and /or intervention. Training of school personnel in administering, interpretation, and use of universal screening instruments is essential.

Universal screeners quantify progress and target key components of academic performance and behavior, they are easy to administer, score, and interpret so that results are obtained early enough to make instructional changes in a timely manner, and they can be supplemented with data from other sources, such as teacher observations, school-wide assessments, and district-level assessments.

The universal screening data will be analyzed after each benchmark period (typically fall winter, and spring) to determine the rate of growth from fall to winter, winter to spring, and fall

to spring for individual students, classrooms, and grade levels; students in need of further intervention, and assessment on specific target areas, as established by pre-set benchmarks; and progress towards goals for teachers and students. Data gathered from the universal screening will be depicted in graph and/or narrative forms that are interpreted by teachers for classroom and student performance, administrators for classroom, grade, and school performance and parents for individual student performance.

Results from formative assessments will be shared with students and parents and instructional plans will be adjusted accordingly. Students will use the results of their formative assessments to set learning goals for themselves. Whereas, teachers at Paul D. West M.S. will make use of weekly common assessments, checkpoints, and mock writing assessments to constantly monitor students' progress to determine if additional diagnostic screening will be needed and to determine who need enrichment.

Use diagnostic assessment to analyze problems found in literacy screening

At Paul D. West M. S., teachers and administrators will use two forms of diagnostic assessments to analyze problems found in literacy screening, formative and summative assessments (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010). Some commonly used diagnostic assessments Paul D. West M.S. teachers will use are weekly and unit common assessments, annual CRCT and ITBS, performance tasks, checkpoints, and quarterly students' writing assessments. These assessments provide valuable information to guide instruction and monitor students' achievement (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010).

Without this system of diagnostics, intervention, and instructional support, students fall further behind the achievement gap; they are often attending school for months before their reading deficits are detected. Once students are identified, the instructional staff is not trained to leverage existing data to identify student performance gaps. There is also a lack of a consistent method of monitoring current performance of at-risk students. This further exacerbates the problem of students who are 3 to 5 years below reading levels, including SWD and ELL subgroups (US Department of Education, 2012) do not receive support in learning and applying literacy skills outside of their reading class. The use of frequently administered diagnostic assessments to evaluate learners, measure the effectiveness of implemented programs as well as the students' academic background is critical for students' success. Such measurements will offer teacher, administers and students at Paul D. West guides for future course of action. The results from the diagnostic will be used to determine student placement and to adjust instruction.

To alleviate some of the literacy problems at Paul D. West M.S., additional instructional support (e.g. pull out students) in the areas of ELA and reading during the instructional day would curtail some of the issues. In conjunction with the additional ELA and reading classes, smaller regular ELA and reading classes will be necessary in order to effectively monitor progress and meet the individual needs of all students. To both engage and educate young readers, content-ear teachers will move towards a more balance mix of real-world material in a variety of genre. Teachers will use technology selectively to differentiate learning in the content area. Student's lexile level will be used to match students with appropriate texts. (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010)-books will be used to reinforce vocabulary and comprehension as well as to translate materials for parents of ELL so they can provide support to their students. Interactive white boards will be utilized within the classrooms to engage students and promote literacy acquisition.

These resources will create clear picture of reading instruction that is student-centered, challenging and interactive.

Incentives will be used to encourage students to meet their literacy goals. One means to celebrate and recognize the improvement of students in reaching their literacy goals, students will be rewarded certificates. Students who have shown consistent gain from the beginning to the end of the year will receive an ice cream party. Through the Pizza Hut's Book-it program, students will receive free pizza for meeting literacy goals, and Six Flag's Read-to-Succeed program park passes will be rewarded to participants.

Use summative data to make programming decisions as well as to monitor individual student progress

Commonly used summative data is gathered from state standardized tests such as the CRCT (GaDOE, *The Why*, 2010) and the ITBS. These state tests are designed to assess how well students have mastered required course standards as well as the effectiveness of instruction. The decision makers at Paul D. West M.S will use the summative data to drive instruction. Data from the summative assessments will be used to determine how many students need further remediation, such as extended learning programs, tutorial, and Saturday school instruction. The collected data will also used to place students in classes that best meet their educational needs. Students scoring level one and level two on the CRCT (GaDOE, The Why, 2010) will be assigned extra assistance in the form of additional ELA and reading instruction after school. To further enhance these struggling learners' skills, adding additional reading and ELA classes during the instructional day will prove invaluable to moving students from level one to level two, and level two students to level three. Consistently monitoring of students' progress in the added

reading and ELA class will be used to analyze the effectiveness of the program. To monitor students' progress, mid-course assessments such as end-of-unit assessments, chapter tests and common assessments will be on going.

At the beginning of the school year, homeroom teachers will pull CRCT results from the previous year. Test results will be discussed with students during a teacher/student conference. During this conference, the test results will be explained to the student, and the students' strengths and weaknesses will be analyzed. After analyzing results, students will then be encouraged to set goals for the next diagnostic assessment and explain what they will do to accomplish these goals.

Teachers, administrators, and the literacy coach will map out summative assessment timelines at the beginning of the school year. Once the time line is in place, teachers will work together to determine the format of the assessment so that school-based test are aligned with the formatting of state test. Assessments will include multiple choice as well as response to literature (writing).

During the weekly collaborative planning meetings, teachers will review results of summative assessments. By disaggregating the data, teachers will determine what standards were not mastered and will require more reinforcement as well as standards that students have mastered. Dialogue will include what changes can be made to improve instruction for all students.

A blended model (online and face-to-face instruction) will be used to provide professional literacy development to teachers at Paul D. West. This training will provide best practice strategies on promoting literacy throughout the school.

To recognize and celebrate individual student's significant improvements and attaining designated standards of achievement, students will be spotlighted on the school's website.

Develop a clearly articulated strategy for using data to improve teaching and learning

The data team consists of administrators, literacy coach, graduation coach, math coach, counselor, and subject area contacts. The dynamics of the team allow for open discourse on student's data and the effectiveness of instruction on meeting standards. This team will use the data collected from assessments to chart students' progress and areas where more instruction may be required. All appropriate staff members follow the established protocol for making decisions when they have access to necessary data to identify the instructional needs of students. Full time coaches, along with the administrative staff and Curriculum Support Teacher train teachers in the use of data, facilitate action planning and support the monitoring of instructional strategies and programs. Several protocols have been developed and are adhered to support the building of skills and culture necessary for collaborative work. These protocols include versions of protocols created by the National School Reform Faculty such as: Atlas-Learning from Student Work, Atlas-Looking at Data, Consultancy, Success Analysis, etc. Staff members understand and utilize the Student Achievement Management System (SAMS) and Achievement Series, which are both data storage and retrieval systems use by the school district. Procedures and expectations for staff to review, analyze, and disseminate assessment results are in place. Protocols for team meetings are regularly followed.

One measure of that achievement is how well students perform on assessments (CRCT and ITBS). Data from these formative and summative assessments help teachers to determine students' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers will develop lesson plans that will be aligned to

the Georgia Common Core Professional Standards and reflect data-driven instructional decisions. Teachers will use this data to identify the needs of each of student. Our school commits to using the SRI assessments as part of the Striving Reader project. Currently, the school uses the data from the CRCT, ITBS, and classroom assessments to identify students' reading deficiencies. Data is also used to determine how best to group students in order to meet their individual instructional needs. This data is used to determine students who are in need of intervention, determine the adequacy of core curriculum instruction, and inform instruction and educational decisions.

Building Block 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

The literacy team at Paul D. West provides a supportive and positive learning environment in which all children achieve literacy success. Our goal is to strengthen literacy development across all content areas. Goals, objectives, and priorities have been clearly articulated and aligned throughout our educational delivery services for the students at Paul D. West. The goal of reading is to comprehend text, in literary and informational text. For many students, explicit instruction in how to comprehend reading is necessary. We know that successful readers think and ask questions about the text as they read, and they employ different strategies for different types of texts. Good readers apply effective habits for reading: visualizing, making connections with the text, asking questions, making predictions, inferring, determining the purpose of parts of the text, and synthesizing content. Unfortunately, these habits do not come naturally to many students, especially to struggling readers, and should be explicitly taught via actual reading. In other words, strategy instruction must be intertwined with assisting a reader to make sense of real text.

Literacy Research

Reading comprehension and literacy proficiency are a concern for the majority of adolescent learners in the state of Georgia. A disproportionate number of students of color, English Language Learners (ELL), and economically disadvantaged are among the struggling readers identified by low performance on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCTs), Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGTs), and End-of-Course Tests (EOCTs). Without academic skills to be successful in school, these students are at high-risk of dropping out of school.

The Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) require that students become proficient in three types of texts: argument, informative/explanatory, and narrative, beginning as early as kindergarten. According to National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), writing becomes a critical need for workers. Technological advances, changing workplace demands, and cultural shifts make writing more important than ever, especially because the way we write often predicts academic and/or job success, creates opportunities, maintains relationships, and enhances critical thinking. Because students enter the classroom with such diverse needs, one single approach is no longer effective (NCTE, 2008, p. 1). According to NCTE, "Instructional practices, writing genres, and assessments should be holistic, authentic, and varied," (NCTE, 2008, p. 2). The following are effective instructional and assessment strategies for writing:

1. Require all students--especially those less experienced--to write extensively so that they can be comfortable writing extended prose in elementary school and writing essays in high school (minimum five pages) and college (ten pages). Create writing assignments that ask students to interpret and analyze a variety of texts and to write in various genres.

2. Employ functional approaches to teaching and applying rules of grammar so that students understand how language works in a variety of contexts.

3. Foster collaborative writing processes.

4. Include the writing formats of new media as an integral component of writing.

5. Use formative assessment strategies that provide students with feedback while developing drafts.

6. Employ multiple assessment measures, including portfolios, to access students' development as writers (NCTE, 2008, p. 5).

Based on research from the National Commission on Writing (2004),

1. People who cannot write and communicate clearly will not be hired, and if already working, are unlikely to last long enough to be considered for promotion. Half of responding companies reported that they take writing into consideration when hiring professional employees and when making promotion decisions. "In most cases, writing ability could be your ticket in . . . or it could be your ticket out," said one respondent. Commented another: "You can't move up without writing skills." (2004, p.3)

2. Two-thirds of salaried employees in large American companies have some writing responsibility. "All employees must have writing ability.... Manufacturing documentation, operating procedures, reporting problems, lab safety, waste- disposal operations--all have to be crystal clear," said one human resources director. (2004, p.3)

3. Eighty percent or more of the companies in the services and the finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) sectors, the corporations with greatest employment growth potential, assess writing during hiring. "Applicants who provide poorly written letters wouldn't likely get an interview," commented one insurance executive. (2004, p.3)

4. More than 40 percent of responding firms offer or require training for salaried employees with writing deficiencies. "We're likely to send out 200-300 people annually for skills upgrade courses like 'business writing' or 'technical writing,'" said one respondent. (2004, p. 4) Writing demands for the 21st century are increasing not only in schools but also in workplaces that demand effective communication skills. Georgia advocates strong writing skills beginning in elementary and continuing through high school. The implementation of strong writing programs is crucial to a literacy initiative.

As students move beyond the primary grades, their reading comprehension skills must become more sophisticated in order for them to comprehend challenging material. To meet new, rigorous content area standards successfully, reading comprehension is critical. However, 69% of 8th grade students fall below the proficient level in their ability to comprehend the meaning of text at grade level (Lee, Griggs, & Donahue, 2007; NAEP, 2007). At Paul D. West, we also have the opportunity to improve the reading comprehension skills of our students.

Teacher Capacity

Paul D. West's teachers are highly qualified and have experience in teaching reading. Eight teachers have a reading endorsement. They provide all students the direct, explicit instruction that they need. Our teachers have the ability to differentiate instruction to meet needs of students. They use a variety of teaching styles, e.g., peer, hands on, one-on-one, direct instruction, student-facilitated lessons, and differentiated instruction consisting of learning centers within the classroom. Each classroom has activities based on students' learning styles and offers hands-on technology. Paul D. West teachers are able to motivate students to participate and be fully engaged by accessing and utilizing outside resources to supplement what is needed to instruct students. Teachers use common assessments and Checkpoints data to

modify instructional practices.

21ˢᵗ Century Skills

Universities, the Partnership for 21st Century Schools, the National Council of Teachers of English, as well as content-area organizations, support the importance of technology in instruction. Research from 21st Century Schools includes the integration of information, media, and technology skills. Specifically, people in the 21st Century, live in a technology and media-driven environment marked by access to an abundance of information, rapid changes in technology tools, and the ability to collaborate and make individual contributions on an unprecedented scale (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). To be effective in the 21st Century, citizens and workers must be able to exhibit a wide range of functional and critical thinking skills, such as information literacy; media literacy; and information, communications, and technology literacy.

Literacy Supports

Paul D. West has numerous resources and activities to support literacy in our classrooms including: guided reading lessons, differentiation based on DRA2 results, web-based reading materials, interactive whiteboards, common assessments in reading/writing, and monitoring / analyzing student work in professional learning communities.

In addition, we offer Team Teaching and Inclusion /classes to address the unique needs of our students with disabilities. We have implemented strategies where special education teachers coordinate and team-teach with the general education teachers. These specialized services are put in place to support and address the needs of students with disabilities.

Extended Learning supports Tier 1 and Tier 2 students. Students are also given the opportunity to utilize Renzulli, Study Island, Carnegie Learning, and Success Maker. These Web-based resources assist with growth and differentiation for the specific students' needs.

At Paul D. West, we use Thinking Maps in all content areas. Thinking Maps correspond with fundamental thinking processes. In addition, these maps provide visual representations that enhance students' comprehension of the lesson. We use word study to help support vocabulary skills. Word study is an engaging interactive activity that supports students' understanding of vocabulary.

We use guided reading lessons for difficult text, differentiation based on process and product in all content areas, web-based reading materials, interactive whiteboards, common assessments in reading/writing, and monitoring and analyzing student work in professional learning communities.

Furthermore, we offer team taught classes to address the individual needs of our students with disabilities. Our team teachers collaborate with the regular education teachers in order to maximize learning by focusing on differentiation and modification. Although these specialized services are put in place to support students with disabilities, they also service our regular education population.

Students' daily schedules include a 60-90 minute literacy block for intervention, disciplinary literacy in content areas, and time for collaborative planning. At Paul D. West Middle School we have a core program that provides continuity based on a carefully articulated scope and sequence integrated into a rich curriculum of literacy and informational texts. Students' performance on common assessments is examined regularly to identify areas of instruction with greatest needs.

Administration conducts classroom observation using the Teacher Keys Assessment tool to gauge current practice in literacy instruction. The faculty participates in professional development on using data to inform instructional decisions and explicit teaching, selecting appropriate text and strategies for instruction, telling students specific strategies to be learned and why, modeling of how strategy is used, providing guidance and independent practice with feedback, discussing when and where strategies are to be applied, and differentiating instruction.

Paul D. West has a Reading Department Contact Chairperson who is a critical resource for teachers. She provides targeted, professional development strategies for teachers to extend their instructional program to meet students' needs. She models lessons and conducts observations. She also provides grade-level professional development during common planning time. In addition, she manages the Extended Day Learning Program that supports Common Core Standards.

Having a Reading Department Contact Chairperson is critical to have for our learning community. Students and parents depend on the support services offered by the reading coach. She assists parents with comprehending how data is intertwined with students' instructional needs. Additionally, she supports teachers with understanding data and how data should be utilized to drive instructional needs.

For our parents, we offer CRCT, common core, math data, and literacy night workshops. We also have a unique program called Internet Essentials, where each sixth grader who attends the presentation will get a desktop computer to keep with an abundance of software for students. The program offers tech support as long as students have the computer. Students are able to access school software from home with the computers. We also have a Title 1 Parent Resource

Room that allows parent to interact with the Parent Liaison who provides assistance to parents as needed.

The need for extended time for literacy has been recognized in numerous sources including Reading Next, Writing to Read, ASCD, Center on Instruction, National Association of State Boards of Education (NASCB), Kappan Magazine as well almost all other state literacy plans. Citing a study done in 1990 titled, "What's all the Fuss about Instructional Time?" by D. C. Berliner, the authors of a report to the NASCB stated, "Providing extended time for reading with feedback and guidance across the curriculum has been well documented and conforms to the extensive literature on academic learning time."

Our literacy team is constantly scanning research-based best practices to look for new ideas to pilot. Further, we benchmark our literacy programming against best practices in high performing middle schools to continuously improve.

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

Use information developed from the school-based data teams to inform RTI process

Team meetings are a vital part of creating curricular improvements, designing interventions, and deciding which students will benefit from additional tiered instruction. RTI teams use a problem-solving process to analyze data from school-wide universal screening at the Tier 1 level to assist teachers in planning and implementing instructional strategies that will differentiate on the basis of students' varying skill levels. The same type of teaming process is used for designing instruction and placing students into higher tiers (i.e., Tier 2 and Tier 3). Data analysis teams are convened after benchmark screenings to review universal data, select students for tiered interventions, and discuss instructional strategies.

In the initial fall meeting, plans are set forth in which initial goals are set and the team plans for instruction. A list of activities are planned and reviewed before the meetings. We outline the procedures for reviewing benchmark data and planning for improved Tier 1 instruction for the entire grade level. The process is then repeated for Tier 2 and 3. This same format is followed for subsequent meetings (quarterly benchmark meetings). The general procedures and prompts are the same for the initial meeting and follow-up meetings, but some differences do necessitate a variant script.

Teams record current student performance, goals, strategies discussed, strategies chosen, students considered for tiered services, and decisions made regarding student placement.

Before the Meetings

RTI teams are organized into grade-level data analysis teams that include the principal, all teachers from that grade level, the individuals who provide the tiered interventions, the school psychologist, and the individual who manages benchmark and progress-monitoring data (data manager). The principal/assistant principal arranges for meeting logistics, such as scheduling, and acts as facilitator of the meeting or appoints another team member for that role. Teams meet shortly after each universal screening. They will meet more frequently to accommodate changes in student movement or interventions if deemed necessary. Prior to meetings, the data is compiled and sent to all team members ahead of time in a user-friendly format so that all team members can review the data to familiarize themselves with it before the meeting.

Tier 1 Analysis

Initially, the team reviews whole-grade level performance on the universal screening conducted for that grade level. The team reviews what percentage of students is at each performance/risk level: benchmark (low risk), strategic (some risk), and intensive (high risk).

Next, the team uses the percentages at each level to set measurable goals to achieve by the next review point. The goals are stated in terms of the percentage of students making a particular amount of progress toward the identified benchmark.

Provide Tier I Instruction based upon the CCGPS in all grades to all students in all classrooms

Tier 1 represents effective, strategic, and expert instruction that is available in all classrooms. The use of effective questioning skills is critical to responding to student performance. Bloom's Taxonomy should guide the types of questions asked by teachers for student feedback.

Focused attention to content knowledge of teachers is required to support appropriate teacher questioning and feedback skills.

Rigorous instruction based on the CCGPS is required. Vertical (across grade level) instructional conversations will support and challenge all teachers to provide instruction where students demonstrate depth of understanding, including such cognitive processes as explanation, interpretation, application, analysis of perspectives, empathy, and self knowledge. Alignment of instruction and assessment based on the CRCT and the GPS will ensure student access to an appropriate rigorous instructional program.

Planning

- Tier 1 is for every student in a general education setting and is not limited to instruction in the academic content areas, but also includes all developmental domains such as behavior and social development.

- Tier 1 is the Core Instructional Program provided to all students by the general education teacher in the general education classroom.

- Tier 1 should meet the needs of 85% of our students. This means that instruction is differentiated including flexible grouping and multiple means of learning to meet diverse needs of students in each classroom.

- Teachers and co-teachers as well as ESOL teachers will be responsible for delivery of instruction.

- Instruction will be delivered in a general education setting in a 55-minute literacy block (this includes whole group instruction and other flexible grouping opportunities.

- Flexible grouping options are offered in the general education setting that will include whole group activities as well as small group and one-to- one learning experiences. All settings will be included.

Implementing

- Frequency of Progress Monitoring

- Teachers will use bi-monthly common formative assessment results (achievement series, etc.) and analysis of student work to guide and adjust instruction.

- Universal Screening (checkpoint, Unit Assessment) four times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring, Pre-Summer)

- Progress monitoring of students initially identified as at-risk by classroom teacher.

- Based on data review, adjustments in instruction will be made

- Frequency of Intervention Provided

- 55-minute literacy block

- At least three small groups every third day of a cycle

- Expanding

- Duration of Intervention

- 2-6 Weeks

- General Education interventions and progress monitoring by classroom teacher should last five to six weeks.

Implement Tier 2 needs-based interventions for targeted students

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 2 becomes the answer to the question "what are we prepared to do when they do not learn?" Using universal screening data (CRCT), summative assessment data (end of unit test), and Tier 1 formative assessment data (achievement series results), teachers and instructional leaders will determine concepts, content areas, and/or specific skills needing support.

- Interventions will be developed and made available when specific students show weaknesses in those areas.

- All students who need Tier 2 intervention (in addition to Tier 1 instruction) will be identified through the universal screening and formative assessment protocol.

- A school wide assessment data and projected levels of student mastery (70% or above) for the school year is for effective Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction in all content areas.

- Tier 2 interventions are in place for students who are not being sufficiently successful or adequately challenged with Tier 1 interventions alone.

- Tier 2 interventions are pre-planned, developed, and supported at the school level during collaborative planning thereby becoming "standard intervention protocols" that are proactively in place for students who need them.

- Tier 2 interventions are not a substitution for Tier 1 instruction, but are layered in addition to the Tier 1 instruction that is provided.

- Acceleration is provided in concepts and content areas that have been mastered by highly able students.

- Tier 2 interventions are re-evaluated periodically using assessment data and teacher evaluation.

Planning

- Tier 2 offers support in addition to the Core Instructional Program

- Instruction will be delivered in the general education setting or an alternative location (push-in or pullout).

- Tier 2 is the Benchmark Assessment System and Level Literacy Intervention

- Tier 2 should have no more that 5% of students who were not meeting the Tier 1 benchmark.

- Tier 2 instruction will occur in small group settings at the student's instructional level.

- Tier 2 will include small group instruction (3-5 students)

- Reading and ESOL teachers will be responsible for instructional delivery

- Tier 2 will include will include additional targeted support that extends these efforts beyond the 55 minute block of instruction into the Extended Day program as well as teacher tutorials opportunities.

- Tier 2 occurs in small group homogenous settings of 3-5 students. This supplemental instruction intervention is provided in addition to, and not in place of Tier 1. Students will receive core instruction plus 20 minutes of supplemental interventions 3-5 day per cycle.

Implementing

Frequency of Progress Monitoring

- Teachers will use bi-monthly common formative assessment results (achievement series, etc.) and analysis of student work to guide and adjust instruction.

- Universal Screening (checkpoint, Unit Assessment) four times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring, Pre-Summer)

- Progress monitoring of students initially identified as at-risk by classroom teacher.

- Based on data review, the data team will follow school-created procedures for decision making to determine the need for additional support. Support will be

determined with the use of the available data and consideration of where the results reflect learning concern based on a curriculum issue, an instructional issue or a student issue.

Frequency of Intervention Provided

- Movement between Tier 1 and Tier 2 is fluid and flexible. Adequate time will be given for the Tier 1 instructional program to be implemented before determining that Tier 2 support is needed.

- Progress monitoring should be used for identified students involved in Tier 2 to measure the effectiveness of the intervention. Attention to transfer of learning to the Tier 1 core classroom should be considered.

- Weekly collaboration between the Tier 2 intervention teacher and Tier 1 classroom teacher(s) is focused on progress monitoring data.

- Weekly collaborative discussion and planning will support transfer of learning.

- Weekly collaborative discussion and planning will support appropriate and rigorous instruction in the intervention class.

- Weekly collaborative discussion and planning will create the language of a common instructional focus.

- Specific academic interventions will be established for students who are missing core academic skills (e.g. strong reading skills) that will increase the probability that these high-risk students will have the necessary skills to be successful.

Expanding

- Duration of Intervention
- 2-6 Weeks

- General Education interventions and progress monitoring by classroom teacher should last five to six weeks.

In Tier 3, ensure that Student Support Team (SST) and Data Team monitor progress jointly
SST-DRIVEN LEARNING

Tier 3 is a unique individual, diagnostic, data driven instructional problem solving process where the question about a student expands to include the "why" as well as the "what". Specialists (school psychologists, intervention specialists, behavior specialists, counselors, social workers, speech-language pathologists, etc.) participate in the problem solving process if they have not already been involved at Tiers 1 and 2.

Problem solving at this stage is more in-depth and intensive and requires gathering and analyzing additional information about the student, performance strengths and weaknesses, background information, etc. Appraisal by the SST team, including vision and hearing testing is done when deemed necessary.

Whereas Tier 2's supplemental activities will have been programs designed to strengthen targeted skills for a range of students, the Tier 3/SST process employs scientific analysis to discover the reason(s) for an individual student's difficulties. This knowledge will guide the design of individualized interventions that attempt to best fit the student.

Many students will be satisfactorily helped by the careful analysis and interventions of the Tier 3/SST process. Their cases will revert to Tier 2 or Tier 1 with the benefit of key discoveries that enabled the student to experience success. These may be in academics or in behavior, and often in both.

In some cases, some students may present problems for which even the most effective known interventions appear to be inadequate. It is a combination of supporting data and use of professional judgment as to when or if their cases are referred for a comprehensive evaluation to investigate for a suspected disability. Upon evaluation of individual student's profile a decision to pursue Section 504 eligibility and its individual accommodation plan will be employed where necessary.

In addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2, targeted students in Tier 3 participate in learning that is different by including:

- Intensive, formalized problem solving to identify individual student needs.

- Targeted research based interventions tailored to individual needs.

- Frequent progress monitoring and analysis of student response to intervention(s).

Implement Tier 4 specially designed learning through specialized programs, methodologies or instructional based upon students' inability to access the CCGPS any other way

Tier 4 is developed for students who need additional supports and meet eligibility criteria for special program placement including English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), gifted education and special education. With three effective tiers in place prior to specialized services, more struggling students will be successful and will not require this degree of intervention. Tier 4 does not represent a location for services, but indicates a layer of interventions that may be provided in the general education class or in a separate setting.

For students with disabilities needing special education and related services, Tier 4 provides instruction that is targeted and specialized to meet students' needs. If a student has already been determined to have a disability, then the school system does not require additional documentation of prior interventions when and if the student demonstrates additional delays. The

special education instruction and documentation of progress in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) will constitute prior interventions and appropriate instruction. However, in some cases, the student may require a comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility for additional disability areas.

Students in Tier 4 interventions will be involved in deep, systematic, and formalized progress monitoring, data collection, and targeted instruction. Tier 4 interventions are individualized based on student assessment data. Documentation of progress is comprehensive and robust.

In addition to Tiers 1 through 3, targeted students participate in:

- Specialized programs, methodologies, or instructional deliveries
- Greater frequency of progress monitoring of student response to intervention
- Only those students who need specially designed instruction by specially trained teachers are placed in specialized programs
- Data collection and progress monitoring are clearly defined
- Goals for students are clearly defined and measurable
- Services and methodology are distinctly different from those routinely provided in the general education environment
- Consideration is given to ensure placement in the least restrictive environment

Building Block 6. Improved Instruction through Professional Learning

Ensure that preservice education prepares new teachers for all the challenges of the classroom

New teachers and veteran teachers receive the following professional development prior to the start of the school year: Differentiated Instruction/anchor lessons, Rigor and Relevance,

CCGPS unit development, lesson planning, Achievement Series, Best Practice Strategies, Writing Across a Curriculum, Interactive Notebook, standards based instruction/5-step protocol, and analysis of student work.

We will plan with a goal to prepare new teachers within the classrooms. The professional learning plan for this school year includes the following activities: Meeting with representatives from Professional Standards Commissions to enlist support to ensure pre-services for teachers to receive coursework, in disciplinary literacy within the content. Also, we will revise the teacher preparation and learning standards to include coursework in disciplinary literacy, for pre-service teachers in all subject areas. Great teachers help create great students. It is critical to pay close attention to how we train and prepare new teachers and the veterans as well across the curriculum.

Conducting and implementing professional learning entails support from the institutions of higher education. Many teachers require professional development in reading theory and disciplinary literacy. We partner with local colleges and universities to provide this training. In addition to those pre-services, we provide an evaluation instruments for pre-services teachers to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses.

We have used several delivery and evaluation modules to assist new teachers and experienced teachers with professional development. The Literacy team members have developed protocols for implementing and the evaluation of new coursework and ensuring that mentoring teachers are fully trained in providing instruction in disciplinary literacy. These professional development programs will create opportunities for novice teachers to learn from best practices, analyze and reflect on their teaching.

Sustaining the professional learning is critical for new teachers and veteran teachers to have ongoing and regular opportunities to learn from each other. We provide professional development that keeps teachers up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more. The best professional development is ongoing, experiential, collaborative, connected to and derived from working with students and understanding their culture. We continue to monitor and support the integration of disciplinary literacy and provide consistent expectations from the system level administrators to our building with professional learning on the need to integrate disciplinary literacy instructions into the content areas in order to help us to make informed hiring decisions.

Provide professional learning for in-service personnel

Professional Learning Communities at Paul D. West are mandatory for all teachers. Generally, PDW teachers work within formal settings and structures. They engage in a wide range of activities, in lesson/unit planning, brainstorming ideas, assessment creation, peer observation discussions, best practice sharing, student work analysis and defining a clear, coherent learning pathway for students etc. Typically content area teams/groups meet weekly with an instructional Coach or designated leader over a significant period of time. Participants share the following beliefs and behaviors:

- Caring deeply about learning.
- Feeling free to take risks.
- Challenging each other and raising the expectations of everyone.
- Respecting and valuing perspectives other than their own by seeking and valuing every member's input.

- Intentional in seeking to do the work better.

- Aggressive in continually building capacity of each member to work smarter.

In addition to sharing common beliefs and behaviors, our successful professional learning communities share a common focus. Grade level and content area teachers at Paul West collectively determine focus. The work of PDW's professional learning community is also data driven and informed, standards-driven, and focused on instruction, equity, and results. The work of our PLCs expands the knowledge and skill of participants while encouraging innovation and excellence.

In addition, to making a connection with professional learning and to foster students' conceptual understanding, teachers must have rich and flexible knowledge of the subjects they teach. They must understand the central facts and concepts of the discipline, how these ideas are connected, and the processes used to establish new knowledge and determine the validity of claims while transferring the information in the mind of an eleven year old and old. Therefore, we have schedule and protect allocated time during the school day for teachers to collaboratively analyze data, share expertise, study the standards, plan lessons, examine student work, and reflect on various practices used. Teachers also use data (surveys, and interest inventories; teacher observations) as well as student data to target professional learning needs, and hiring an instructional coach to provide site-based support to staff. Here at Paul D. West Middle School, we encourage every teacher to develop a professional growth plan based on a self-assessment of professional learning needs. This will bridge the leadership and staff relationship to provide program assistance specifically on training in intervention programs before the beginning of the year to prepare teachers and staff for implementation of expectations / goals.

Our professional development programs include an explicit focus on subject matter and literacy across the curriculum can help our novice teachers develop these powerful understandings of the targeted CCGPS based on student and teacher needs within the classrooms. To guide student thinking, teachers must also understand how children's ideas about a subject develop, and the connections between their ideas and important ideas in the different levels of the child mind works at processing new information. We also use a checklist when conducting classroom observations or walkthroughs to ensure clear expectations and to provide specific feedback to teachers on student learning. Furthermore, the most common professional development that we develop is a list of sites for an online professional library that includes research-based books, journals, magazines, and videos where teachers can readily access for professional growth at their leisure.

A key reason for deepening teachers' knowledge of subject matter and student thinking is to improve classroom teaching. As a result, the professional learning will revisit and revise professional learning yearly based on student mastery of CCGPS and classroom observations, partner experienced teachers with pre-service and beginning teachers, continue program specific professional learning each year for new and experienced teachers, and encourage all teachers to share information learned at professional sessions. This provides evidence that strong professional development communities are important contributors to instructional improvement and school and staff.

Teachers today are under growing pressure to perform. But most new teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the needs of their students, and many experienced teachers have yet to adapt to new standards. For that reason, we will ensure that new personnel receive vital professional learning from earlier years, videotape important professional learning sessions for

staff to review and share with colleagues within and out of school, and continue to encourage "professional talk" among staff and provide time for discussion. The basic outcome on the importance of professional development for teachers is designed to give teacher professional development as a vital tool for improving professional growth with student learning in a stress free and learning environment.

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Needs Assessment, Areas of Concern and Root Cause Analysis

In order to identify specific literacy needs and potential strategies to address those needs, the principal asked the school's administrators and all teachers to participate in the GADOE K-12 Needs Assessment. This process solicited ideas from teachers with a strong focus on professional development and technology. Input from the faculty was used to develop our Title I and School Improvement Plan (SIP). Our goal is to align our Literacy Plan with our Title I and SIP so as to streamline our goals and activities. The Title I and SIP needs analysis was conducted by our Title I team. The team reviewed data to reveal areas where improvement occurred and to validate the areas for growth or development. After a presentation of the data, the team suggested strategies for improvement. Parents were encouraged to provide input based on successful interventions that their children participated in at other schools. Certified staff members in each content area or connections area identified strategies deemed impactful for student improvement.

Our school consistently uses data to identify student needs. Annually we review the school improvement plan, teacher feedback and concerns and student comprehension needs assessment. This assessment indicates that Literacy needs are identified throughout our school as a cause for the decrease in overall content area scores.

Needs Assessment

The following are strengths that have been highlighted:

- Paul D. West Writing score for the 8th grade increased by 5 points in the previous year.

- 2 ESOL students met the standards with our writing initiative

- Reading and ELA scores have maintained their percentile however, in comparison to other schools with a similar demographic makeup, Paul West scores are lower.

The following list is inclusive of additional needs and weakness that have been assessed:

- Student performance on the 8th grade-writing test has improved however; Paul West overall writing scores have remained lower than most of the school's that are demographically similar.

- Higher expectations for teacher instructional delivery in Common Core and student performance

- Teacher expectations to take ownership and accountability for meeting the needs for all student population

- Team taught classes need on-going training to ensure that SWD, ESOL, and struggling students needs are met

- Increasing Meets and Exceeds categories in all content areas

- Teacher accountability for Creating performance based task across content areas for the "BIG PICTURE" for students make connections with what is taught

- Bridging the gap and providing struggling readers with additional support when they have missed the bar in elementary school.

Areas of Concerns

We used the following instruments, procedures, and processes to obtain student data: CRCT results, student growth and school performance data, common and summative assessments, as well as benchmark data. Survey data from students, parents and staff was also included. Data was disaggregated by subgroup, grade level, and content areas for analysis. The student's past and present year teachers collaborated to analyze student data and make informed decisions. Completing the needs assessment allowed us to identify students at-risk of not meeting state standards by reviewing their past CRCT data, summer school rosters, retained student lists, Student Support Team lists, and attendance data.

Sub-group	Area of Concern	Standards	Assessment	Current Strategies	Future Strategies	Transitions (Existing)	Root Causes
	Comprehension- The student uses a variety of strategies to gain meaning from grade level text.	- Weekly and Common assessments, Benchmarks, ITBS, CRCT Writing Assessment	-Guided reading instruction, Accelerated Reader program, Study Island web-based standards mastery program Mock Writing Test	Woodruff's Arts Program: Reader's/Writer's Theater Digital storytelling Published author visits School-wide novel study Classroom libraries eBooks Content area database subscriptions	Vertical planning End of the year transition meeting Beginning of the year Curriculum Night 5th grade visit to middle school	• imited internet access in homes • o public library • o bookstores • ack of books at home • igh parental dropout rate • ow post-secondary attendance • ack of background experiences • ack of transportation to multicultural events • ow household income • igh unemployment • o formal language used in the home • ransiency
	Fluency Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.					
	Comprehension Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.					
SWD	**Writing** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.					
ELL						
ED						

					- imited staff development - nsufficient teacher knowledge literacy content integration - nsufficient access to literacy based technology

In October 2012, a School Quality Review (SQR) team visited Paul D. West MS to observe, review, assess, and recommend improvements. The table below summarizes the findings.

Topics	SQR Recommendations	Focus Team
Assessment for Rigor High Quality Instruction Systematic Monitoring of	• Provide greater rigor in all classes by ensuring teachers use data effectively to plan work that meets the differing needs of their students and sets challenging targets and learning goals for all students. • Increase the effectiveness of professional collaboration by having a focus on improving learning and teaching, Ensure teachers have a clear expectations, routines, planning and understanding of what constitutes high quality instruction through generating and posting clear, measurable learning objectives for each lesson, making use of higher order questioning techniques to evaluate students' understanding and using an effective end of class evaluation that checks on gains in students' knowledge and understanding and informs next steps in teachers' planning. • Communicate non-negotiable for instruction and teaching, establish expectations of teachers to focus on best practices, provide timely, relevant and instructive informal	Dr. LaRoyce Sublett, Principal Kenneth Young, Curriculum Assistant principal Dwayne Roberts, Assistant Principal Curriculum & Instruction Carol Nesmith, Literacy Coach Phyllis Shealey, Math Coach Brandy Williams, Math Teacher Jacqueline Hayward, Reading Teacher Joseph Carroll, Science Teacher Bobbi Livingston, Graduation Coach Lynn Jones, Counselor

| Instructional Strategies | feedback on daily instruction and lesson planning, provide ongoing effective systematic coaching and support for all teachers, ensure instructional strategies outlined above are systematically and rigorously monitored to evaluate their impact on students' learning and academic growth and refocus efforts as needed, Observe Differentiated activities in the classroom. Checking for understanding daily. | |
| Focused Improvement Efforts | • Expectations on teachers and staff members to implement professional development initiatives with fidelity and monitor for execution streamline and prioritize current school improvement goals to ensure initiatives have a greater impact on student achievement. | |

Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

Our middle school population tends to experience a tremendous gap in reading from elementary to middle immediately after transition. Most are discouraged about not being able to read well. Several students enter our building lacking basis skills and are reluctant readers. Remedial and small group instruction that most students received at the elementary level are not offered in Middle School. Student interest inventory also noted a lack of interest in reading informational text or general reading for pleasure. Our school consistently reviews data to identify student needs. A comprehension needs assessment is reported in our School Improvement plan to assess student needs. Based on the low achievement scores in Social Studies, and Science, literacy and the ability to read informational text is a need and root cause of low scores.

Finally, based on our student population and the diversity of the group who struggle to meet grade level standards in reading for many different reasons. In addition to providing active and skillful literacy instruction by content-area teachers in their own disciplines, our middle schools must also meet the capacity to provide more intensive and targeted reading instruction to students reading below grade level. Data and analysis based on staff feedback of a literacy plan,

Teacher Retention Data

School Year	Percentage of Certified Teachers Retained
2011-12	91%
2010-11	91%
2009-10	91%

Source: Fulton County Schools Administrative Records

We have a relatively stable staff with most attrition due to retirements. We attribute this to a strong teacher community in which teachers appreciate the needs of our students and accept the challenges of the population.

Teacher Professional Learning Needs

Teacher participation in professional learning communities and other professional development is included in the Literacy Plan. Teachers need professional learning experiences that address the following areas: phonemic awareness, morphological awareness, and comprehension strategies. Teachers need to be engaged in activities and training that will give them experience in developing higher order thinking skills that engage learners in authentic tasks, some of which are community based. Technology should be woven through all of those processes to extend the learning.

Our teachers should also be engaged in developing the ability to challenge pervasive cultural norms that render students and community as victims of circumstance rather than empowered contributors. Professional learning as a process of aligning students' individual visions to the school's vision will energize both individuals and groups on the desired outcomes of their best hopes. The use of digital storytelling, which combines the power of words, audio, and video, along with a process that guides students to create a positive future fuels the ability to change what is real and possible for our students.

Many of our student needs can be corrected by providing intensive professional development to Paul West's teachers. Professional development empowers teachers by giving the teachers a new skill/technique. The teachers can then apply that skill in the classroom and evaluate their own implementation of that skill. To address the difficulty teachers have

implementing strategies with fidelity, we will utilize a professional development laboratory session where teachers work with small groups of students while learning how to implement strategies and best practices. The facilitator will model the strategies first, teachers will try out the strategy in a classroom with small groups of students while the facilitator observes the teachers in one classroom, and then they will debrief with the facilitator about how well they were able to implement the strategy or the need for additional support. This will require substitutes and will occur within 3 class periods.

Through our needs assessment process, teachers identified specific professional learning needs including: implementing reading strategies across content areas; supporting parents to assist their children to become better readers; using Microsoft Excel and data analysis; technology to enhance learning; writing across content areas; and collaborative professional development between 8th grade Reading teachers and 9th grade Literature teachers to identify standards necessary for high school success.

Curriculum Needs

Our students struggle with various reading skills in science, math, social studies and the application of basic reading skills. Several of our students function at least two to four grade levels below the average in comparison to others who are on-level with varying instructional needs. A recent formative assessment based on teacher input, several students as previously mentioned are reluctant readers and lack basic skills needed to master on-level standards. Teachers need additional technology training, resources and supplies to meet each learner on their level.

Student Data

% Free and Reduced Lunch	% SWD	% ELL	Mobility Rate
85%	13%	4%	41%

READING	2011-2012				2010-2011			
	Does Not Meet %	Meets %	Exceeds %	Total Tested	Does Not Meet %	Meets %	Exceeds %	Total Tested
6th Grade								
--SWD	66%	34%	0%	29	18%	82%	0%	22
--ELL	62%	38%	0%	13	19%	81%	0%	16
7th Grade								
--SWD	62%	38%	0%	21	59%	41%	0%	29
--ELL	80%	20%	0%	10	28%	68%	4%	47
8th Grade								
--SWD	69%	28%	0%	32	9%	86%	5%	22
--ELL					18%	82%	0%	11

Paul D. West-Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

ELA		2011-2012			2010-2011	
	Does Not Meet	Meets	Exceeds	Does Not Meet	Meets	Exceeds
	%	%	%	%	%	%
6th Grade						
--SWD	53%	47%	0%	20%	80%	0%
--ELL	23%	77%	0%	38%	63%	0%
7th Grade						
--SWD	38%	62%	0%	54%	46%	0%
--ELL	30%	70%	0%	23%	68%	9%
8th Grade						
--SWD	28%	56%	0%	4%	65%	30%
--ELL	71%	29%	0%	18%	73%	9%

<u>Student Literacy Needs PDW</u>

Through the needs assessment process, we identified both strengths and areas of weakness in our approach to literacy. Major strengths discovered include:

- Moving students from "meeting" to "exceeding" on the CRCT

- Increasing the proportion of "exceeding" students between 2010-11and 2011-12 in 6th Grade (ELA and Reading), 7th Grade (Reading and ELA), and 8th Grade (Reading and ELA)

- Increasing the percentage of talented and gifted students who exceeded expectations by 5 points in ELA and Reading

- All students in the Black subgroup meeting the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) by at least 6 points in 2011-12.

However, there were also major weaknesses discovered. Reading and ELA has proven to be a consistent area of weakness for our SWD, Black, ESOL, and Economically Disadvantaged students. Many of our students, especially SWD and ESOL, are not meeting standards on the Science, Math and Social Studies portions of the CRCT, as well as local formative and summative assessments. We see deficits in phonemic awareness, decoding, comprehension, background knowledge, and vocabulary that could be addressed through literacy.

<u>Black Students</u>

52% of 6th graders and 49% of 8th graders in this subgroup did not meet standards for the Science portion of the CRCT.

<u>Students with Disabilities</u>

Only 53% of 6th graders and 65% of 7th graders in the SWD category met or exceeded standards for the Reading/ELA (combined) CRCT, compared to the state AMO of 86% of 6th graders and 96% of 8th graders in this subgroup did not meet standards on the Science portion of the CRCT.

<u>English Language Learners</u>

6th – 8th grade ELL students experienced a dramatic decrease in math performance; however, their combined Reading/ELA CRCT scores increased.

<u>Economically Disadvantaged students:</u>

Collectively, students (6th -8th grade) in this subgroup scores decreased in combined Reading/ELA than in the previous year. For Science CRCT, 6th grade students in this subgroup experienced a 10% decrease in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards.

Project Plan, Procedures, Goals and Objectives

Paul D. West has implemented the following evidence-based initiatives to help improve student achievement:

- Writing Across the curriculum to support literacy with a specific focus on writing. Students write rough drafts of papers and learn revision and proofreading strategies; teachers provide writing models. In addition a school wide mock writing test is administered twice annually to assess writing skills. This data is used to create and establish mini sessions for student writing performance. This program has been particularly helpful in supporting our students in the four domains of writing to improve the overall writing structure in the school as a whole.

- Job embedded training on differentiated instruction, best practices, on-going observations and student feedback: A consultant works with our teachers across content areas twice monthly on two specific needs: differentiated instruction and providing constructive and meaningful feedback to students.

- Learning Lab in the AM to develop Literacy and Math skills across the content area. This is a 30 minute homeroom block to serve students with an extra dose of Math and Reading instruction.

- GATE (Gifts, Abilities, Talents, and Exceptionalities) program is a one-on-one mentoring program in that provides student with character building, goal setting for academics, individual mentoring conferences and personal relationship building.

The structure to implement tiered instruction has been somewhat limited over the past several years due to budgetary constraints. For example, our remedial Reading course was eliminated because of a reduction in allocated remedial positions. Consequently, teachers make efforts to seize

extra instructional time for targeted tutorials after school and through lunch and learn. There needs to be a strengthening of the implementation of developed strategies from the SST process, especially during the informal collaboration phase. Currently, a web-based program that targets individual weaknesses would have a better chance of impacting student performance. Teachers are in more control of structuring classroom time for students to engage in such activities. Transitioning to a schedule that most easily accommodates a structure that fully supports tiered activities is feasible through the reinstatement of the Connections Remedial Reading position. A Striving Readers grant would enable our school to build on existing initiatives, expand services to students, and provide additional professional development to assist our teachers. In addition, a Striving Readers grant will enable faculty and staff at Paul West MS to provide literacy support to the full range of children from 6-8 and apply the learning through 12th grade.

Our project objectives build on existing initiatives and include new strategies to help us achieve our literacy goals. With grant funding, we will implement the following strategies to better address our areas of concern:

- Improve literacy across content areas by providing professional development in literacy strategies. Example: Math, SS, Science and World Language Literacy include incorporating the following strategies and common used tools to promote Literacy: connecting, predicting, questioning, thinking, inferring, visualization, summarizing, and determining importance. In addition to the above listed strategy we have also incorporated, Building academic vocabulary, anticipation guides, talking drawings, word journals, vocabulary rating scales, frayer model, and concept circles.
- Engage students in 4 hours of literacy instruction daily in all content areas.
- Provide additional professional development in team teaching understanding assessment data inclusion model of instruction, SOLO for Students with disabilities will be critical for

the implementation of Literacy for consideration of the outcomes of Emergent Literacy based on the needs assessment.

- Will provide resources for parallel learning for adolescent Literacy development

- Will Recognize and provide extended learning, and best practices for the diversity among individuals of all learner needs and exceptionalities.

Activity	Time-line	Person(s) Coordinating Activity	Person(s) Involved in Activity	Milestones	Benchmarks
Professional learning with integrated approach to higher-order thinking skills, student engagement and motivation, real-world tasks and problem solving, and use of technology	Spring 2013 – Spring 2014	Literacy Team Lead Facilitators	Teachers	Professional Learning completed	Professional learning implemented with developed lessons or units as evidence
Professional learning on phonemic awareness, decoding, and reading comprehension	Summer 2013– Fall 2013	Literacy Team Lead Facilitators	Reading, ELA teachers	Professional Learning completed	Professional learning implemented with developed lessons or units as evidence
Professional learning for the entire staff to build capacity to work interdependently within high-performing collaborative teams	Early Fall 2013 with on-going follow-up	Literacy Team Lead Facilitators	All staff including administrative team and support staff	Professional Learning completed	Professional learning implemented; Collaborative team rubric evaluation results
Professional learning on teaching reading comprehension and vocabulary	Fall 2013 – on-going	Literacy Team Lead Facilitators	Teachers	Professional Learning completed	Professional learning implemented; teacher lesson plans; student

acquisition skills					work samples and assessment results
Professional learning on use of existing data to identify student performance gaps and methods of monitoring current performance of at-risk students in terms of literacy skills	Fall 2013 – Ongoing	Literacy Team Lead Facilitators	Teachers	Professional Learning completed	Professional learning implemented; sign-in sheets from training sessions
Plan a calendar for common academic and interdisciplinary team planning meetings	Fall 2013– Ongoing	Literacy Team Lead Facilitators; Curriculum Assistant Principal	Grade Level Content teams	Calendar created	Adherence to calendar by teacher teams; meeting minutes from team meetings
Plan a calendar for activities to be completed during collaborative planning time and instructional faculty meetings	Fall 2013 – Ongoing	Literacy Team Lead Facilitators; Curriculum Assistant Principal	Grade Level Content teams	Minutes from planning sessions	Time Sheets; Artifacts from afterschool planning sessions (unit lesson plans, assessments, performance tasks)
Analyze student data	Fall 2013 – Ongoing	Teachers	Teachers	Content team meeting agendas	Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) completed by each teacher
Use assessment data to make instructional decisions	Spring 2013– Ongoing	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers making adjustments to lesson plans based on assessment data	Adjustments to lesson plans; reassessment data
Purchase of technology	Summer 2013– Ongoing	Principal	Input from Literacy Team and Teachers; Media Center staff	Technology order placed; technology acquired	Implementation of technology in classrooms as documented via observations and lesson

Paul D. West Project Plan

					plans; use of technology by students in the home as documented by checkout records
Use web-based program to supplement the identification of struggling readers and to identify and provide appropriate interventions	Fall 2013 – Ongoing	Literacy Team	Reading and ELA Teachers	Purchase and implementation of web-based program	Analysis of data provided by reports generated by program at least monthly
Schedule students in targeted tutoring classes to support their progress	Early Fall 2013	Administration; Content team teachers	Content team teachers	Identification of student weaknesses; established schedule for students to attend tutoring sessions	Record of student attendance in targeted skills sessions; student assessment results
Professional learning in RTI	Pre-planning (Fall 2013) – on-going	Graduation Coach and SST Chairperson	Teachers	Professional learning completed	Professional learning completed
Use RTI to plan interventions with struggling readers	Spring 2013	Administration, SST Chairperson	Interdisciplinary teams	Plans made	Plans fully implemented and ready for students next year
Engage family through engaging family literacy workshops	2013 – ongoing	Literacy Team	Parents, students and teachers	Program from workshops	Program evaluations
Seek additional ways to increase parent involvement	2013 – ongoing	Leadership Team	Leadership Team Parent Liasion	Logs of meetings/contacts with parents	Increase in number of parent contacts and attendance for events
Annual assessment of professional learning needs	2013 – ongoing	Principal; Literacy Team	Input from teachers	Teacher Survey and Self-reflection	Survey results
Classroom Observations	2013 – ongoing	Administration; Teachers	Administration; Teachers	Notes from observations	Conferences with teachers

Yearly evaluation of grant process	2013 – ongoing	Administration; Literacy Team	Administration; Literacy Team	Reports Completed	Reports Filed

Assessment/Data Analysis Plan

Current Assessment Protocol

Formative and summative assessments are used to monitor student progress throughout the school year. Resources and materials are assessed. Teachers are involved in the decision-making regarding the use of academic assessments to improve instruction. Teachers meet weekly during collaborative planning with the Reading Instructional Coach to create common assessments. Teachers use assessment data results to re-teach, remediate and plan for instruction. Standards are realigned and re-evaluated.

Assessment	Purpose	Skills	Frequency
Checkpoints	Monitoring and screening diagnostic assessment for all students	Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	(pre & post-test) twice each semester
Collaborative dialogue/ Test Talks	Progress monitoring	Reading Comprehension	4 – 8 per year
Common Formative Assessments	Progress monitoring	Concepts of print and Reading Comprehension	Weekly, bi-weekly, or as needed
Common Summative Assessments – End-Of-Unit Test	Outcome	Vocabulary, Informational text Concepts of Print Comprehension	4 per year (pre & post-test)
End of Unit Assessments	Diagnostic assessment for content areas	Concepts of Print Reading	8 per year (pre & post-test each semester)

Assessment	Purpose	Skills	Frequency
		Comprehension	
Informal Assessments	Diagnostic	Vocabulary and Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	Daily
Online Assessment Results – SAMS & Achievement Series	Diagnostic	Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	4 – 8 per year (pre & post-test)
ITBS	Progress monitoring	Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary	Annually
Renzulli	Interest and progress monitoring and individualized technology	Informational Text and comprehension	As needed
Periodic Fluency DRA II kits Assessments	Progress Monitoring Screening	Reading fluency and Lexile target scores	On-going twice yearly
Student Writing	Screening	Vocabulary	Twice during the semester
Study Island (Social Studies)	Progress monitoring	Concepts of Print Reading Comprehension	As needed

Assessment	Purpose	Skills	Frequency
OAS On-line test	Progress monitoring	Concepts of print	As needed

How Assessment Data is Shared with Parents

Parental engagement is critical to our students' success. Student performance data for the school is discussed with parents during Open House, Curriculum Nights and at the State of the School Address. Specific student data is shared during parent conferences or is provided in student packets. Parents of 6th and 7th grade students receive detailed data in the standards-based report cards. Our parent liaison serves as the point of contact for parents. The liaison is responsible for assessing parent needs and concerns. The liaison works cooperatively with teachers and administrators to devise strategies to meet the identified needs of the parents. We communicate with parents through multiple communication channels, such as email, U.S. mail, calling posts, newsletters, PTSA meetings, and report card night. The liaison also assists parents in obtaining and using Home Access Center which gives parents online access to their students' grades, attendance and demographic information. Each year, incoming 6th graders and parents are invited to participate in a transitional workshop, where students and their parents are exposed to expectations and processes of middle school. Parents are encouraged to participate in conferences and curriculum nights. This allows interaction with their child. For example, on 'Writing Night,' parents receive the state rubric for the Middle Grades Writing Assessment. They have the opportunity to see exemplars, brainstorm, write transitional sentences and review the writing process. Students and parents participate in the writing process facilitated by teachers in the Reading and language content area.

SRI Implementation Plan

  Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) guides teachers to differentiate and offer intervention strategies for struggling students. Students receive a Lexile score based on the comprehension of a text which has an equivalent reading level. Once a student masters one level, the program gives another reading passage at a higher level. Media centers categorize books by their Lexile levels; therefore, SRI helps match the reader to the appropriate text for 75% reading accuracy rate. An accuracy rate ensures that appropriate challenge is built in, but the level of frustration for the student will be low. Our school commits to using the SRI assessment as part of the Striving Reader project. Currently, the school uses the data from the CRCT, ITBS, and classroom assessments to identify students' reading deficiencies. SRI data will help teachers differentiate instruction and target the appropriate interventions. Training for SRI would be conducted during preplanning. Follow up training opportunities will be provided throughout the year, through content collaborative meetings and teacher work days. The Train-the-Trainer model will be used to build capacity for school personnel. This will allow training to be on-going, once funding is no longer available. SRI will be administered by ELA/Reading teachers, with ELA/Reading department chairs serving as facilitators. This assessment will be conducted three times a year.

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

Classroom Resources

We leverage the following classroom-based resources to support our literacy plan: white boards, interactive boards, laptop computers, LCD projectors, etc. Shared resources include: 3 COWS (Computers on Wheels), a computer lab, time for collaborative planning built into the daily schedule, and class sets of textbooks.

Library Resources

Our library resources that we will use to support our literacy plan include: class sets of novels to support CCGPS, GALE Cengage Learning-Virtual Reference Library, Galileo-Georgia Library On-line, AJC On-line (E- Newspaper), NetTrekker-digital resources, Discovery Education, United Streaming, Scholastic Classroom Magazines, professional library to support each content area, Maps 101, and a visual thesaurus.

Existing Resources for Tier I-Tier IV Instruction

Paul D. West MS provides remediation for those students who demonstrate the need for additional support from the CRCT data. The resources for tiered instruction are the following:

- Extended Day for ELA/Reading.

- SOLO – intervention for students with disabilities provided during Connections period.

- Language! – Intervention for students with disabilities designed to address the needs of students reading 3 to 5 years below grade level.

- Supplemental Education Services – free tutoring services for students provided through state funding.

- Tutoring providing by teachers.

- Renzulli Learning to help differentiate instruction, academic prompts or RAFTS (Role of the Writer, Audience, Format, and Topic) and performance tasks.

Resource Needs

To fully implement our literacy plan, we need additional resources in the following areas: technology and software, print materials, and professional development. To create a 21st Century learning experience for our students we need new laptop computers with digital storytelling and visioning software, USB headsets, digital cameras, digital storage space and batteries for cameras, MP3 players, e-readers, tablets, digital books, and decoding pens. These resources will support teachers in engaging learners and differentiating instruction, and necessitate professional development, to ensure that teachers have the skills to utilize these tools effectively. We need non-fiction informational text and print text available at the classroom level plus subscriptions to a developmentally appropriate literary magazine, to ensure literacy-rich environments for students. To enable teachers to participate in professional development, we need stipends and access to exceptional substitute teachers.

Activities that Support Classroom Practices

Our professional learning communities (PLC) currently meet twice each week and bi-monthly for content planning and professional development. During our PLC meetings, the grade levels collaborate, plan lessons and share best practices. We disaggregate data from assessments to best address differentiation strategies for future lessons of various learners. Our teachers participate in vertical team and interdisciplinary meetings so that each grade level and department can share ideas and help plan for the future grade levels and all content areas. We take time to examine student work and collaborate to achieve the literacy goals shared by all

teachers. There is instructional time for literacy prioritized by scheduling disciplinary literacy in all content areas.

Professional Learning Strategies Identified on the Basis of Documented Need

Through our needs assessment process, teachers identified specific professional learning needs including: implementing reading strategies across content areas; supporting parents to assist their children to become better readers; using Microsoft Excel and data analysis; technology to enhance learning; writing across content areas; and collaborative professional development vertically between 5th grade Reading teachers, 8th grade Reading teachers and 9th grade Literature teachers to identify standards necessary for the transition from elementary, middle, and high school success. Veteran and newly hired teachers will be required to participate in the Reading Endorsement Program – to increase reading across the content areas. This course will provide participants with the strategies to help teachers diagnose, understand and formulate sound instructional strategies to\meet the literacy needs of all students

Professional development for all teachers on the following: test-taking strategies, differentiated instruction, working in cooperative learning groups, standards-based classrooms and professional learning communities. These strategies will be incorporated into each classroom though out the school. This will also improve our overall instructional strategies and meet the needs of students in the area of literacy in all subjects. Teachers will be empowered to assist students in their specific needs in the subject area and students will benefit from receiving strategies in all subjects to help improve their academic performance.

Funding opportunities for teachers to attend additional workshops in their core areas will also provide additional support for students. Technology and the use of technological instructional tools and strategies will ensure that additional resources that will enhance and continue to build the foundations of literacy in all children.

Professional Learning Strategies Identified on the Basis of Documented Needs (5 points)

Instructional staff members at Paul West participate in on-site professional learning to improve their abilities to differentiate instruction and collect student feedback. A detailed list of teacher participation in professional learning communities is included below.

<u>Professional Learning Conducted within Past Year</u>

Professional Learning Topic	PL Hours	% of Staff Attending	Comments
Rubric Development	1	85	Core Content teachers
Achievement series/Data Utilization - Assessment For Learning – developing and utilizing common assessments to improve instruction	1	100	Core content Areas 6th – 8th
Differentiated Instruction	1	100	All Instructional Areas
Integrating Technology – Edmodo	0	100	All Instructional Areas
Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum	1	85	Core Content Areas
Renzulli Training	0	85	Core Content Areas
Common Core Rigor and Relevance and creating balanced assessments	1	100	School-wide
Differentiated Instruction	1	100	School-wide all classes

The professional development plan for this school year includes the following activities:

Differentiated Instruction, Student Feedback, Technology Integration, Data Utilization,

Reading/Writing Across the Curriculum, Common Core training Rigor and relevance, creating

balanced assessments, Rubric development, implementing Interactive notebooks based on teacher

needs.

Sustainability Plan

Fulton County Schools' Striving Reader grant can serve as a blueprint that can be scaled and replicated to build principal and teacher capacity to improve literacy achievement for all of our Fulton County Schools' students.

Expanding the Lessons Learned with other Schools and New Teachers

A goal of the Striving Reader Grant is to identify best practices at participating schools and share those strategies with schools throughout the district to ensure sustainability. Paul D. West will share lessons learned at the district's annual Best Practices Conference for teachers, instructional staff and school leaders. In addition, we will share our experiences with other middle schools within the district through technical assistance workshops, school site visits, and administrative staff meetings.

Extending the Assessment Protocol Beyond the Grant Period

Beyond the life of the grant, Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) can be used to provide essential data for all students. The SRI provides benchmark assessments for the identification of students' reading skills. The grant-sponsored professional development for SRI will ensure that Paul D. West teachers will be trained in the use of these assessments. We will identify master teachers who will train new staff on SRI administration after the grant period ends. We expect to pay for SRI after the grant period, by using Title I funds.

Extending the Professional Learning Practices beyond the Grant Period to New Staff

As new staff is acquired, professional development in literary strategies will be provided during new teacher orientation. Paul D. West's Literacy Team will provide opportunities for new teachers to become familiar with grant-funded strategies as well as state and district initiatives,

through the use of master teachers. A mentor teacher will work with new staff as they plan and implement instructional strategies that support the Paul D. West's literacy plan.

Sustaining Technology beyond the Grant Period

On November 8, 2011 Fulton County voters extended a one-penny sales tax to upgrade technology in classrooms and build new schools. The SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) education tax is expected to raise $912 million for Fulton County school improvements over its five-year lifetime. The SPLOST proposal calls for technology enhancements, particularly in the areas of wireless, mobile learning devices for student use, updated video and audio recording tools, improved and expanded distance learning for students, virtual space for digital student work, interactive classroom websites with curriculum resources and assignments, updated equipment for technology and career-oriented classes, teacher/student communication and collaboration tools, and online professional learning resources for staff. The district's technology plan will help sustain the Striving Reader investments made at Paul D. West in educational technology.

Budget Summary

Technology and Software

Paul D. West requests funding for technology supplies, including mobile laptop computers with digital storytelling and visioning software, Promethean boards, USB headsets, digital cameras, digital storage space and batteries for cameras, MP3 players, e-readers, tablets, digital books, audio books and core reading and reading intervention programs. These costs incorporate initial purchase and software licenses for the first year, maintenance and replacement costs, and software upgrades and licenses in subsequent years.

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

Professional Development

We request funding for professional learning for targeted teachers to be initially delivered by a consultant, with follow-up by Fulton Instructional Technology staff. The amount incorporates a consultant fee for targeted teachers. It also includes benefits calculated at 27.7% for full-time employees and at 10% for teacher stipends for targeted teachers to attend content-specific professional learning. Additionally, funding is requested for substitutes to effectively lead instruction while allowing targeted teachers to attend professional development.

We also request funding for a Reading Endorsement for a total of 15 Professional Learning Units (PLUs) for each of the targeted teachers. Funds would also be used for required texts and supplemental materials for each teacher.

Professional development costs also include benefits calculated at 27.7% for full-time employees and at 10% for teacher stipends for targeted teachers to attend content-specific

professional learning. Additionally, funding is requested for substitutes to effectively lead instruction while allowing targeted teachers to attend professional development.

We also request funding delivered by consultants for school training for materials ordered.

Print Materials

We request funding for print materials, including non-fiction informational text, novels and subscriptions to a developmentally appropriate literary magazine, to ensure literacy-rich environments for our students at home and at school. In addition, we request funding for print materials the Collision Plus program through the Woodruff Arts Center, as three or four children's books are provided to teachers per targeted classroom.

Pupil Travel/Field Trip

We request funding for the annual field trip through the Woodruff Arts Center to an Alliance Theatre production. Classrooms in grades six through eight will participate in the Collision Plus program and tour the High Museum of Art. These costs include ticket prices for students, a complimentary ticket for the teacher, and bus transportation per classroom. We request funding to support transportation for students to our enrichment and Tutorial sessions.

Additional Pay

We request funding to pay teachers to lead the extended learning intervention program for two, nine-week sessions. We also request funding to pay a teacher to serve as the school-based grant coordinator.