School Profile

Created Friday, April 11, 2014

Page 1

School Information

District Name:	Whitfield County Schools
School or Center Name:	Whitfield County Pre-K

Level of School

Early Learning (Birth to Five)

Principal

Name:	Merry Boggs
Position:	Pre-K Project Director
Phone:	706-244-3223
Email:	merry_boggs@whitfield.k12.ga.us

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

Name:	Karey Williams
Position:	Assistant Superintendent
Phone:	706-217-6711
Email:	kareywilliams@whitfield.k12.ga.us

Grades represented in the building

 example pre-k to 6

Pre-K- 5th

Number of Teachers in School

6,357-elem students

FTE Enrollment

190-elem teachers

Grant Assurances

Created Friday, April 11, 2014

Page 1

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

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

- Yes

Preliminary Application Requirements

Created Friday, April 11, 2014

Page 1

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

SRCL General Information Packet-Cohort 3

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

- Yes

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

SRCL Scoring Rubric-Cohort 3

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

- Yes

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

SRCL Required Assessments Chart

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

- Yes

Assessments

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

- I Agree

Unallowable Expenditures

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

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

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

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

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

Advertisements, Promotional or Marketing Items

Decorative Items

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

Land acquisition

Capital Improvements, Permanent Renovations

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

Dues to organizations, federations or societies for personal benefits

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

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

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

- I Agree

Georgia Department of Education
Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy

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

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

I. **Conflicts of Interest**

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

    a. **Organizational Conflicts of Interest**.

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

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

      i. The Applicant shall describe in detail why it believes, in light of the interest(s) identified in (a) above, that performance of the proposed Agreement can be accomplished in an impartial and objective manner.

      ii. In the absence of any relevant interest identified in (a) above, the Applicant shall submit in its grant application a statement certifying that to the best of its knowledge and belief no affiliation exists relevant to possible conflicts of interest. The Applicant must obtain the same information from potential subcontractors prior to award of a subcontract.

       iii. GaDOE will review the statement submitted and may require additional relevant information from the Applicant. All such information, and any other relevant information known to GaDOE, will be used to determine whether an award to the Applicant may create a conflict of interest. If any such conflict of interest is found to exist, GaDOE may:

         1. Disqualify the Applicant, or

         2. Determine that it is otherwise in the best interest of GaDOE to make an award to the Applicant and include appropriate provisions to mitigate or avoid such conflict in the grant awarded.

       iv. The refusal to provide the disclosure or representation, or any additional information required, may result in disqualification of the Applicant for an award. If nondisclosure or misrepresentation is discovered after award, the resulting grant Agreement may be terminated. If after award the Applicant discovers a conflict of interest with respect to the grant awarded as a result of this solicitation, which could not reasonably have been known prior to award, an immediate and full disclosure shall be made in writing to GaDOE. The disclosure shall include a full description of the conflict, a description of the action the Applicant has taken, or proposes to take, to avoid or mitigate such conflict. GaDOE may, however, terminate the Agreement for convenience if GaDOE deems that termination is in the best interest of the GaDOE.

b. Employee Relationships

       i. The Applicant must provide the following information with its application and must provide an information update within 30 days of the award of a contract, any subcontract, or any consultant agreement, or within 30 days of the retention of a Subject Individual or former GaDOE employee subject to this clause:

         1. The names of all Subject Individuals who:

           a. Participated in preparation of proposals for award; or

           b. Are planned to be used during performance; or

           c. Are used during performance; and

       ii. The names of all former GaDOE employees, retained by the Applicant who were employed by GaDOE during the two year period immediately prior to the date of:

         1. The award; or

         2. Their retention by the Applicant; and

         3. The date on which the initial expression of interest in a future financial arrangement was discussed with the Applicant by any former GaDOE employee whose name is required to be provided by the contractor pursuant to subparagraph (ii); and

         4. The location where any Subject Individual or former GaDOE employee whose name is required to be provided by the Applicant pursuant to subparagraphs (i) and (ii), are expected to be assigned.

       iii. "Subject Individual" means a current GaDOE employee or a current GaDOE employee's father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, spouse of an in-law, or a member of his/her household.

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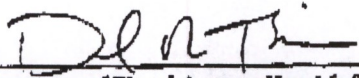
II. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest after Agreement Execution**

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)

_____Daniel Theis_____
Typed Name of Fiscal Agency Head and Position Title

_____4-11-2014_____
Date

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

_____Dr. Judy Gilreath_____
Typed Name of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head and Position Title

4-11-2014
_____
Date

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

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

_____
Date (if applicable)

Georgia Department of Education
John D. Barge, State Superintendent of Schools
August 31, 2012 • Page 4 of 4
All Rights Reserved

Fiscal Agent Memo of Understanding

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

Fiscal Agent/Applicant Required Signatures:

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

Please sign in blue ink.

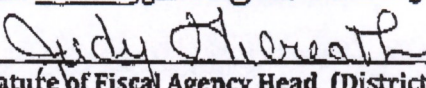Name of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: _____Dr. Judy Gilreath_____

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

Address: _____1306 South Thornton Ave_____

City: _____Dalton_____ Zip: __30722-2167_____

Telephone: (_706_)_260-5268_____ Fax: (_706_)_____217-6755_____

E-mail: _____jgilreath@whitfield.k12.ga.us_____

_Judy Gilreath_____

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

_____Dr. Judy Gilreath_____

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

4-11-2014

_____

Date (required)

Whitfield County Schools

District Narrative

Brief History

Whitfield County School System (WCS), established in 1872 to serve children no longer needed on family farms, serves four cities: Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill, and Varnell. Cohutta is a railroad town known for its land and agriculture, including a fish hatchery and a museum. Dalton is known as the Carpet Capital of the World and is rich in Civil War and railroad historical events. Tunnel Hill is famous for 100 year old homes with various architectural styles and a yearly Civil War re-enactment. Varnell is the City of Ethics, dedicated to serving others in an environment of equality, honesty, openness, and integrity. Local businesses include high-tech chemical, plastics, and automotive companies. Almost 8% of the population in Georgia is children under 5 years of age. Thirty-three percent of Whitfield County's population is Hispanic, which is three times that of the state. Locally, the Dalton-Whitfield Community's Archway Project has several literacy components such as "Spring into Reading," Saturday Academies, Reach Out and Read, Book Nooks, and Sharing is Caring which uphold the goals of building parent capacity, improving the home learning environment, and strengthening the pre-school aged child's readiness skills. These community initiatives were based upon the report that teachers are seeing an increase of kindergarten children without basic readiness skills, who also do not attend early learning environments.

WCS, the 26th largest of Georgia's 180 public school systems, envisions a responsive school district, focused on students, which is valued and respected by the community. Our mission is to increase student learning by providing students and staff with meaningful, challenging, and engaging educational experiences in a safe and supportive environment. We believe learning should involve more than listening to lectures, and that it is sometimes loud and messy. Students are provided choices in their education and have valuable relationships with educators. WCS teachers employ customizing, communicating, collaborating, critical thinking, and problem solving to support all students.

System Demographics

The Whitfield County School System lies between Atlanta and Chattanooga. Approximately 13,200 students attend 24 schools including 13 elementary, five middle, three traditional high schools, a career academy, an alternative school, and a special purpose high school. Since 2002, WCS has experienced a 15% growth in enrollment; 72% of students are economically disadvantaged. According to 2010 census data, Whitfield County had approximately 102,599 residents. The median household income for Whitfield County was $42,345, compared to the

state of Georgia median household income of $49,347. Current student demographics include: 55% White, 39% Hispanic, 3% Multi-Racial, and 2% Black.

Current Priorities

After an analysis of system and school achievement data, areas of need identified are:

- Revise current K-12 Literacy Plan to reflect rigorous literacy instructional practices
- Align Professional Learning offerings to district and campus needs based on assessment analysis, TKES system, and District Leadership Committees
- Progress monitoring of all students through collaboration between district and campus data teams
- Increase students *Exceeding* standards on CRCT
- Increase writing scores on state assessment
- Increase student access to a variety of texts
- Expand technology usage with students
- Communicate with parents frequently, clearly, and consistently

Strategic Planning

WCS's mission is to increase student learning by providing students and staff with meaningful, challenging, and engaging educational experiences in a safe and supportive environment. With the leadership of our new superintendent, and the creation of three new positions: elementary, middle school, and high curriculum directors, strategic planning is firmly established. Curriculum directors meet and plan regularly with teachers and principals to develop and ensure district and school initiatives are aligned. Through these collaborations the following initiatives are under way:

- Implementing pilot studies of Literacy Design Collaborative at middle and high schools

- Implementing pilot studies of Math Design Collaborative at middle and high schools

- Implementing Formative Assessments

- Implementing K-5 Common Curriculum Maps

WCS strategic planning mirrors our priorities in the following ways:

- **Student Achievement**: WCS is working to increase student achievement as measured by End of the Course Exams, State Assessments, and Implementation of a Formative and Summative Assessment Cycle in grades K-12.

- **Professional Learning**: WCS is committed to providing ongoing, targeted professional learning for teachers, principals, and central office personnel to support continuous improvement.

- **Parent and Community Involvement**: Whitfield County reflects a community actively involved in all aspects of increasing student achievement. *Readers to Leaders* and *Early Childhood Initiatives Committees* bring together community resources to support parents and students.

- **Technology**: WCS is working to provide equitable technology at all campuses.

Current Management Structure

Dr. Judy Gilreath, WCS Superintendent since March 2013, re-organized the Central Office to strengthen the district's commitment to curriculum and instructional leadership. WCS has six divisions: Finance, Human Resources; Assessment, Accountability, and Technology; Operations; Teaching and Learning; and Student Services. Each division is supervised by a Chief Officer with the exception of Teaching and Learning which is supervised by the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.

Past Instructional Initiatives

WCS initiatives since 2005 include implementation of the Schlechty Center's Working on the Work (WOW) framework, guiding our endeavors in designing work for students. In 2007, we participated in Georgia's Reading First Struggling Reader training. Other past instructional initiatives include:

- Common Core Transition Training for ELA and Math
- WIDA Standards
- SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) for ESOL and regular education teachers
- Response to Intervention (K-8)
- Assessment Driven Instruction
- Technology Integration
- ActivStudio Software Training
- Literacy and Math Work Stations (K-5)
- Content Specific Professional Learning in ELA, Reading, Math, Science & Social Studies

Literacy Curriculum

The PreK-12 literacy curriculum is based on the English/Language Arts Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) which encompass foundational skills for elementary children such as concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing and conventions. The literacy curriculum is supported by Bright from the Start standards, Scholastic, basal readers, Literacy Collaborative, Reading Recovery, trade books, novels, and content text books.

District Literacy Assessment Program

Literacy Assessments used with fidelity are:

- Work Sampling System (Pre-K) and Pre-School Evaluation Scale
- Georgia On-Line Assessment System (Grades 1-12)

- Georgia Alternative Assessment (Grades K, 3-5,6-8,11)
- Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills
- Georgia Writing Assessments (Grades 3,5,8,11)
- CoGAT (Grade 4)
- World-Class Instructional Design (WIDA) ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT, K-12)
- Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English (ACCESS, K-12) and Alternate ACCESS where appropriate
- Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT, 3-8)
- End of Course Test (EOCT, 9-12)
- SAT, AP Exams (9-12)
- MAP (Measures of Academic Progress System, K-8)

Need for Striving Reader Project

District data reveals that grades 3-8 CRCT Reading scores range from 91% to 96.9%, but few students EXCEED the standards. Additional "what if" data from the GADOE indicate our true reading passing scores would tumble if the passing threshold was increased. Informational reader response and narrative writing are linked to increased reading and vocabulary levels (Why document). Therefore, concurrent implementation of a strong writing program is critical to a complete literacy initiative. CRCT data summarized in the table below demonstrates basic student reading needs are being met, but SRCL funds would provide much needed professional development and instructional resources, fostering teacher leaders and college/career ready students.

Students Meeting/Exceeding Standards on 2013 CRCT, Writing, and End of Course Tests					
	Reading	ELA	Writing	Science	Social Studies
3rd Grade	93%	90%		76%	83%
5th Grade	93%	93%	80%	80%	82%
8th Grade	97%	94%	78%	69.5%	76.2%
EOCT	EOCT American Literature & Composition	9th Grade Literature & Composition	11th Grade Writing	Biology	US History
High School	90%	87%	90%	74%	62%

Northwest High School and its feeder schools indicated interest in pursuing SRCL funding to ensure students were college and career ready. They are not satisfied with simply meeting standards. SRCL will

allow these schools to build professional learning communities across the feeder pattern campuses that will serve as a model for the district.

Management Plan and Key Personnel

WCS has identified key leaders to supervise the implementation of the grant. The WCS Literacy Leadership Team includes, Dr. Merry Boggs, Elementary Curriculum Director, Kathy Hammontree, Lead Special Education Pre-K teacher, Dr. Meg Baker, ESOL Director, and Lorijo Calhoun, Federal Programs Director. This team meets weekly to ensure vertical alignment in regards to literacy curriculum and instruction. Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent, and Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, will provide the district's key leadership support.

Dr. Jonathan Willard, Director of Professional Development, will work with principals and WCS Literacy Leadership Team to coordinate all grant professional development activities. Pam Pettyjohn, instructional technology coordinator, will assist in the evaluation of technology tools and programs. WCS Finance Office along with administrative support from Teaching and Learning Administrative Assistant will be responsible for requesting funds and will meet with WCS Literacy Leadership Team along with campus administrators to review budgets, expenditures and reports. Key personnel for grant implementation:

Area	Individual Responsible	Supervisor
Grant Administration: Coordinating project and managing the budget	Dr. Merry Boggs, Director of Elementary Curriculum (Lead)	Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent
Purchasing: Approval of Purchase orders	Dr. Merry Boggs Director of Elementary Curriculum	Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent
Site-Level Coordinators (Schools) Antioch Elementary Beaverdale Elementary Cedar Ridge Elementary Cohutta Elementary Dawnville Elementary Dug Gap Elementary Eastside Elementary Valley Point Elementary	Instructional Coaches: TBA by May 2014	Principal: Tami Dodd Cheri Mahon Meleia Bridenstine Cindy Dobbins Sherri Travisano Mandy Locke Ben Hunt Doris McLemore
Professional Learning Coordinator	Dr. Jonathan Willard Professional Development Director	Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent
Technology Coordinator	Pam Pettyjohn Instructional Technology Coordinator	Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent

Assessment Coordinator	Dr. Audrey Williams Chief Officer of Assessment, Accountability, and Technology	Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent
Finance Director	Daniel Theis Chief Financial Officer	Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent

WCS has an active District Literacy Committee comprised of teachers, administrators, and community members that meets monthly to discuss and review literacy goals, objectives for district literacy needs and SRCL grant. This Committee also reviews district strategic plans for literacy. Additional support meetings occur weekly where all district curriculum and instruction personnel collaborate to discuss the coordination of all district literacy plans.

With a successful SRCL grant application, the District personnel will include grant implementation at regularly scheduled meetings. Finance Officer, Professional Development, Technology Office, and Assessment Officer will meet with WCS Literacy Leadership Team monthly to review all budgets, technology purchases, and professional learning.

Experience of the Applicant

The following chart summarizes WCS experience with funded programs:

Year	LEA Grants/Projects	Project Title	Funded Amounted	Audit Yes or No	Audit Results
2014	SRCL Grant Award		2.3 million over 5 years	NA	NA
2013	In-progress				
2012		Title IIA	414,639.24	Y	No
		Title III	310,058.05	Y	No
		Special Ed Cluster	2,517,128.07	Y	No
		Bright From the Start	808,022.99	Y	FS-7551-12-01* FS-7551-12-02*
2011		Title IIA	517,535.00	Y	No Findings
		Title III	355,083.00	Y	No Findings
		Special Ed Cluster	3,275,512.00	Y	FA 7551-11-01**
		Bright From the Start	808,022.99	Y	No Findings
2010		Title IIA	529,015.00	Y	No Findings
		Title III	371,781.00	Y	No Findings
		Special Ed Cluster	2,320,156.00	Y	FA 7551-10-01*
		Bright From the Start	691,814.58	Y	No Findings

2009		Title IIA	514,383.00	Y	No Findings
		Title III	342,655.00	Y	No Findings
		Special Ed Cluster	2,248166.00	Y	No Findings
		Bright From the Start	418,296.56	Y	No Findings

*FY12 WCS did not have a CFO in place until halfway through the fiscal year. A CFO was hired and a Finance Officer was in place by the summer of 2012 to implement new financial software, which was implemented FY12. Changes are in place to correct this audit finding.

**Salary—Person charged to SPED that should have been charged to QBE.

WCS initiatives that have been funded through QBE and Title funds include Working on the Work by Phillip Schlechty, SIOP training, Reading Recovery, and Literacy Collaborative.

WCS has sustained past initiatives implemented by supporting continued professional development through the addition of three District Instructional Coaches, successful management of grant funds by the Federal Program Director/Finance Division, and ESOL Coordinator.

WCS has proven its capacity to coordinate resources and control for spending in the past through supporting individual campus grant applications including:

- Grants from WCS Educational Foundation

- Local business grant awards to individual campuses

    o Walmart, Lowe's, various carpet companies, and Georgia Farm Bureau grants

District/School Narrative

Project *JELLY* History

Whitfield County Schools (WCS) resides in a dynamic community that feverishly supports literacy for all children. With the support of Archway Partnership, Whitfield County businessmen/women, government officials, faith community, day care providers, and school officials are collaboratively working together to create an exemplary community that comes together to support the children of the county. Readers to Leaders and First Five Coalition are committees which were created from needs assessments administered by the Archway Partnership. Readers to Leaders promotes literacy for all children in the community. First Five Coalition specifically focuses on literacy, health, and emotional needs of families prenatal to 5 years of age.

WCS are committed to improving, aligning, and building effective Pre-K programs for all county elementary schools. This does not begin as students enter the Pre-K classrooms, but starting with prenatal care. As the community rallied around supporting struggling families with young children, WCS joined the community. Numerous literacy events are underway to support the young children of Whitfield County. Through SRLC funding, we propose a rich and tasty program to ensure early literacy that we are calling *Project JELLY* (**J**oint **E**arly **L**iteracy **L**earning for our **Y**oungest).

In this school/district narrative, WCS, day care providers, community groups' stories are shared as WCS builds a case for their need of the Striving Readers Grant Funding. WCS Pre-K started with one Pre-K classroom at Antioch Elementary School, and has grown to over eleven classrooms on nine campuses. Even now, a request is in progress for adding a Pre-K classroom for 2014-15 school year. WCS is committed to quality Pre-K programs as shown by, WCS continuing to fund Pre-K teachers and classrooms even after the State of Georgia funding reductions.

Whitfield County Schools (WCS)

Currently, WCS Pre-K program consists of 11 classrooms serving 240 students. In an inclusion classroom, a special education teacher and paraprofessional provide support for four year old students with special needs students for one half of the day. An additional Head Start classroom is housed on yet another campus. Specifically in WCS, there are two special needs Head Start classrooms. There are seven inclusion students in each classroom. For the 2014-15 school year, WCS has requested to identify another Pre-K inclusion at the Career Academy. Both programs are in the process of transition between the OLD Standards and the new GELDS Pre-K Standards.

Administration and Teacher Leadership Teams

Merry Boggs is the Elementary Curriculum and Pre-Kindergarten Director. Merry has a Ph.D. in the area of literacy. She has over twenty years of experience in early childhood education, as well as administrative experience. Kathy Hammontree is the Coordinator for Services for Exceptional Children in Pre-Kindergarten   Joanna Scruggs is the certified teacher in the area of Special Education who serves the inclusion students.

Community Initiatives

Due to limited funds and resources, community programs have been limited to one or two sites in Dalton leaving out the surrounding communities that compose Whitfield County Schools. The west portion of Whitfield County has limited resources to support children Birth to 5 and families. *JELLY* would support expanding current early literacy programs that have been successful to west side Whitfield County that include the programs summarized in the following table:

Program Description	Level
Lunch and Learn	Pre-K and families
Literacy Celebration	All ages
Saturday Academy (pilot)	3 to 5 years
Summer Library Programs	All ages
Book Nooks	Birth to 5
Reach Out and Read	Birth to 5

Instructional Initiatives

Traditionally, WCS Pre-K teachers and assistants have been only received the BFTS yearly required trainings. When completing the SRCL Needs' Assessment, the District Teaching and Learning team and District Literacy committee realized the importance of providing in-depth professional development to all Pre-K teachers and assistants. This school year this first stages of reaching this goal was accomplished through monthly Pre-K teacher meetings. April and May meetings will have different publishers share Pre-K curriculum aligned to the new GELD standards. Writing this grant application for Birth to 5 is the next step to creating an action plan that meets the goals of ongoing, systematic Pre-K teacher and assistant best practice instructional training for young children.

Historically, the District belief was that Pre-K teachers received all training from *Bright from the Start;* this belief has changed with the change of District leadership. As demonstrated by, beginning the 2014-15 school year, a new District initiative is to place an instructional coach on

every elementary campus. These instructional coaches will also work with Pre-K teachers, and include them in appropriate literacy and math Kindergarten and first grade teachers' trainings.

Professional Learning Needs

WCS goal is to maintain high qualified Pre-K teachers and assistants in every Pre-K classroom. WCS Pre-K classrooms are housed on elementary campuses; therefore, the District goal is to include Pre-K teachers in horizontal curriculum planning teams while simultaneously building a professional community of Pre-K teachers that regularly meet face-to-face and through electronic means. Pre-K teachers need ongoing systematic professional development in developmental appropriate curriculum and instruction for 4 year olds. Pre-K staff needs training in instructional practices that differentiate for content, product, and process. Additionally, Pre-K teachers have reported that they need additional professional development opportunities in the area of working with special needs students as well as dual language learners (DLL).

A second area of professional learning is working with families. Whitfield County community has developed a strong community commitment to supporting families in need with partnering with them to provide educational resources and training outside of school. Hence, this unique grant application threading together school and community to support learning of all young children in the county

Learning begins before school and with a positive learning environment that focuses on academic content in developmental appropriate ways. This only happens with a strong professional learning component. With the change in WCS District leadership, there is a strong commitment to ongoing, systematic training for all District teachers. Vertical and horizontal curriculum planning is also another district goal; Pre-K teachers play a critical role in reaching these goals.

Need for a Striving Reader Project

Research is abundant (Barnett, Jung, Wong, Cook, & Lamy, 2007; Cannon & Karoly, 2007; Gormley, Gayer, Phillips, & Dawson, 2005) that well-designed preschool programs can improve school readiness and increase performance on academic performance in the early elementary grades. WCS resides in a community that recognizes Birth to 5 supports for families is lacking. While a number of Birth to 5 initiatives have started in our community, a cohesive Joint Pre-K Literacy Committee needs to flesh out a cohesive Literacy Plan to provide focused support for our earliest learners.

Based on needs assessment and other Pre-K teacher and site director feedback, additional training is needed for Pre-K lead and assistant teacher training. Teacher and assistants expressed need for instructional materials that are developmentally appropriate for all levels of Pre-K students. *JELLY* will enhance the district Pre-K programs and expand community outreach and support for our earliest learners and their families.

Works Cited:

Barnett, W. S., Jung, K., Wong, V., Cook, T., & Lamy, C. (2007). *Effects of five state prekindergarten programs on early learning*. Working paper, New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute of Early Education Research.

Cannon, J.S. and & Karoly, L. A. (2007). *Who is ahead and who is behind: Gaps in school readiness and student achievement in the early grades for California's children*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Gormley, W.T., Gayer, T., Phillips, D., and Dawson, B. (2005). The effects of Universal Preschool on Cognitive Development. *Developmental Psychology*, 41 (6).

District/School Literacy Plan

Research is abundant (Barnett, Jung, Wong, Cook, & Lamy, 2007; Cannon & Karoly, 2007; Gormley, Gayer, Phillips, & Dawson, 2005) that well-designed preschool programs can improve school readiness and increase academic performance in the early elementary grades. WCS resides in a community that recognizes Birth to 5 supports for families is lacking. While a number of Birth to 5 initiatives have started in our community, a cohesive Joint Pre-K Literacy Committee needs to flesh out a cohesive Literacy Plan to provide focused support for our earliest learners.

 Based on needs assessments and feedback from Pre-K teachers and site directors, additional training is needed for Pre-K lead and assistant teacher training. Teachers and assistants expressed need for instructional materials that are developmentally appropriate for all levels of Pre-K students. JELLY will enhance the district Pre-K programs and expand community outreach while providing supports for our earliest learners and their families.

Works Cited:

Barnett, W. S., Jung, K., Wong, V., Cook, T., & Lamy, C. (2007). Effects of five state prekindergarten programs on early learning. Working paper, New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute of Early Education Research.

Cannon, J.S. and & Karoly, L. A. (2007). Who is ahead and who is behind: Gaps in school readiness and student achievement in the early grades for California's children. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Gormley, W.T., Gayer, T., Phillips, D., and Dawson, B. (2005). The effects of Universal Preschool on Cognitive Development. Developmental Psychology, 41 (6).

School Literacy Plan

20 points (7,000-10,000 words max., 20-30 pages. No minimum length requirement) The Why is the research base

School/District/Community Literacy Plan

Introduction

An analysis of Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) needs assessment data shows that Whitfield County Schools (WCS) Pre-K program and the Whitfield County

Community are in the emergent state of developing a plan for organizing, implementing, and sustaining an effective approach to literacy.

Building Block 1. Engaged Leadership

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

Needs Assessment: While 22% of community responders to the Georgia Literacy Plan Birth-to-Five Needs Assessment for Literacy (hereafter called the Needs Assessment) found this fully operational and 39% rated it Operational (plan exists, but is not in use), in fact, no WCS literacy plan is in place to continuously and systematically collect and review Pre-K data from Work Sampling Online (WSO). Only 14% of WCS educators responded Not Addressed, 20% felt it was Fully Operational. Without district leadership in the Pre-K program, WCS Pre-K teachers have struggled to master the WSO process according to data from BFTS Consultant during 2013-14 school year.

Current Situation in WCS: Each year Pre-K principals, teachers, and assistant teachers complete all required Bright from the Start (BFTS) Pre-K trainings including various webinars. Pre-K principals include Pre-K students in all campus parent and special events. This school year brought change at the District level supporting an internal audit of all programs including Pre-K. Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent and Ms. Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning supported the review of District Literacy Plan including the Pre-K program.

WCS Pre-K BFTS Project Director, Dr. Merry Boggs, is in her first year. She also serves as WCS Elementary Curriculum Director. The reinstated K-12 District Literacy Committee asked about the role of Pre-K in the district literacy program ("The What", p. 5) which prompted district leaders to include Pre-K in the campus literacy planning. Through the application process for the SRCL Cohort 3, Pre-K students and teachers were brought to the table. Initially, WCS did not include Birth to 5 in initial grant application as none of the elementary campuses applying housed Pre-K classrooms. However, WCS is requesting a Pre-K classroom on one of the SRCL elementary campuses for the 2014-15 school year. Additionally, as Pre-K program issues were raised through the needs assessment process, WCS BFTS Project Director implemented monthly Pre-K meetings to start sharing best practices for Pre-K students learning, the WSO system, and building District support for the Pre-K programs.

According to a review of the SRCL Birth to 5 Needs Assessment, Pre-K teachers reported the following needs:

- Additional training in best literacy practices for 4 years olds
- How to differentiate during small group time
- Strategies for working with Pre-K students with special needs.

According to focus group meetings and emails, Pre-K assistants reported a need for additional professional development in all areas of working with Pre-K students. Pre-K assistant teachers are not required to hold teaching certificates, but do hold proper state required paraprofessional certification and BFTS training completion certificates.

The "Why" document cites leadership as a key factor in literacy reform at least 30 times (page 157). Emerging Birth to 5 District and Community leaders are organized and meeting. Small steps to support Birth to 5 children and families have begun as demonstrated through Summer Lunch and Learn programs, Saturday School for Families, and collaborative meetings with all community and school members. Next steps include a shared leadership that first needs to build an effective literacy plan that recognizes the unique role of each entity and builds collaborative pieces together that break down the traditional roles of schools,community and governmental agencies.

Whitfield County-Dalton Community: In the Whitfield County-Dalton Community, fall, 2013, the Early Literacy Committee was initiated through the support of the Archway Partnership. A subcommittee of this larger committee is the First Five Coalition, which specifically targets community literacy needs in the areas of Birth to Five children. The First Five Coalition has collected data to assess the weaknesses and strengths of the community services for the support for young children. First Five Coalition met to actively support this grant application. Furthermore, the Early Literacy Committed has provided leadership by beginning literacy programs to support families at and below the poverty line ("The What", p. 5). Although this Committee was developed almost a year ago and actively providing leadership to the community, they reported that work has started, but a specific plan for a comprehensive literacy and support system is needed (March 27, 2014, Subcommittee meeting minutes).

Next Steps: Establish an annual schedule for Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council meetings.

Building Block 2. Continuity of Care and Instruction

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

Needs Assessment: While 75% of community members indicated this was Fully Operational and 25% rated it Operational, a joint coalition is still in the formative stages. WCS educators' responses ranged from Not Addressed (19%) to Fully Operational (28%). According to an analysis of the Block 2 questions, community responses on the Needs Assessments results are inconsistent perhaps reflecting a lack of real knowledge and data in the community to accurately respond. There were six questions in the area of continuity of care and instruction on the Birth to 5 needs assessment. Two strengths identified were

that schools connect families and community connects to schools. A Birth to 5 Community Committee was conducted to discuss this discrepancy (Thursday, March 27, 2014). Members shared that while schools and communities serve and refer young children and families, there are no plans in place to promote a systematic and continuous contact. WCS Pre-K teachers supported this perspective. Leaders creating a shared plan for organizing, implementing, and sustaining an effective approach to literacy is an agreed upon weakness. Additionally, plans are needed to ensure smooth transitions among different community agencies and providing support to families.

Current Situation in WCS: WCS principals and District administrators work at times in isolation of each other when addressing the Pre-K students' academic needs. Best practices support the belief that "All stakeholders, including educators, media specialists, and parents of Pre-K, primary, adolescent, and post-secondary students are responsible for promoting literacy," ("The Why", p. 31). Each campus addresses their young students' academic and social needs by referring students to different community services and including Pre-K students in all campus events, but there is not a WCS common Birth to 5 literacy plan. Leaders need to create a plan for shared leadership and a plan for organizing, implementing, and sustaining an effective approach to literacy.

WCS has a special education classroom at one of the District's middle schools that houses two 3 to 5 year old Head Start special needs classrooms. Kathy Hammontree organizes this setting. Until this year, little interactions were made with this program and Pre-K classrooms except the inclusion Pre-K at Cedar Ridge Elementary. The District Literacy Committee began asking questions that, in turn, brought Kathy Hammontree to meetings. Currently, BFTS Pre-K Project Director, at the direction of the WCS Literacy Committee, has requested an additional inclusion classroom for the 2014-15 school year. On Monday, April 7, 2014, WCS received approval to change a current Pre-K classroom into an inclusion classroom for next school year.

Whitfield County-Dalton Community: At the operational level, A First Five Coalition Committee is in place with a cross-section of community members actively attending meetings and participating in community activities. This committee has implemented small scale literacy projects for young children:

- Six week Saturday School for 3 to 5 years olds with their families
- Summer reading programs
- Summer programs at the library
- Summer community literacy celebration

All of these initiatives are limited to specific locations in downtown Dalton excluding, not by choice, but limited funds, the outer areas of the Whitfield County.

Next Steps: Currently, all Early Literacy Committees meet during the day. First Five Coalition recommended that Birth to 5 Committee meet after school to include teachers

and daycare workers to promote further collaboration and cooperation between school districts resources and community resources.

1. Conduct regular, Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council meetings at times that permit attendance of all stakeholders.
2. Create and disseminate an annual calendar of Joint Pre-K Literacy Committee meetings.
3. Create Birth-5 Literacy Plan to direct informed planning for literacy support for our youngest striving readers.

B. A plan is in place to ensure smooth transitions from one school or agency to another.

Needs Assessment: Most WCS educators indicated this was Operational (33%) or Emergent (31%)WCS community response varied on the Needs assessment with 40% responding Operational, 30% Emergent, 20% Fully Operational , and 10% Not Addressed.

Current Situation in WCS: While a community and school district strategic literacy plan needs to be created, coordination is in place in some areas. For example, WCS Pre-K Coordinator is a member and active participant of the First Five Year Coalition. She is a vital link between the district and these community partners and will ensure continued communication.

Whitfield County-Dalton Community: Practices are in place to support transition into Pre-K classrooms

Next Steps: Include transition information that makes current practices protocol into Literacy Plan

C. A plan is in place to connect families to schools and childcare entities.

Needs Assessment: Community ratings varied some as 40% felt this was Fully Operational, while 30% rated it Operational and another 30% rated it Emergent. Most WCS educators rated this as Fully Operational (33%) or Operational (33%).

Whitfield County-Dalton Community: Prenatal support brings the First Five Year Coalition into the lives of families. Meeting with new moms in hospital settings allows them to continue this support and strengthen the message of the importance of literacy by providing books to encourage the mother to read to her child.

At Pre-K registration, the community meets and develops a common Pre-K registration that is conducted at the Gaston Community Center. At this site, copiers are brought in for parents to use at no cost. WCS and Dalton Public Schools' personnel are present to help answer questions and determine which sites to register their four year old. While parents register their four year old for Pre-K, a children's corner with developmental appropriate activities and materials provide a taste of the learning in store for these children. All young

children leave with a book and parents are given a packet of information for helping their young children.

Next Steps:

- Enhance current practices and expand to serve additional families
- Create a messaging campaign to reach successfully all parents in the community
- Expand current offerings to include sites through-out the district

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

Needs Assessment: While WCS educators felt this was Fully Operaational (31%) or Opertional (35%), Fully Operational was selected by 60% of community members with 30% rating it Operational. Only one person felt this was Emergent.

Current Situation: Positive relationships and shared concerns connect district leadership and the Whitfield County Community-Dalton. Their unity of purpose and realization of the pressing needs of young children and their families encourages them to work together for the common good.

E. A plan is in place to improve access for families to resources for developing early literacy in their homes.

Needs Assessment: Most educators responded Operational (32%) or Emergent (33%) while community results ranged from Fully Operational (36%) to Emergent (18%), with 46% rating this Operational.

While Pre-K through 5 and summer experiences provide developmentally appropriate instruction using a variety of instructional tools, access for families to resources that encourage literacy have been limited to the following:

- Lending library of books, games, and puzzles for students to take home for a limited period of time.
- Parents will leave all parenting meetings and workshops with literacy materials to actively participate with their children in the home.
- At key locations, WCS media centers will open for summer family reading. (Summer 2014, two media centers are opening in conjunction with Dalton Public libraries.)

Next Steps:

1. Develop parenting workshops that stress early literacy skill building.
2. Provide summer programs that provide access to resources for developing early literacy at home.

Building Block 3. Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessments

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

Needs Assessment: While 25% of community members feel this is Not Addressed, the rest is evenly split between Fully Operation and Operational. WCS educators mainly responded Operational (37%) or Fully Operational (32%). With questions from the District Literacy Committees, guidance from BFTS regional consultant and current Pre-K teachers, additional training is needed to build common WCS District guidelines and understandings of rating Developmental Indicators. District support is needed by campus principals and District Leadership to compliment these common understandings. Furthermore, kindergarten teachers require training in interpreting Developmental Checklist ratings (The Why, 2010, p. 122-123).

Current Situation in WCS: Work Sampling Online System (WSO) is required by Bright from the Start (BFTS) Georgia Pre-K Division. WSO is a performance based assessment system that was created to assess young children. Teachers observing young children in authentic settings then support observations through several methods of documentation.

WSO consists of the following:

- Developmental Guidelines cover seven major curriculum areas: personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematical thinking; scientific thinking; social studies; the arts; and physical development, health and safety.
- Summary Reports replace conventional report cards as a way of recording progress, communicating with parents, and meeting reporting requirements. Information from the Developmental Checklists informs a Summary Report three times a year (from Pearson WSO webpage, http://www.pearsonclinical.com/childhood/about.html).

BFTS Pre-K guidelines require that Pre-K teachers are initially trained and then yearly follow-up trainings with the Work Sampling Online System (WSO). Pre-K teachers are expected to rate their students weekly on the indicators on the WSO Development Checklist.

Next Steps:

1. Train teachers to administer new assessments required by SRCL
2. Become data users through collaboration using data to plan instruction.

B. The results of formative assessments are used to adjust intervention to meet the needs of children and students.

Needs Assessment: While 63% of community members view this as Operational, WCS educators report Fully Operational (44%) or Operational (37%) which tends to confirm that using data is not happening in many classrooms (The Why, 5.K).

Current Situation in WCS: Daily small group instruction is required by the BFTS operating guidelines. Small group time allows Pre-K teachers to differentiate instruction to meet the individual learning of their students. Small groups should form based on the developmental need and skills of children which are identified by formative assessment. SRCL Needs Assessments reflects that this is strength for Pre-K students.

Students with Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) are given specific goals and objectives based on their IEP objectives. Students' progress towards these goals and objectives are reported to parents with each District reporting period. Progress monitoring schedule are based on individual student's IEP, but annual reviews are conducted yearly to update parents on student progress on personal and academic goals.

Next Steps:

1. Pre-K Teachers need training in using data from formative assessments to inform instruction
2. Pre-K Teachers need stable settings to collaborate in teams using data for instructional planning
3. Pre-K Teachers need training in differentiation for young children.
4. Pre-K Teachers need training in alphabetic principle and phonological awareness.

C. Summative assessments are used to determine effectiveness of interventions or instructional programs.

Needs Assessment: While most WCS educators rated this as Operational (41%) or Fully Operational (34%), community responders were more likely to respond Operational (63) which may indicate that there is doubt on their part that analysis happens to determine effectiveness of interventions or instructional program.

Next Steps:

1. Pre-K Teachers need training in using data from formative assessments to inform instruction
2. Pre-K Teachers need stable settings to collaborate in teams using data for instructional planning

D. Literacy screenings are used to assess readiness of individual children for reading and writing.

Needs Assessment: Most WCS educators responded either Operational (34%) or Emergent (28%) while community members tended to respond Operational (44%) or Fully Operational (33%) which again seems to question where analysis of results is happening. The Georgia Literacy Plan includes a deliberate and comprehensive plan for assessment. The plan promotes the use of ongoing, frequent, and multiple measures that will be used as diagnostic and monitoring tools to plan for instruction. It is necessary to examine both summative and formative assessments, to determine how that data positively affects instruction, and to see how formative assessments enhance the overall picture of assessment. (The Why, 5)

Current Situation in WCS: While WSO is used as currently mandated; teachers admit confusion in how to analyze student performance. They may benefit from collaboratively observing varying student performances and then discussing ratings to build inter reliability.

Next Steps:

- Regular opportunities for collaborative work need to be provided and protected.
- WSO training in developing common practices in collecting data on indicators.

Building Block 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

A. Instruction is clearly and consistently aligned with GELS, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Learning Standards for Georgia Pre-Kindergarten.

Needs Assessment: The majority of WCS educators rated this Operational (39%) or Fully Operational (35%) and exactly half (50%) of the community members responded Operational. In the years between ages three and five children are rapidly learning language and they are particularly responsive to efforts to bolster their phonemic awareness (Ehri et al., 2001). Preschool classrooms can significantly boost children's language. Teachers who use appropriate complex forms of language with Preschool children can markedly improve the complexity of children's language (Huttenlocher, Vasilyeva, Cymerman, and Levine, 2002).

Current Situation on WCS: While state and federal mandates are taken seriously and implemented as directed, monitoring of instruction is left to the principal at each building so that knowledge of these standards by the principal varies from site to site.

Next Steps: JELLY will find the WCS Literacy/Instructional Coaches attending trainings with the early childhood educators to develop a better understanding of standards and what they should look like in the Pre-K classroom.

Works Cited:

Ehri, L. C., Nunes, S. R., Willows, D. M., Schuster, B. V., Yaghoub-Zadeh, Z., & Shanahan, T. (2001). Phonemic awareness instruction helps children learn to read: Evidence from the National Reading Panel's meta-analysis. Reading Research Quarterly, pp. 250–287.

Huttenlocher, J., Vasilyeva, M., Cymerman, E., & Levine, S. (2002). Language input and child syntax. Cognitive Psychology, 45, 337–375.

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

Needs Assessment: The majority of the WCS educators rated this Operational (37%) to Fully Operational (36%) with community members closely following with Operational (38%) to Fully Operational (25%). Effective approaches to book reading foster comprehension and vocabulary learning in ways that can still be detected in the middle grades (Tabors et al., 2001; Dickinson and Smith, 1994). Long-term research has revealed that improvements in the quality of children's Preschool experiences have effects that can be detected even into late adolescence and early adulthood (Tabors et al., 2001; Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, and Mann, 2001; Campbell and Ramey, 1994; Schweinhart, L.J., and Weikart, D.P., 1999).

Current Situation in WCS: An Isolation of Pre-K classroom has resulted in varied materials and instructional practices at these sites. Pre-K teachers have just begun to meet with the WCS Pre-K BFTS Coordinator on a regular basis. There is a need for collaboration that will be addressed through new practices. A common curriculum will support collaborative planning. To ensure evidence-based instruction, we have selected a program that is not only research-based, but extensively tested as described below.

Pre-K teachers are in the process of reviewing research-based and Bright from the Start approved Pre-K curricula.

An appropriate curriculum would need to be selected thathas accumulated quantitative and qualitative information.. On average, children should achieve gains in receptive and other language, alphabet knowledge, print concepts, and phonological awareness over their Preschool year. A curriculum would need to be selected with that component in mind.

Critical components of literacy instruction as determined by the National Early Literacy Panel must be accounted for in a program embraced by the district. Several key components would include: phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, oral language, vocabulary. Furthermore, effective strategies for young children need to be included as part of daily routines: small group, dramatic play, daily singing, and hands-on practice. A

majority of WCS Pre-K classrooms include ELL students. A curriculum that integrates effective instructional practices and routines for these students (Cummins, 2001; Tabors, 2004; Thomas, & Collier) is essential.

Next Steps:

1. Schedule bi-monthly meetings for all Pre-K teachers and for Pre-K teachers to meet in Regional Teams.
2. Acquire and implement an affective Pre-K Curriculum such as OWL or Frog Street.

Works Cited:

Campbell, F. A., & Ramey, C. T. (1994). Effects of early intervention on intellectual and academic achievement: A follow-up study of children from low-income families. Child Development, 65, 684–698.

Cummins, J. (2001). The academic and political discourse of minority language education: Claims and counter-claims about reading, academic language, pedagogy, and assessments as they relate to bilingual children's educational development. Summary of pare presented at the International Conference on Bilingualism, Bristol.

Dickinson, D. K., & Smith, M. W. (1994). Long-term effects of Preschool teachers' book readings on low income children's vocabulary and story comprehension. Reading Research Quarterly, 29(2), 104–122.

Reynolds, A. J., Temple, J. A., Robertson, D. L., & Mann, E. A. (2001). Long-term effects of an early childhood intervention on educational achievement and juvenile arrest: A 15-year follow-up of low-income children in public schools. Journal of the American Medical Association, 285, 2339–2346.

Schweinhart, L.J., & Weikart, D.P. (1999). The advantages of High/Scope: Helping children lead successful lives. Educational Leadership, 57, 76–77.

Tabor, P. O. (2004). One child, two languages, a guide for preschool educators of children learning English as a second language. Baltimore, ME: Brookes Publishing.

Tabors, P. O., Snow, C. E., & Dickinson, D. K. (2001). Homes and schools together: Supporting language and literacy development. In D. K. Dickinson, and P. O. Tabors (Eds.), Beginning literacy with language: Young children learning at home and school (pp. 313–334). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Thomas, W. & Collier, V. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievements. Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

C. High expectations, grounded in developmentally-appropriate practice with a focus on student interest for all learners, are consistently evident.

Needs Assessment: WCS educators rated this Fully Operational (47%) to Operational (37%) and the community concurred with 38% response to each of the same.

Current Situation in WCS: Lack of monitoring data finds us unable to triangulate these data. Increased monitoring by Literacy/Instructional Coaches and the WCS Pre-K BFTS Coordinator will support high expectations and developmentally-appropriate practices that focus on student interests.

The content of an effective Pre-K curriculum is built around a carefully crafted daily routine familiar to all Pre-K teachers and caregivers. Themes, skills, and concepts are developed through quality children's fiction and nonfiction trade book classics. The consistent format and features in every unit makes it easy for teachers to use and children to learn.

Center Time needs to plan for setting up and orienting children to self-selected activities in which they explore, experiment, deepen their understanding of new concepts, and practice budding skills. Conversation tips for developing language in the context of centers are included.

Small Groups needs to plan for three small group activities each day to address math, writing, language and print manipulatives, science, and book browsing. Each activity includes suggestions for meeting the needs of ELL students, children needing additional challenge, or children requiring social or emotional support.

Oral Language needs to helps teachers use opportunities for informational conversation with children to develop children's language, social skills, and concept knowledge. These pages include models for literacy-related conversations to use during mealtimes and times of transition.

Story Time guides teachers as the class reads and discusses one or two trade books. (Each book is read four times over a period of time, advancing from an initial sense of story and vocabulary to active interaction with the text.) Teachers view useful notes on purpose and standards, strategies for reading aloud, key vocabulary with simple definitions, ELL and other adaptations, progress monitoring, and suggested conversations to model successful reading.

Songs, Word Play, Letters builds children's phonological awareness, alphabet letter knowledge, and vocabulary with fun literacy circle activities.

Let's Find Out About It builds students' background knowledge using information from nonfiction texts and hands-on experiences. Let's Talk About It, an alternating feature, addresses topics of social and emotional importance to children and teachers.

End-of-the-Day Centers promote conversation that develops language at the end of the day's learning, and ideas for connecting with families needs to suggest family activities that develop oral language and literacy.

Next Steps:

1. Acquire and implement an affective Pre-K Curriculum such as OWL
2. Monitor implementation with monthly classroom walkthrough.

Building Block 5. System of Tiered Intervention

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

Needs Assessment: WCS educators rated this Fully Operational (43%) to Operational (33%) while half (50%) of our community members ranked it Operational with 13% rating it Fully Operational. Children who start school behind often become poor readers in the early grades and then continue to struggle with reading through their school career (Alexander & Entwistle, 1988; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Juel, 1988; Tabors, Snow, & Dickinson, 2001). Once children fall behind, compensatory education often has only negligible results (McGill-Franzen, A., & Allington, R.L., 1991). After Grade 3, reading difficulties become increasingly difficult to remediate (Good,R.H., Simmons, D.C., & Smith, S.B., 1998). First Grade reading ability is a strong predictor of a variety of Grade 11 measures of reading ability, even when measures of cognitive ability were taken into account (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997).

Next Steps: Our plan is to break this cycle of struggling readers through early intervention that is personalized to support student area of strengths and remediate weak areas. By teaching to students' strengths through play that supports speaking, listening, and early reading skills, these students will find success at school necessary for developing a love of learning and literature.

Screening tests (DP-3, PALS, PPVT4) and Work Sampling Online will inform individual planning and the formation of small groups for focused instruction. Progress monitoring and outcome assessments will be used to monitor student literacy skill growth. Post testing will identify students who have attained mastery and identify students in need of additional instruction.

Works Cited:

Alexander, K. L., & Entwistle, D. R. (1988). Achievement in the first two years of school: Patterns and processes. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Cunningham, A. E., & Stanovich, K. E. (1997). Early reading acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later. Developmental psychology, 33(6), 934–945.

Good, R.H., Simmons, D.C., & Smith, S.B. (1998). Effective academic interventions in the United States: Evaluating and enhancing the acquisition of early reading skills. Educational & Child Psychology, 15(1), 56–70.

Juel, C. (1988). Learning to read and write: A longitudinal study of 54 children from grade 1-4. Journal of Educational Psychology, 80, 437–447.

McGill-Franzen, A., & Allington, R.L. (1991). The gridlock of low reading achievement: Perspectives on practice and policy. Remedial & Special Education, 12 (3), 20–30.

Tabors, P. O., Snow, C. E., & Dickinson, D. K. (2001). Homes and schools together: Supporting language and literacy development. In D. K. Dickinson, and P. O. Tabors (Eds.), Beginning literacy with language: Young children learning at home and school (pp. 313–334). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Building Block 6. Professional Learning and Resources

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

Needs Assessment: While most community members rated this Operational (67%), only 33% of WCS concurred with another 27% rating this Emergent.

Current Situation in WCS: Currently, Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers participate in district-wide professional development (PD) and BFTS annual trainings. Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers are required to attend annual Bright from the Start training on creating a positive classroom and Pre-K lesson plans. Pre-K teachers attend some campus trainings and meetings. Additional training is needed to develop in-depth knowledge in the area promoting oral language and alphabetic principle and phonological awareness.

Teachers need strategies to help them to see the interrelationships of language and literacy across curriculum that builds vocabulary and content in all content areas. Bright from the Start requires that children experience 60 minutes of uninterrupted center time that provides a wide variety of learning experiences for children in the program. Teachers struggle with meaningful learning taking place during periods of play.

Next Steps:
1. Schedule extensive and intensive professional development for Pre-K teachers and teacher assistants.
2. Invite community partners to attend summer training.

B. In-service personnel receive professional learning in the development of early literacy.

Needs Assessment: WCS educators rated this Operational (38%) to Fully Operational (32%). Most community partners responded Fully Operational (56%). Teachers who engage in sustained professional development efforts can adopt new practices that dramatically improve the quality of support they provide for language and literacy—changes that translate into marked improvement in children's learning (Dickinson, Anastasopoulos, Miller, Caswell, and Peisner-Feinberg, 2002).

Current Situation in WCS: Pre-K teachers identified the following areas as needing support:

- Additional training for differentiation, alphabetic principal, phonological awareness, working with dual language learners (DLL) and, oral language development. Professional learning on elementary campuses, at times, excludes Pre-K teachers. Summer sessions to increase professional knowledge is needed for Pre-K teachers and assistants.
- Data analysis of WSO
- Training in conversational Spanish
- Pre-K assistants teachers need in-depth training on developmental appropriate practices
- Special needs students
  - o Assistive technology
- Using technology with students

Additional efforts need to focus on building effective relationships with teachers and parents at home and at school.

Next Steps: JELLY will provide expanded opportunity for professional development that will include both teaching assistants and community partners providing services during Saturday Schools and Summer Programs.

Stipends aligned to bargained contracts will reimburse employees for attending PD workshops during the summer so that time with students is not diminished. PD will focus on the following areas:

- Data Use and Collaborative Planning to Support Differentiated Learning
- Applying Effective Practices in Early Childhood Classrooms with appropriate curriculum
- Language and Literacy in Early Childhood with appropriate curriculum
- Stimulating Conversations and Oral language Development in Young Children
- Child Centered Centers
- Developing Literacy in Early Childhood Classrooms
- Music, Movement, and Learning in Early Childhood Classrooms

Needs Assessment, Concerns, and Root Cause Analysis

Needs Assessment Process: Formation of the WCS District Literacy Team involved only K-12 representatives. After working together for two months, it became apparent that we were overlooking important stakeholders in literacy planning—our Pre-K level. In December, 2013 they were invited to join our collaborative discussion and it soon became apparent that they held key pieces that were missing from earlier discussions. We soon learned that they lacked district leadership, opportunity to collaborate, and were actually isolated as Pre-K classrooms are scattered across the district with only one school housing more than a single classroom. If these educators were going to prepare young children from families facing severe economic stressors and second language learning problems to be ready for Kindergarten, they needed the basic building blocks to provide foundational learning for our youngest learners. Since summer 2013, WCS staff participated in the Dalton-Whitfield First Five Early Childhood Coalition, and the Dalton-Whitfield Readers to Leaders Community Literacy Initiative. The SRCL needs' assessment threaded the three groups together.

But Pre-K teachers are not the only ones supporting early literacy learning in our community. By tapping into community providers, we recognized we could construct a literacy ladder that begins prenatally and extends through graduation. Looking at the need for a cohesive solution that brings all these partners together, ***Project JELLY (Joint Early Literacy Learning for our Youngest)*** was born. Through SRCL funding, we will provide rich and research-based instructional supports by students. Jelly has a way of sticking to everything and leaving a rich taste that pleasantly pleases the palate, seeking more. Our hope is that connotation extends to ***JELLY*** developing a love for literacy and learning in a cohesive way so that students entering Kindergarten are better prepared to learn.

Surveys Used: A Needs Assessment of the WCS Pre-K program was conducted by Dr. Merry Boggs using both quantitative, SRCL Birth to 5 Needs Assessment, and qualitative, focus groups and short answer responses, assessments to collect data. In addition, focus groups were queried to further investigate needs. The following table summarizes the result of this survey:

Survey Instrument	Description	Participants
Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment for Birth-to-Five Literacy	Electronic Survey developed to determine district and school level needs. Survey designed to answer all areas of Georgia Literacy Plan Needs Assessment from	Administrators: 9 Classroom Teachers including support Staff: (ESOL, EIP, Gifted, Reading Recovery, ESS, Media, Paraprofessionals): 295

	GADOE.	
Focus Group Discussions	• Pre-K Teachers & Assistants • First Five Years Initiative members	Administrators: 9 Classroom Teachers: 11 Support Staff: 0 (ESOL, EIP, Gifted, Reading Recovery, ESS, Media, Paraprofessionals)* Parents: 3 Community Members 9

*March 28th meeting, a recommendation was made and accepted to change meeting times to after school as to include classroom teachers.

An analysis of Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) needs assessment data shows that Whitfield County Schools (WCS) Pre-K program and the Whitfield County Community are in the **emergent** state of developing a plan for organizing, implementing, and sustaining an effective approach to literacy.

While 2 elementary campuses host 2 Pre-K classrooms. 9 of the 11 WCS Pre-K classrooms are singularly housed individual on elementary campuses. This format presents a challenge for Pre-K teachers working together collaboratively to collect and analyze Working Sampling Online (WSO) data consistently and systematically. Furthermore, no WCS literacy plan is in place to continuously and systematically collect and review Pre-K data from WSO. Lacking district leadership in the Pre-K program, WCS Pre-K teachers have struggled to master WSO process (Data from Bright from the Start (BFTS) Consultant, 2013-14 school year). Yearly, Pre-K principals, teachers and assistant teachers complete all required BFTS Pre-K trainings including various webinars. Pre-K principals include Pre-K students in all campus parent and special events. This school year brought change at the District level supporting an internal audit of all programs including Pre-K. Dr. Judy Gilreath, Superintendent and Ms. Karey Williams, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning supported the review of the District Literacy plan including Pre-K program.

WCS Pre-K Project Director, Dr. Merry Boggs, is in her first year. She also serves as WCS Elementary Curriculum Director. As she reinstated the K-12 District Literacy Committee, discussion soon turned to the role of Pre-K in the district literacy program ("The What" document, p. 5). District Leaders are beginning to include Pre-K in the campus literacy planning. Through the application process for the SRCL Cohort 3 process, Pre-K students became a focal point and Pre-K teachers were brought to the table. Initially, WCS did not include Birth to 5 in the grant application as none of the elementary schools housed Pre-K classrooms. However, WCS will request a Pre-K classroom on one of the SRCL elementary campuses for the 2014-15 school year. Additionally, as Pre-K program issues were raised through the needs assessment process, WCS Pre-K Project Director implemented monthly Pre-K meetings to share best

practices for instructing Pre-K students, learning the WSO system, and building District support for the Pre-K programs.

According to a review of the SRCL Birth to 5 Needs Assessment, Pre-K teachers report similar learning needs that include the following:

- Additional training in best literacy practices for 4 years olds
- How to differentiate during small group time
- Working with special needs Pre-K students

According to focus group meetings and emails, Pre-K assistants (non-certified) requested additional professional development in all areas of working with Pre-K students.

Root Causes: Whitfield County simultaneously faced numerous factors challenging the District to meet the academic needs of their youngest students. The District must work with county partners to work effectively with the youngest students and their families.

1. Lack of District leadership failed to support Pre-K literacy.

2. Isolation on 10 separate elementary campuses limits teachers' collaborative planning.

3. Lack of a Literacy Plan resulted in autonomous decisions that failed to benefit the Pre-K program.

4. Increase of poverty levels in Whitfield County

5. Increase of English Language Learners

6. Increase in unemployment rates

Areas of Concern (Research Base) and Action Plan:

1. **Cohesive Leadership:** The "Why" document cites leadership as a key factor in literacy reform at least 30 times (The Why, page 157), and states that both teachers and principals provide leadership by demonstrating a thorough understanding of effective reading/writing instruction meeting various needs in the student population (page 156). Galvanize local capacity to support students and families in need (The What, 7-8, The How, p. 32) Celebrate academic successes publically through traditional and online media (The What,p.7)   (The How,p.28). **Action Plan:** Dr. Boggs will convene the Joint Birth-5 Literacy Committee that includes representative stakeholders from community agencies, early educators, and teaching assistants to oversee the implementation of *Project JELLY*. They will meet quarterly to plan initiatives, monitor data, identify hindrances to the initiative, create solutions for overcoming barriers, and celebrate victories, large and small.

2. **Collaborative Planning:** Collaborative teams are a necessity.(GLP-The Why, 1.B; -The What,p.7;The How,p.29)
   Action Plan: Dr. Boggs will schedule monthly meetings Pre-K Teachers for district wide collaboration. A second monthly meeting will find Pre-K Teachers and Teacher Assistants meeting for collaborative planning that is informed by data in regional teams.

3. **Curriculum Updating:** Direct, explicit, literacy instruction is essential for all students (The Why, 6.D; The What, p. 9-10; The How, p. 40)
   Action Plan: Implement a proven, research-based curriculum with fidelity at all WCS Pre-K sites.

4. **Professional Development:** Professional development examining literacy elements of literacy creating a developmentally appropriate early learning environment will builds teacher capacity. (The What, p. 13-14)

   Action Plan: Conduct extensive and intensive summer PD for WCS Pre-K Teachers and Teacher Assistants. Invite community partners to participate in training to develop shared vision.

5. **Continue and Expand Community Partnerships:** Active involvement with First Five Coalition and Readers to Leaders to continue to offer community-wide literacy opportunities, parent trainings, and health needs for families.

   Action Plan: 1) Create a community-wide literacy plan. (The How, p. 1) 2) Expand teacher involvement on community committees. (The How, p. 3)

Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

Student Data

WCS Pre-K Demographic Data

School	Free/Reduced Lunch	Hispanic	Black	White	Asian	Native American	Pacific Islander
Antioch	41	33	0	11	0	0	0
Beaverdale	15	6	0	16	0	0	0
Career Academy	20	12	0	10	0	0	0
Cohutta	11	5	0	17	0	0	0
Cedar Ridge	35	26	1	16	0	0	0
Dawnville	11	10	0	12	0	0	0
Dug Gap	17	19	0	3	0	0	0
Eastside	19	19	0	3	0	0	0
Valley Point	16	4	0	18	0	0	0
Head Start Classes	*	12	3	17	0	0	0

* Head Start provides all lunches for these classrooms.

WCS Pre-K Students with IEP's

Through the SCRL Needs Assessment process, WCS found an increasing number of Pre-K students requiring special services as shown by the data below. Immediate action was taken to request changing the Pre-K classroom at the Career Academy for the 2014-15 school term. WCS received notification on Monday, April 7, 2014 for approval of this request to an inclusion model. Additionally, WCS is requesting an additional Bright from the Start Pre-K inclusion expansion classroom for 2014-15.

Students receiving preschool special education services:

- Whitfield Co Pre-K: 12 (+2 in evaluation process)

- Georgia Pre-K (not in Whitfield Co School): 15 (+2 in evaluation process)

Additional data discovered:

- WCS has identified 21 special needs four/five year olds who are not in a Georgia Pre-K program, but are old enough

- WCS has identified 39 three/four year olds needing SPED services in Pre-K settings for the next school year

- WCS has a list of students in the evaluation process who will be placed by the end of the school year, if they qualify for services.

System Table of Percentage of Students with "Proficient" Ratings by Domain via Work Sampling Online for WCS

Year	Language Literacy	Math Thinking	Scientific Thinking	Social Studies	The Arts	Personal And Social	Physical and health
2012-13	90.3%	90.2%	98.8%	89%	92.7%	94.6%	97%
2011-12	94.3%	91.4%	96%	90.9%	100%	97.7%	99.6%

At this time, we have not received the requested data from *Bright From the Start*: percentage of students with "Proficient" ratings by domain via Work Sampling Online by school. WCS did provide below Measures of Academic Progress (MAPS) data for incoming kindergarten students.

Analysis of WSO System Data

All Pre-K children in the Whitfield County Schools (WCS) were administered the Work Sample Online (WSO) in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. The WSO revealed that at the end of the Pre-K school year, an average of 93.2% of students were deemed 'proficient' across the seven domains in 2012-2013 and an average of 95.7% were noted 'proficient' in the previous year. For both school years, the number of children reported 'proficient' was lowest in *Social Studies* and the key academic areas of *Language/Literacy* and *Math Thinking*. The number of Pre-K children reported 'proficient' was highest in *The Arts, Personal and Social, Physical and Health,* and *Scientific Thinking*. Although, according to the WSO scores, the large majority

of Pre-K students are performing at a 'proficient' level, these scores are not consistent with

Kindergarten fall benchmark assessment data and teacher interviews which note that entering

Kindergarten children are not performing at proficient readiness levels. The Measures of

Academic Progress assessment (MAP), a nationally normed benchmark progress monitoring

assessment, revealed much lower scores of Kindergarten entrance for the 2012 and 2013 school.

The results are in a table below.

Table of Percentage of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Summary Report by WCS

School in the *Reading* domain at Kindergarten Entrance.

	Antioch		Beaverdale		Cohutta		Cedar Ridge		Dawnville		Dug Gap		Eastside		Valley Point	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
Total Students	80	94	56	62	51	52	87	72	106	84	81	75	103	106	82	91
Mean RIT	135.4	138.9	140.5	140.7	141.9	143	137.5	138.9	136.6	140.5	136.1	139.0	136.8	139.2	138.4	139.6
District Mean RIT	138.4	141.3	138.4	141.3	138.4	141.3	138.4	141.3	138.4	141.3	138.4	141.3	138.4	141.3	138.4	141.3
Norm Grade Level Mean RIT	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5	142.5
Students At or Above Norn Grade Level Mean RIT	15	30	21	23	26	28	23	22	29	33	21	35	23	35	24	37

*RIT = The RIT Scale is a curriculum scale that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate student achievement

Analysis of MAP Data by School

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment was administered to all

Kindergarten children the fall of 2012 and fall of 2013. The analysis of MAP data in the *Reading*

domain revealed that on average, 22.75% of Kindergarten students were at or above nationally normed Kindergarten *Reading* level in 2012. In 2013, this number increased slightly to 30.75%. These scores indicate critical concern that the children entering Kindergarten in WCS are performing well-below peers across the nation in the *Reading* domain. An analysis of the referenced table revealed that some schools have a greater need than others in Kindergarten readiness in *Reading;* yet all schools reported that less than 36% of enrolled Kindergarteners are on grade level in *Reading* as compared to children nation-wide.

Student Literacy Needs

According to the WSO and MAP data, the area of Literacy is a weakness of the young children in WCS and of great concern. The Kindergarten entrance MAP data revealed that children scored in the lowest nationally normed percentile possible in *Foundational Skills of Reading.* These foundational skills include the critical emergent literacy subareas of *Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Concepts of Print, Vocabulary and Word Structure,* and *Comprehension.* Particularly concerning was the great number of children entering Kindergarten in the lowest percentile in *Phonics* (i.e., 62% in the lowest percentile). WSO revealed that the *Language and Literacy* domain was amongst the areas of the fewest number of children at 'proficient' level. These assessments tools confirm that WCS has great student literacy needs.

The classrooms require materials and technology that correspond with current and relevant practices. With high percentages of children who are English Language Learners (ELL), the classrooms require a specialized assortment of instructional resources to meet both the language and the literacy needs of all learners.

Teacher Data

Table: Pre-K Teacher and Assistant Retention Data

School Year	% of GA Pre-K Teachers retained	% of GA Pre-K Assistants Retained	% of Special Needs Pre-school Teachers Retained
2012-13	81%	81%	100%
2013-14	81%	81%	100%

- At this time, this is the only data available from Human Resource Department due to changes in software management system.

Table: Georgia Pre-K Teacher Experience by Years

School Year	0-2	3-5	6 or more
2012-13	72%	18%	9%
2013-14	64%	27%	9%

- At this time, this is the only data available from Human Resource Department due to changes in software management system.

Table: Georgia Pre-K Teacher Credentials

Year	Bachelor's Only	Bachelor's Degree (Certified)	Master's Degree	Specialist Degree	Doctorate
2009-10	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2010-11	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2011-12	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2013-14	0%	90%	10%	0%	0%

Teacher Professional Learning Needs

According to the WSO and MAP data, the Birth-to-Five educators require professional development in emergent literacy foundations, including *Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Concepts of Print, Vocabulary and Word Structure,* and *Comprehension*. The professional development needs include workshops, conferences, and coaching specific for children less than six years of age. These professional development opportunities will include the latest research in evidence-based practices, tiered instruction, and inclusion. Professional development opportunities would be extended to community partners, such as child care professionals and

community volunteers. Basic professional development courses, such as child development is needed, including advanced classes (e.g., differentiated instruction).

To improve teacher instruction and practice, a classroom-level assessment should be utilized, such as the CLASS observational assessment. The CLASS assessment requires for training and materials. CLASS data would inform individual teachers and administrators of classroom-level strengths and areas for growth and professional development.

Family Engagement Needs

Families are their children's first teacher. Parents build the foundation through interactions, experiences, and relationships for formal learning to attach. WCS and Whitfield County through the Archway Partnership has identified that parents are struggling to find adequate prenatal care and lack knowledge to support their children's academic learning. This grant application is written in collaboration with community members and committee to continue to offer support for families. WCS is committed to continue and expand summer reading programs, after school tutoring, celebrating literacy, getting books in the hands of children.

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

The WCS Pre-K Committee, District Literacy Committee, and First Five Coalition will implement and coordinate to develop a professional learning plan that supports Pre-K teachers, day care teachers, Head Start teachers, and parents. Professional learning opportunities will focus on providing professional development for teachers, day care workers, and parents that support building early literacy in young children. Project plans include expanding and creating additional family literacy opportunities throughout Whitfield County Schools.

Goal	Literacy Strategies & Description	Objective	Implementation & Timeline	Measurement	Funding Source
District Literacy Committee will develop young child -12 literacy plan that coordinates and integrates community literacy activities by December, 2014. (first draft) Increase teacher/community collaboration. (new literacy/instruction coaches on all elementary campuses) Increase collaboration with early literacy special needs, ESOL, and Early Intervention, and content area teachers.	Develop appropriate professional learning plans for teachers and assistants. Share observations and challenges in Pre-K programs. Expand literacy teams to reflect community members.	A plan for Birth to 5 literacy is revised and used by all stakeholders. Literacy teams will meet monthly. (Year 1) Provide ongoing communication for parents and community literacy committees.	Plan meetings for teachers to discuss data and plan instruction. (regularly scheduled month meetings) Establish meetings with First Five Coalition.	Sign-in sheets and meetings agendas	Local funds
Create a Community Literacy Plan with First 5 Coalition and Readers to Leader	While many community literacy activities have been implemented, there is a need to ground these activities in a systematic community literacy plan.	By May 2015, a draft of a Whitfield County community literacy is completed.	Monthly meeting	Sign-in sheets and agendas	Local funds

Expand partnership with First Five Coalition by May, 2015. Plan student and families literacy events outside of school hours by August, 2014	Provide parent orientation at the beginning of the year. Continue and expand Saturday Academy Open WCS media centers for student and family reading over summer After school parent and child education classes Implement school tutoring Expand current Lunch and Learn program Coordinate students' transitions from community programs and services.	Provide ongoing workshops for parents and private stakeholders at venues throughout the district. Expand Begin throughout the county literacy events outside of school	July 2014-July, 2015	Schedule monthly meetings to share resources, training plans, and professional development needs in the community Sign-in sheets and agendas	Striving Readers Funds Community Grants used by First Five Coalition Seek funding from business partners
Purchase Pre-K Curriculum for WCS Pre-K classrooms	Research high quality Pre-K curriculum based on GELDS (June 2014)	Purchase effective Pre-K curriculum,(June 2014)	July, 2014- May, 2015 Set-up ongoing curriculum and trainings with partners, literacy/instructional coaches, BFTS consultant. Order curriculum	Purchase orders	Striving Readers Grant

			materials Train teachers and assistants		
100% of teachers will plan strategies to improve language and literacy throughout the curriculum, January, 2015. 100% of teachers will implement strategies to improve language and literacy throughout the curriculum, May, 2015. Coordinates Instructional/Behavioral Support teachers Administrators teachers Assistants Literacy Team	Parent and community development on site and local training, technology training.	Teachers will be trained effectively implement curriculum materials. Teachers will work Literacy Coach to develop appropriate language and literacy activities. Feb, 2015.	Monitor and observe teachers to determine success of program implementations. Implementation strategies at trainings. Plan appropriate language and literacy instruction. Differentiate professional learning based on teacher/assistant needs Train community as needed.	Lesson plans, Work Sampling Data, PPVT results,	Pre-K funds, Striving Readers Grant funds, and community funds
Training for effective use of assessments with young children Teacher Coordinators, Sped teachers, Literacy teams, community members, First Five Coalition	Common understandings need to be built to understand the role of assessment with young children.	100% of Pre-K teachers use assessments to guide instruction.	August, 2014-May, 2015	Lesson plans, observations, WSO scores are varied.	Striving readers grant, BFTS funds
Increase number of kindergarten students scoring in the high average percentile on MAPS Teacher Coordinators, Sped teachers, Literacy teams, community members,	WCS needs to establish consistent, reliable scoring policies WSO. Set-up a system to monitor, collect, and analysis data	Train teachers on WSO data collection. Students will engage in developmental appropriate academic experiences to improve oral	August, 2014- May 2015 Collaborate with teaches to plan units Participate in staff development strategies	Works Sampling Online, PPVT, PALS PK, MAPS	Striving Readers Grant funds, WCS county funds

First Five Coalition	of WCS Pre-K students' MAPS test.	language and literacy skills.	Train teaches and assistants to use tables and interpret data		

WCS and Birth to 5 Coalitions Collaborative Support of Parents and Families with Young Children

WCS Pre-K committee members will work with the community through the Birth to Five Coalition to offer parent and young children (birth to 5) training and literacy events.

- Provide job-embedded time to learn early literacy basics and how to support their children's literacy learning at home
    - Provide parents training in literacy habits with children (GA Literacy Plan, The What)
- Continue to build on current partnerships with Dalton Public library to expand summer reading programs throughout the county
- Additional panning days for Pre-K teachers and assistants along with planning time for collaborative lesson planning
- Planning time for teachers and assistants over the summer
- Provide books for families with young children
- Collaborate with Birth to 5 coalition to expand Saturday school and summer offerings
- Training days for Pre-K teachers and day care providers

Assessment/Data Analysis Plan

Whitfield County Schools currently uses the following Birth-5 assessments:

Assessment	Age Level(s)	Purpose	Frequency
PPVT	3 year olds	Diagnostic, Monitor, Outcome	NA
WSO	4 year olds	Diagnostic, Monitor, Outcome	3 times a year

Transition Plans for Assessment

Very little formal assessment is currently administered for our earliest learners. JELLY will provide greatly expanded assessment as required for SRCL funding. Upon receiving the SRCL funding, both WSO and PALS will be given three times per year, beginning, middle and end. DP-3 and PPVT will be administered at start up of the school year and upon completion in May to provide a measure of student growth. All staff will need professional learning on using and analyzing these assessments with fidelity.

WCS Special needs teachers use the following assessments with young children referred for additional screening:

- Battelle Developmental Inventory-II (BDI-II)
- Developmental Profile-3 (DP-3)
- Conners Early Childhood (CEC)
- Brigance Inventory of Early Development-II
- Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC)
- Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development 3

Upon notification of funding, the required assessments will be purchased and integrated into our assessment schedule. Professional learning for administration of new assessments will occur well in advance of testing.

Communication of Assessment Data to Parents and Stakeholders

WCS will provide parents and stakeholders with current and specific data periodically throughout the school year using print and online media. Parents and students will receive information through personal face-to-face communication. JELLY will use the following vehicles to communicate with its stakeholders:

- Title I Parent Meetings

- Infinite Campus Parent Portal
- Readers to Leaders and First Five Coalition publications
- Social Media
- Radio Stations: Spanish and English
- Annual School Improvement Plan meetings
- School Council Meetings
- Bi-Annual Parent Teacher Conferences

In addition, a Joint Birth-5 Council will be established to oversee *JELLY*. It is our hope that this group of community business leaders, professionals, and parents will become advocates for literacy that will spark partnerships and propose unique solutions for hurdling barriers to success. The action steps for establishing the Joint Birth-5 Council follow:

1. Identify key members of the community groups/organizations that support early literacy
2. Meet quarterly to review goals, objectives, and progress data.
   a. Identify barriers to success
   b. Brainstorm ways to overcome obstacles
3. Utilize social media to communicate and promote the goals of literacy throughout the community at large.
4. Celebrate successes, large and small, attributed to *JELLY*

Data Driven Instruction

Data from formative and summative assessments will inform instruction in a number of ways.

Data are regularly used to determine professional learning needs. Observations during informal and formal observations provide administrators data that can help them determine professional learning needed by individuals, small groups, or the faculty at large.

Teachers, both individually and in collaborative teams will be charged with monitoring data to inform their instruction. Data will let them know when students are demonstrating competency with new skills allowing them to move on to other topics. Data will be the basis for determining what instructional strategies to use, what materials to use, and which students will benefit from this instruction.

Finally, our Pre-K Literacy Committee will use data to inform budgetary purchases for resources to improve achievement and professional growth.

Assessment Plan Grades K-5

SRCL funding will result in the implementation of the following assessment plan to support *JELLY.*

Assessment Administration

Assessment What?	Grade Level	Timeline When?	Responsible Party Who?	Analysis
DP-3	3 YO	2 X per year	Teacher, Katy Green	Teacher, Pre-K Literacy Committee, Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council
PALS PreK	4 YO	3 X per year	Teacher	Teacher, Regional Teams, Pre-K Literacy Committee, Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council
PPVT 4	4 YO	2 X per year	Teacher	Teacher, Regional Teams, Pre-K Literacy Committee, Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council
WSO	Pre-K	3X per year	Teacher	Teacher, Regional Teams, Pre-K Literacy Committee, Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council
CLASS	All	1X per year	Dr. Merry Boggs, Dr. Katy Green	Teacher, Regional Teams, Pre-K Literacy Committee, Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council

Assessment Analysis

More assessments mean more time to celebrate our earliest learners' literacy growth. Assessment data will be analyzed in four settings:

- Each **teacher** will be responsible for developing a list of strengths and weaknesses indicative of student data and a plan for addressing weak areas.

- Pre-K teachers in **regional teams** will be responsible for examining student data to identify strengths and share strategies used that support these strong areas. Discussion supported by video clips or student work samples will help these teachers develop inter-rater reliability. Likewise, they will examine common weak areas and develop solutions to address those weak areas. They will review each other's plans for addressing weak areas and revise as a group. Weak areas that require additional support materials or professional development will be requested through the Pre-K Literacy Committee.

- The **Pre-K Literacy Committee** will analyze data from a district-wide perspective. Anomalies will provide opportunities to showcase teachers whose students outperformed others in a particular area. Weak areas will be discussed to determine the need for additional instructional materials or professional development.

- The **Joint Birth-5 Literacy Council** will monitor student data on a quarterly basis, cheering on areas of growth and looking for ways to support weaker areas.

CLASS data will be discussed with the teacher and then analyzed (without teacher names) to determine future professional development for individuals, small groups, or all Pre-K teachers.

Resources, Strategies & Materials Supporting Literacy

The importance of the Preschool years to children's long-term educational success is predicated on experiences that begin developing long before children enter Kindergarten and are nourished by children's experiences with print, books, and conversations (Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, and Poe, 2003; Snow, Burns, Griffen, Burns, and Griffen, 1998; Whitehurst and Lonigan, 1998). Unfortunately, children from families who have limited economic resources and do not speak English as a first language are disproportionately likely to start Kindergarten behind (Baydar, Brooks-Gunn, and Furstenberg, 1993; Hart and Risley, 1995).

The Preschool years also are a critical time for children to learn to regulate their own emotions, acquire social skills needed to form relationships with children and adults, and to function as part of a group. During these years children are first learning to manage their emotions and form relationships, their success seems likely to have long-term implications for later personal and social adjustment (Pianta,1999). Furthermore, the emergence of self-regulatory skills and social competence is linked to language skills and early literacy (Lonigan, Burgess, and Anthony, 2000). Language, in turn, is foundational to early literacy development (Dickinson et al., 2003; Whitehurst and Lonigan, 1998) as well as to long-term reading comprehension (Tabors et al., 2001; Storch and Whitehurst, 2002).

Current Classroom Resources: Curriculum materials that support Pre-K classes tend to differ from classroom to classroom, but all WCS Pre-K classrooms have all the materials as required by Birth From the Start Instruction Guide for Classroom materials in each of the following areas: reading Area Materials are accessible, labeled and organized, dramatic play, math, science art, and music. (http://www.decal.ga.gov/Prek/LearningEnvironment.aspx). Each Pre-K classroom has 4 IPADS.

.

Activities that support early learning include the following:

Shared Classroom Resources

WCS Pre-K classrooms are housed on school campuses This arrangement allows for all Pre-K students to participate in: music, physical education, media centers. Pre-K students are served breakfast and lunch in the elementary cafeterias. Additionally, Pre-K students use playground equipment. All Pre-K students requiring speech services are served on their school campuses by a speech therapist. Pre-K students have a scheduled visit to the school library on a weekly basis for story time and book check out.

With funding for our *JELLY*, we envision adding the following activities to support student success:

- Curriculum Updating
- Expanded summer programming
- Support and expand Whitfield County literacy projects
- Extensive summer Professional Learning for early childhood educators and community partners.

Curriculum Updating is necessary to provide a cohesive program district wide to Pre-K students. We are currently examining Pre-K curricula to find a comprehensive curriculum that covers all domains of early learning. WCS expects a content to be built around a carefully crafted daily routine within an activity-center day. Themes, skills, and concepts are developed through quality children's fiction and nonfiction trade books. The consistent format and features in every unit makes it easy for teachers to use and children to learn.

When WCS Pre-K teachers, Pre-K Project Director, and Site Directors agree upon Pre-K curriculum, Each Pre-K teacher will have a wealth of materials to provide hands-on learning situations for her students. Students will receive extensive manipulatives so they can interact with new content and concepts both physically and cognitively.

Funding Alignment

The following table shows the alignment of funding for the resources we hope to fund for *JELLY***:**

Objective	Resource	Funding
Objective 1.1, 2.1: Students participate in lessons informed by data to bolster personal strengths and support needs/weaknesses **3.1:** Teachers will use data to collaboratively plan instruction **3.3:** Teachers	Training Materials supporting professional learning New assessments Collaborative settings and collaborative planning time	**Other Funding:** - District funded PD by district instructional coaches - Online PL at the Comprehensive Reading Solutions website - Title I funded meetings - District funded mailings and printing of assessment results - WSO

will use formative and summative assessments to drive instructional and programming decisions		**SRCL Funding** • Additional PD • PL materials • Stipends or substitutes for released time for teachers to attend training • New assessments
Objective 1.2, 2.2: Implementation of new literacy program with fidelity in a developmentally appropriate setting **1.3, 2.3:** Incorporation of explicit instruction in letter/sound identification, vocabulary and comprehension in all content areas **3.2:** Teachers will apply new strategies from PD workshops for implementation of current phonemic awareness, phonics, and letter/sound/word study programs	PD for implementing new materials Pre-K Curriculum computers/laptops or tablets for students and teachers to access OWL materials supporting personalized learning	**Other Funding:** • District funded PD by district instructional coaches • Online PL at the Comprehensive Reading Solutions website • Title I funded meetings • District funded mailings and printing of assessment results **SRCL Funding** • Pre-K Curriculum • Laptops or tablets for centers and teacher to access assessments and Pre-K curriculum personalized learning components • Summer Professional development • Stipends or substitutes for released time for teachers to attend training

Sample Schedule for WCS Pre-K Schedule

Pre-K Class Schedule

7:30-8:05	Breakfast
8:05-8:55	Electives

Monday- Media/ Counseling
Tuesday- Music
Wednesday- Computers
Thursday- PE

8:55-9:20	Calendar
9:20-9:30	Story 1
9:30-10:00	Small Groups
10:00-10:30	Large Group Literacy
10:30-10:40	Music and Movement
10:45-11:15	Lunch
11:20-11:30	Phonological Awareness
11:30-12:30	Centers
12:30-12:40	Clean up
12:40-12:50	Story 2
12:50-1:50	Nap
1:50-2:00	Wake up/ Pack up
2:00-2:15	Recess
2:15-2:20	Closing Activity/ Snack

Works Cited:

Baydar, N., Brooks-Gunn, J., and Furstenberg, F. F. (1993). Early warning signs of functional illiteracy: Predictors in childhood and adolescence. *Child Development,* 815–829.

Dickinson, D. K., McCabe, A., Anastasopoulos, L., Peisner-Feinberg, E., and Poe, M. D. (2003). The comprehensive language approach to early literacy: The interrelationships among vocabulary, phonological sensitivity, and print knowledge among Preschool-aged children. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 95(3), 465–481.

Hart, B., and Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday lives of American children.* Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Lonigan, C. J., Burgess, S. R., and Anthony, J. L. (2000). Development of emergent literacy and early

reading skills in Preschool children: Evidence from a latent-variable longitudinal study. *Developmental Psychology,* 36(5), 506–613.

Pianta, R. (1999). *Enhancing relationships between children and teachers.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., Griffen, P., Burns, M. S., and Griffen, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children.* Washington, DC: National Research Council, National Academy Press.

Storch, S. A., and Whitehurst, G. J. (2002). Oral language and code-related precursors to reading: Evidence from a longitudinal structural model. *Developmental psychology,* 38, 934–947.

Tabors, P. O., Snow, C. E., and Dickinson, D. K. (2001). Homes and schools together: Supporting language and literacy development. In D. K. Dickinson, and P. O. Tabors (Eds.), *Beginning literacy with language: Young children learning at home and school* (pp. 313–334). Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Whitehurst, G. J., and Lonigan, C. J. (1998). Child development and emergent literacy. *Child development,* 69(3), 848–872.

Professional Learning Needs

Teachers who engage in sustained professional development efforts can adopt new practices that dramatically improve the quality of support they provide for language and literacy -- changes that translate into marked improvement in children's learning (Dickinson, Anastasopoulos, Miller, Caswell, & Peisner-Feinberg, 2002).

The following chart summarizes literacy-related professional learning opportunities provided our Birth-5 educators during the current year. Trainings were open to both certified teachers and classified staff.

Professional Learning: August 2013–April 2013

Date	Activity, Instructor & Description	Goals	Evaluation	Certified Staff Participation
July, 2014	Training on new curriculum	100% of Pre-K teachers and assistants implement new curriculum.	Lesson plans, observations, monthly meetings,	Pre-K teachers and assistants
August-December 2014	Training in effective assessments of 4 and 5 year olds. Follow-up training with new curriculum	For all teachers to understand the role of assessment in planning instruction. Successful implementation of new curriculum	Pre/post in trainings, observations, job-embedded coaching, and lesson plans	Pre-K teachers and assistants, day care workers
Jan-May, 2015	Literacy training for 3 to 5 year olds. Differentiation instruction for for 3 to 5 year olds.	In-depth understanding of the literacy process. Translate new literacy concepts in an instructional manner for 3 to 5 year olds.	Pre/post in trainings, observations, lesson plans	Pre-K teachers and assistants, day care workers

Professional Learning Needs Assessment and Processes

Our needs assessment determined that our school needs more professional development in the following areas:
- Additional training in best literacy practices for 4 years olds
- How to differentiate during small group time
- Working with special needs Pre-K students (Year 2 focus)

Our Pre-K teachers and their assistants will also need training to implement the new Pre-K curriculum program, administer new assessments, and to use data to inform instructional planning.

As we continue to provide professional development in the areas listed above, the adequacy and effectiveness will be evident by increased student achievement and increased teacher knowledge. Lesson plans, observations of classroom instructional strategies, and student achievement data will document the effectiveness of this professional learning while classroom walkthroughs will identify teachers integrating these strategies in classrooms.

Lesson plans and classroom walkthroughs will reflect specific application of the professional learning topic under study so that building and district administrators can monitor how the teacher is applying what they learned while providing feedback to the teacher about their ability to transfer pedagogy in a manner that improves student achievement and engagement. CLASS assessment of the learning environment over time will chronicle growth.

Professional Learning Plan

As we strive to do more than merely meeting standards, we will provide targeted professional learning for our staff through webinars, face-to-face workshops, and regular opportunities to collaborate in teams to support our goals and objectives.

Teachers will meet twice a month for collaborative planning in both a district team and a regional team. Teacher will be supported to observe their peers and provide feedback to support continued professional learning as roving substitutes release them for Peer Coaching.
Early Childhood Educators and their assistants need to be equipped with cutting-edge strategies to support our earliest striving readers. A series of workshops will equip them to ramp up learning in their classrooms. They include:

- Applying Effective Practices in Early Childhood Classrooms with new Pre-K curriculum
- Stimulating Conversations and Oral language Development in Young Children
- Child Centered Centers
- Developing Literacy in Early Childhood Classrooms
- Music, Movement, and Learning in Early Childhood Classrooms

Job-embedded coaching and monitoring will bring Literacy Specialists into the Early Childhood Classroom to observe and support the Pre-K teachers as they apply new practices in their classrooms. All early childhood educators, including CTAE and Special Education teachers, will be included in this training.

JELLY calls for teachers to use new assessments and instructional materials with fidelity as their use is monitored and celebrated. Students will experience heightened engagement and targeted instruction as their teacher's content knowledge and pedagogy is improved. The following table summarizes professional learning to support *JELLY*:

Objective	Professional Learning	Effectiveness Measure
1.1,2.1: Implementation of new literacy program with fidelity in a developmentally appropriate setting	Applying Effective Literacy Practices in Early Childhood Classrooms with research based Pre-K Curriculum selected	Lesson Plans Classroom Walkthrough Data
1.3, 2.3: Incorporation of explicit instruction in letter/sound identification, vocabulary and comprehension in all content areas	Language and Literacy in Early Childhood: Making it Purposeful and Playful	Classroom Walkthrough Data CLASS
3.3: Teachers will use formative and summative assessments to drive instructional and programming decisions	Child Centered Centers supporting RTI	Classroom Walkthrough Data Evaluation Forms
3.2: Teachers will apply new strategies from PD workshops for implementation of current phonemic awareness, phonics, and letter/sound/word study programs	Developing Literacy in Early Childhood Classrooms	Lesson Plans Evaluation Forms
3.2: Teachers will apply new strategies from PD workshops for implementation of current phonemic awareness, phonics, and letter/sound/word study programs	Music, Movement, and Learning in Early Childhood Classrooms	Lesson Plans Evaluation Forms
3.1: Teachers will use data to collaboratively plan instruction	Bi-monthly collaborative team meetings	Lesson Plans Summative Test Scores

Work Cited

Dickinson, D. K., Anastasopoulos, L., Miller, C. M., Caswell, L., and Peisner-Feinberg, E. (2002). Enhancing Preschool children's language, literacy and social development through an in-service professional development approach. *Annual Conference of the American Education Research Association.*

Sustainability Plan

Whitfield County Schools (WCS) will sustain programming beyond the grant period by securing funds from sources including WCS operating funds, Title I, and the local business community. Throughout this document, sustainability is a major focus. WCS District Administration is committed to the successful implementation and sustainability of the Striving Readers' Grant, Cohort 3 and now, the Birth to 5 grant application. WCS's Teaching and Learning leadership has been actively involved in planning Striving Reader Grant applications with the goal of expanding the professional learning gained from this grant opportunity to all campuses.

Teachers and administrators believe in the importance of ongoing professional development to improve Response to Intervention, literacy, effective reading/writing instruction, professional learning communities, and data analysis to improve student achievement. WCS is committed to support community initiatives that assist families and help children start school successfully.

(a) Extending the Assessment Protocol	• Consider purchasing assessments with a one-time charge • Purchase paper/pencil assessment, if possible • Utilize local, state, and federal funds to continue formative and summative assessments
(b.) Developing Community Partnerships	• WCS currently has successful partnerships with numerous businesses and organizations in the local community. We will continue to cultivate relationships and use resources to help provide funds necessary to support literacy goals and plans.
(c, f, g, & h) Sustaining	• The District and Campus Instructional Coaches will participate in trainings in order to become an in-district resource for all teachers and to ensure that all lessons learned through professional development are implemented with precision and fidelity. • All elementary campuses will have instructional coaches. These coaches will work with Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers. • We will expand on the lessons learned by continuing to examine data, through stakeholder input, and through collaboration with other schools in the LEA.

	• The assessment protocol will be extended by carefully purchasing assessments that can be maintained using our existing Title I budget. Currently, we use all the assessments prescribed by Striving Readers Grant and are able to fund these assessments through other sources. • Training for new employees will be conducted by the district and campus instructional coaches and participating grant recipient teachers. • The District and Campus Instructional Coaches will provide coaching and assistance to all teachers in order to assist in fully implementing the lessons learned from professional development. • New teachers will be assigned a teacher leader as a mentor to ensure they receive relevant professional learning and assistance in the classroom. • A plan to replenish technology resources at every grade level will be developed. • After the grant period, we will continue the practices learned through the needs assessment to examine data and determine areas for improvement. After the grant period, it may be necessary for the district instructional coaches to attend trainings and redeliver to staff.
(d) Training New Teachers	• New teachers will be assigned a teacher leader as a mentor to ensure that they receive relevant professional learning and assistance in the classroom. • Trainings will be offered throughout the school year, ensuring that new teachers will have opportunities to benefit from the Striving Readers Grant information and findings.
(e) Replacing Print Materials	• When possible, purchased print materials will have library binding to ensure durability. • Title I funds, local and state funds, funds from community partners, and fundraisers will be used to replenish print materials after the grant period. • A rotating schedule to replenish materials on a yearly basis will be developed to maintain a wide variety of print materials in a range of Lexile levels and student interest. • An annual inventory of print materials will be conducted in order to determine areas of need.

Budget Summary

Striving Reader Grant funds will be used for the following purposes:

1. Pay stipends for Pre-K teachers and assistants for additional days worked during the summer and after hours.

2. Pay for substitutes that will be required for professional learning and collaborative planning for Pre-K teachers and assistants.

3. Purchase Pre-K Curriculum materials.

4. Purchase mobile tablets for Pre-K classrooms. Striving Readers funds will be used to purchase tablets including teacher training and technical support.

5. Pay for assessment materials required by SRCL to administer 3 times a year.

6. Pay for contracted services for Pre-K training.

7. Pay cost for Pre-K teachers and assistants to attend state and national conferences.

8. Pay cost associated with parent workshops that may include transportation, materials, and supplies.

9. Pay cost for early literacy training for campus literacy/instructional coaches.

10. Pay instructional materials and stipend costs associated with summer, Saturday Academy, and after school tutoring.

11. Pay cost for books for families with children Birth to 5.