School Profile

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School Information

System Name:	Rockdale County
School or Center Name:	Conyers Middle School
System ID	722
School ID	0278

Level of School

Middle (6-8)

Principal

Name:	Allison Barbour
Position:	Principal
Phone:	770-483-3371
Email:	abarbour@rockdale.k12.ga.us

School contact information

(the persons with rights to work on the application)

Name:	Elizabeth Walker
Position:	Educator
Phone:	770-483-3371 ext. 23172
Email:	ewalker@rockdale.k12.ga.us

Grades represented in the building

example pre-k to 6

6-8

Number of Teachers in School

70

FTE Enrollment

859

Grant Assurances

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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

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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

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

SRCL General Information Packet-Cohort 4

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

- Yes

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

SRCL Scoring Rubric-Cohort 4

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

- Yes

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

SRCL Required Assessments Chart

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

- Yes

Assessments

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

- I Agree

Unallowable Expenditures

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

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

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

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

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

Advertisements, Promotional or Marketing Items

Decorative Items

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

Land acquisition

Capital Improvements, Permanent Renovations

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

Dues to organizations, federations or societies for personal benefits

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

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

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

- I Agree

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.

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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.

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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.

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III. Incorporation of Clauses

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

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

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

11/07/2014
Date

Signature of Applicant's Authorized Agency Head (required)

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

11/12/14
Date

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

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

N/A
Date (if applicable)

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Fiscal Agent Memo of Understanding

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

Fiscal Agent/Applicant Required Signatures:

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

Please sign in blue ink.

Name of **Fiscal Agent's** Contact Person: Richard Autry

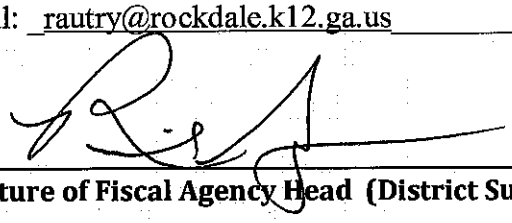
Position/Title of Fiscal Agent's Contact Person: Superintendent

Address: 954 North Main Street

City: Conyers Zip: 30012

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

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



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

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

10/29/2014
Date (required)

Brief History of the System

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

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

System Demographics

RCPS has experienced increasing numbers of students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. District-wide, the student population is 65% African American, 18% White, and 12% Hispanic. All of our eighteen "traditional" schools are Title I eligible. The free and reduced meal rate in RCPS is currently 71% with some schools as high as 91%, up from 63% in 2009. 99.8% of RCPS certified staff are "Highly Qualified."

Current Priorities and Strategic Planning

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

1. Create a rigorous system of teaching and learning that empowers students to define and achieve their educational success.
2. Create safe and supportive learning environments that inspire and activate the love of learning.
3. Create a culture that nurtures individual uniqueness and embraces the diversity of our school community.
4. Provide optimum resources to support a world-class educational system.

5. Continually maximize the district's capacity through the individual growth of each person.
6. Engage students, parents, community members and other stakeholders to build an alliance for student success.

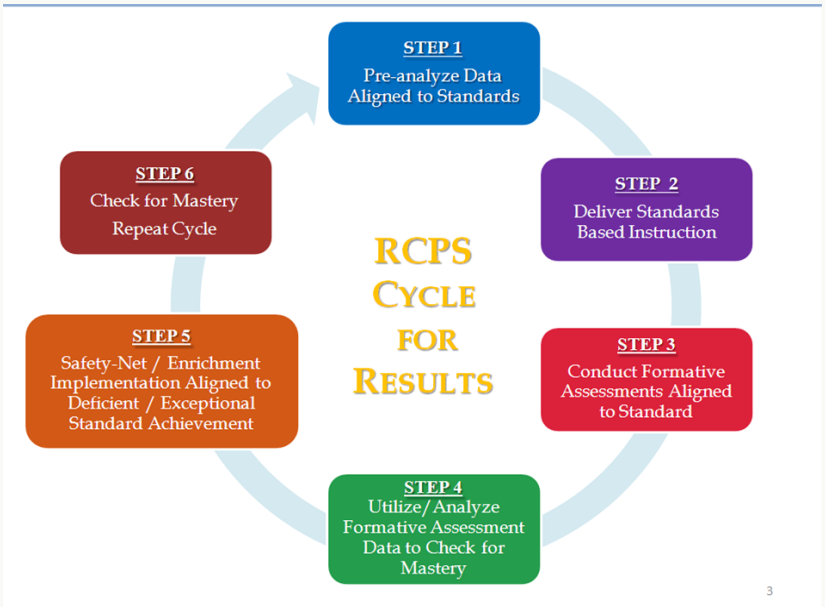
RCPS has a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that will 1) ensure educational equity; 2) accelerate student achievement by supporting each student's unique learning needs and individual interests; and 3) help each student achieve his or her greatest potential through a wide variety of strategies,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

Current Management Structure

Mrs. Shirley Chesser, Chief Academic Officer, will oversee all management of the Striving Readers grant. Ms. Erika Tucker, RCPS English and Language Arts Coordinator, will serve as project manager. A Striving Readers Support Specialist will be identified once the project begins and all will provide technical support to participating schools. All schools in Cohort 4 will implement their own Striving Readers grant with principals, teachers, and literacy teams overseeing day-to-day instruction and monitoring of student progress.

Past Instructional Initiatives

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



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

Literacy Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on Common Core GPS. High schools and middle schools currently use the Pearson Common Core Literature series. Elementary schools are using Story Town.

Literacy Assessments used District Wide

- STAR Early Literacy assessment from Renaissance Learning is the reading assessment for K-2. Grades 3-10 take the Scholastic Reading Inventory. Both assessments are given three times a year.
- In addition, we administer the Write Score mock writing assessment to grades 3, 5, and 8 and 10th, which this year included 2-3 reading passages along with the prompt. The old version with just a prompt and no passages was given twice in the fall to grades 3, 5, 8, and 10.
- The District ELA Benchmarks are given three times a year for grades 1-8, 9th & 10th.
- In addition, we receive data from other assessments such as SLO's, ITBS, CogAT, CRCT, and beginning in December for high school, the new Georgia Milestones assessment.

Need for a Striving Reader Project

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

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

District Management Plan and Key Personnel

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

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

The RCPS Striving Readers Program Manager will be responsible for managing the grant operations, implementing related activities, coordinating relevant meetings, preparing and/or disseminating information and surveys to schools and administrators as an evaluation tool to determine project success and needs for improvement, collaborating with district and school level administration in all program implementation(s), collaborating with partners on relevant activities, establishing a plan to ensure sustainability of grant initiatives, establishing goals and objectives of the grant that are aligned with the philosophy within the RCPS strategic plan, overseeing funding for the grant, and collecting and analyzing data to ensure and evaluate the quality of the implementation of the service learning program. RCPS will post the job description for the Project Manager no later than 2 weeks after the start of grant period.

At the building level, each school principal will be responsible for overseeing the grant at his/her school. The Program Manager and District Literacy Team will meet as soon as the grant is awarded to begin planning to prioritize needs, create budgets, and establish timelines for plan implementation. Budget decisions will be made by the literacy team at each school. All requisitions will be approved by the principal of the school and also by the *RCPS Striving Readers* Program Manager. Our established procedures for internal control for federal programs will be followed. All school coordinators will meet monthly to discuss project implementation and progress. Day to day implementation of the literacy plan at each school will involve instructional coaches, assistant principals, lead teachers and the Literacy Team. *Striving Reader* goals and plans will be integrated into our school improvement plans and our system strategic plan.

Experience of the Applicant

Rockdale County Public Schools oversees an annual budget of approximately $129 million including federal, state, and local funds. As one of the only school systems in Georgia to continue to operate debt-free, RCPS has a well-established internal and external structure for successfully managing large projects as evidenced by its career academy (the largest in the state of Georgia,) virtual campus, Georgia Race to the Top grant, Safe Schools/Healthy Students federal grant, Math-Science Partnership grants, Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools federal grant, Governor's Office Innovation Fund grant and year-round pre-kindergarten Early Learning Center model. RCPS has managed partnerships of similar size and scope, through a participatory planning process with all partners – more specifically, the STARS project (Safe Schools/Healthy Students) brings together community members to create a "Support Team for All Rockdale Students". The STARS Project has seen improvement in the areas of bullying, mental health services, early childhood education and alcohol/tobacco/ substance abuse prevention. Additionally, Rockdale County is the birthplace of the Georgia System of Care Model – a network of community partners creating a menu of comprehensive, needs-based wrap-around services for children and their families. The RCPS Early Learning Center and its supportive programs allow many of the county's neediest children to be prepared for success when they begin Kindergarten. Additionally, as a result of sound budgeting and community support/confidence, students are benefitting from enhanced learning opportunities through technology, school safety and improved facilities funded by the fourth E-SPLOST referendum.

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

RCPS has no audit findings in the last three years to report.

Conyers Middle School Narrative

Since the opening of its doors in 1979, much has changed around and within Conyers Middle School (CMS). Shifts in leadership, learner and teacher population, instructional practice, community partners, and extracurricular opportunities have all served to develop our school as a unique, evolving institution of learning. Despite these shifts, an unwavering quest of "Success for All" has endured throughout the years, and this pursuit of excellence id evidenced through a rich heritage of achievement and recognition in academics and athletics. Our evolution as a learning community continues, as we seek to support the achievement of our unique learners with the context of 21st Century curriculum, instruction, assessment, and accountability. Our 134,602 square-foot facility offers multiple opportunities to develop the young adolescent as an evolving learner and individual. Our school offers learning space for core curricular areas, intervention courses, and connections course offerings that include fine arts, business applications, technology, foreign language, and an AVID (Advancements Via Individual Determination) elective.

The context of our community offers a unique opportunity to defy the norm. Currently, CMS is a Title I school that serves approximately 894 unique learners who exhibit diversity in race, ethnicity, socioeconomics, exceptionality, and language proficiency. Students' diversity is reflected quantitatively using the following racial and ethnic distribution: 68.84% African American, 17.9% Caucasian, 9.8% Hispanic, 0.9% Asian, and 2.6% Multiracial. Over the past three years, this racial and ethnic distribution has remained similar. However, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students—those who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program—has demonstrated a growth trend from 75% to 79% to 84%, respectively, over the past three years. With respect to exceptionality, 11.1% of the student population receives special education/ Tier IV support through a variety of tailored models, including self-contained (6th grade), resource, and inclusion offerings to support student learning. Moreover, 12% of our students are identified as Gifted, and they receive instruction through self-contained and collaborative models. While Limited English Proficient enrollees have declined, CMS supports the achievement of these learners, which comprise 2% of the student population.

To strategically assist and support each student's academic success throughout his or her educational career, the CMS Literacy team was formed. The focus of the literacy team is not only to enhance reading and writing skills within English/Language Arts courses, but across all content areas. Since our data supports the need of literacy interventions in Social Studies and Science, it was imperative to develop a literacy team that would wholeheartedly work to develop a plan to improve gains in speaking, reading, and writing across the curriculum. The literacy team consists of the following professionals:

Name	**Position**
Allison Barbour	Principal
Fannetta Gooden	Assistant Principal
Anterro Graham	Assistant Principal
Marcia Spivery-Parker	Counselor
Zandra Hunter-Jackson	Counselor
Keyona Revere	English Department Chair
Derrick Ward	Math Department Chair
Nicka Grimes	Social Studies Department Chair
Yvonne Hill	Science Department Chair
Suzanne Stripling	Registrar
Fannetta Gooden	Testing Coordinator
TaShauna Marion	Prevention and Intervention Specialist
Elizabeth Walker	Teacher
Jennifer Toney	Teacher
Ardena Kinsey	Teacher
Jean O'Kelley	Media Specialist

The CMS administrators, faculty, and staff continue to learn and evolve professionally to meet the needs of today's learners. Collectively, the faculty and staff is 62% African American and 38% Caucasian. Of the 61% classroom teachers, 61% hold a Master's degree or higher. There are also classified staff members that include office staff, Tier IV paraprofessionals, custodians, a parent liaison, and food service professionals that support learning and operations at CMS. While certified and classified staff transition has been moderate over the past three years, the greatest change has been a complete shift in administrative personnel—principal and assistant principal. The 2014-15 school year will begin the first full year with the current principal and two assistant principals.

The CMS community landscape reflects other unique characteristics. Named after the county seat of Rockdale County, CMS is located twenty-four miles east of Atlanta, near Interstate 20. As the only Rockdale County middle school north of Interstate 20, Conyers Middle School encompasses the largest geographical attendance zone of the district's four middle schools. While there are a variety of zip codes served within the CMS attendance zone, American Community Survey data by the U.S. Census Bureau reports a median annual household income of $46, 319 for CMS families within the zip code where the school resides, 30012. Slightly over 74% of individuals within this zip code had an educational attainment of high school graduate or higher, and 24% of families with children of 18 years old have income below the poverty level.

We believe that our unique challenges associated with our community context offer unique opportunities for our students and our entire school community. There is significant research that indicates that student achievement correlates inversely with socioeconomic status. However, through the diligence and relentless efforts district, school-based, and community supporters, our school has continued to maintain a positive growth trend in student achievement, and thus, defy the norm. The realities of our contextual challenges are heightened as we embrace new systems of curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability that emphasize college and career readiness for all. When these external shifts are juxtaposed internal transitions in human, fiscal, and physical resources, the challenge becomes even greater for our unique context. We accept the responsibility that our challenges offer, through an unwavering commitment to excellence, as we continue to evolve as a school community. Consequently, while proud of our past, we look to the future in order to remain a relevant learning organization. In alignment with our district's Vision for the Future, we are making plans to offer specialty options including key areas within the STEAM area. In conjunction with this planning, we await the completion of our expansion and renovations that will enhance both our physical and operational workspaces. In addition, the greatly anticipated technological infrastructure will improve our ability to meet the needs of diverse learners in engaging, relevant ways. Thus, using our strategic plan as our guide and the support of our district and community, we will continue to work toward achieving our vision of "Success for all students".

III. Needs Assessment

A. Needs Assessment Description

The Georgia Literacy needs Assessment Survey for SRCL Cohort 4 was administered to certified staff. Results were compiled and analyzed. In September 2014, the Conyers Middle School Literacy Leadership Team was formed in response to the need for enhanced literacy instruction. The Literacy Leadership Team reviewed student data to determine areas of concern.

B. Assessments Used
   a. The Georgia Literacy Needs Assessment Survey
   b. Benchmark Data and Local Assessment Data for Schools
   c. The School Improvement Survey provided and based on School Keys
   d. Strategic School Improvement Plan

C. Root Cause/Underlying Causes

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

   a. Building Block 1: Leadership
      i. Professional development for all teachers from a renowned trainer in the area of literacy is needed.
      ii. Follow up professional learning needs to be provided for all new teachers on an as needed basis to ensure that all teachers are engaged in the school efforts to increase literacy.
      iii. Administration does not use a literacy checklist when conducting walkthroughs.

Root Causes: Currently, only English/Language Arts teachers are trained in best literacy practices; however, CMS's Math percentages on assessments reveal that it is necessary for Math teachers to be trained in those same practices to increase student comprehension of content and domain-specific vocabulary and effective reading and writing strategies.

   b. Building Block 2: Continuity of Instruction
      i. A school-wide writing rubric that is aligned with the CCGPS to set clear expectations and goals for performance is not currently in place. 20% of teachers feel they need additional professional learning in order to effectively teach writing to their students.
      ii. Content area teachers see literacy instruction as the responsibility of English/Language Arts teachers. 13% of teachers feel they need additional professional learning in order to teach literacy skills in the content areas.

Root Causes: The 2014-2015 SRI scores reveal that 34% of students have not grasped the necessary basic reading skills to successfully engage in a variety of standards-based activities and assessments. These low scores prove there is a need for additional literacy support in all content areas. 22% of teachers do not feel confident in their ability to use Lexile scores to match students to texts.

c. Building Block 3: Ongoing Formative and Summative Assessment
    i. Collaboration across the content areas is needed so that all teachers can provide literacy instruction for students.
    ii. Define a process for selecting appropriate interventions for struggling readers. 65% of teachers feel they need additional professional learning in order to effectively differentiate lessons to meet students' needs.
    iii. Data teams training is needed for all teachers in order to use data to impact instruction.

Root Causes: Because there is a lack in professional development centered on literacy interventions, CMS's students haven't been exposed to effective standards-based instruction across content areas. As a result, assessment scores have been stagnant and in some cases, have decreased over the past two years.

d. Building Block 4: Best Practices in Literacy Instruction
    i. Teachers do not have the tools to engage students in the writing process and provide immediate feedback. 24% feel they do not have the resources needed to teach writing as outlined in the CCGPS.
    ii. Continued focus on writing standards for every subject as part of the CCGPS.
    iii. Teachers do not have the training or materials to include literacy skills in all content areas. 50% of teachers feel that having limited informational texts prevents them from meeting the needs of their students.

Root Causes: While students have been provided writing instruction in ELA classes, students have not always been provided with immediate feedback to effectively and quickly identify weaknesses in writing, nor with opportunities to collaborate during the writing process. As a result, many students have not received the necessary tools to correct their writing mistakes.

e. Building Block 5: System of Tiered Intervention (RTI) for ALL Students
    i. Lesson plans and walkthroughs are not used to monitor literacy instruction.
    ii. Escalate use of universal screener data in all subject areas to identify students needing intervention.

Root Causes: Since there is no consistent reading block for all students who have basic or below basic Lexile scores, many students do not receive explicit reading instruction. Providing students with early intervention opportunities will combat CMS's low Lexile levels and increase student literacy.

f. Building Block 6: Professional Learning
    i. Professional development needs to be offered in literacy for veteran and new teachers.
    ii. Monitor and support the integration of disciplinary literacy through a literacy checklist.

Root Causes: The lack of professional development on effective literacy practices across all contents has resulted in a school-wide decrease in reading comprehension as it pertains to Lexile scores. Ensuring that all teachers are trained on effective literacy practices will ensure that all students are receiving the best researched-based instruction to promote literacy across content areas.

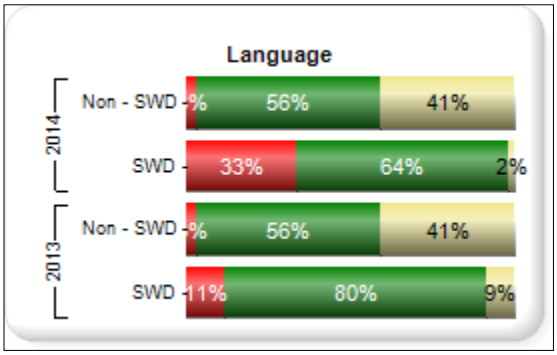
D. School Staff Involved in Needs Assessment

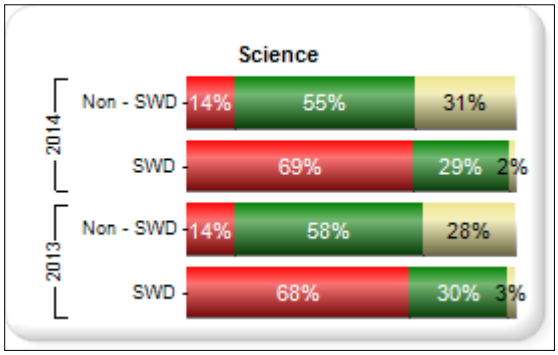
The Needs Assessment included all certified and classified staff at Conyers Middle School as well as parents and students.

E. Disaggregated Data:
Conyers Middle School's overall CRCT scores in 2014 were strong, with over 95% of students meeting or exceeding standards for Reading and over 81% meeting or exceeding standards for Math; however, discrepancies exist between sub-groups. Additional data is provided in the Analysis of Student and Teacher data section.

Conyers Middle School's CRCT Data

Students with Disabilities





Socio-economic Status

School Year	Subject	Subgroup	Did Not Meet	Meets/Exceeds
2013-2014	Reading	*ED*	*3%*	*97%*
		Non-ED	3%	97%
	Science	*ED*	*21%*	*79%*
		Non-ED	15%	85%
	Social Studies	*ED*	*17%*	*83%*
		Non-ED	17%	83%
2012-2013	Reading	*ED*	*1%*	*99%*
		Non-ED	3%	97%
	Science	*ED*	*20%*	*80%*
		Non-ED	14%	86%
	Social Studies	*ED*	*14%*	*86%*
		Non-ED	10%	90%

F. Areas of Concern Related to Research-Based Practices

a. Building Block 1: Need for Literacy Leadership Team at Conyers Middle School

Currently:

- The administration has assimilated a list of current strategies and literacy initiatives at the school.
- A literacy team was formed with membership from each grade level, content area and connections teachers along with the RTI coordinator and the Media Specialist.
- Procedures to collect data regarding the analysis of school, teacher, and student level data have been utilized with the mindset of enhancing student achievement.

Moving Forward:

- Implement school-wide professional development to train all teachers in strategies for teaching literacy and writing.
- Formalize the usage of data collection, analysis, and usage in data related to literacy goals.
- Assess the needs of teachers and students for materials to support literacy initiatives.
- Acquire resources to meet literacy needs, through purchasing, implementation of available technology tools, and engagement of community organizations.
- Engage parents and community stakeholders in the literacy plan, with the goal of increasing literacy for all students, across all subject areas.
- Select or develop a walk-through observation form, such as the Literacy Instruction Checklist, to ensure consistency of effective instructional practices.

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

Currently:

- Utilizing data briefings to discuss statistical evidence from assessments (school-wide and county-wide)
- Having weekly content meetings for collaborative planning and research-based strategy implementation
- Analysis of formative assessments to gauge authenticity in grade-level, team, and content meetings
- Using data to drive instruction and assessment development
- Aligning lesson plans to fit the backwards planning method
- Discussing effective lesson activities to reinforce cross-curricular configuration

Moving Forward:

- Continue data briefings, and begin utilizing a shared online tool for agendas, minutes, and feedback to maximize collaboration between teams.
- View model lessons through peer observation and expert videos available online to help all teachers implement best practices in literacy instruction
- Literacy Leadership Team members, Language Arts teachers, Reading Specialist, and/or Instructional Coaches will assist as needed with the incorporation of literacy instruction into all subject areas.
- Showcase evidence of student learning success on the school or class websites and through blogs.

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

Currently:

- Teachers develop a professional growth plan which aligns with TKES and professional needs.
- Teachers meet weekly with trained professionals in content, grade level, and/or team to analyze data, provide knowledge, plan rigorous and engaging lessons, monitor student progress, and determine areas of growth and weakness for both teachers and students.
- Teachers attend RTI training to learn how to develop appropriate interventions for struggling students.
- Administration provides effective feedback and suggestions using the TKES checklist during walkthroughs to improve instructional practices and strategies.

Moving Forward:

- Provide ongoing school-based professional development from an outside expert on incorporating literacy strategies in all subject areas.
- Use videos of CMS teachers and/or outside experts showcasing best practices in literacy instruction.
- Monitor the implementation of a formal school literacy plan that aligns with goals outlined in our school improvement plan.
- Literacy Leadership Team members act as facilitators to promote literacy goals during weekly PLC meetings, and team data meetings.
- Administration will continue to provide feedback and suggestions on literacy strategies during walkthroughs.
- Encourage all teachers to share information learned in professional learning sessions.

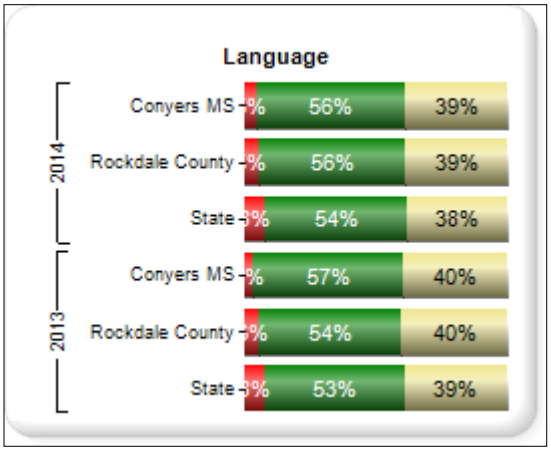
Analysis and Identification of Student and Teacher Data

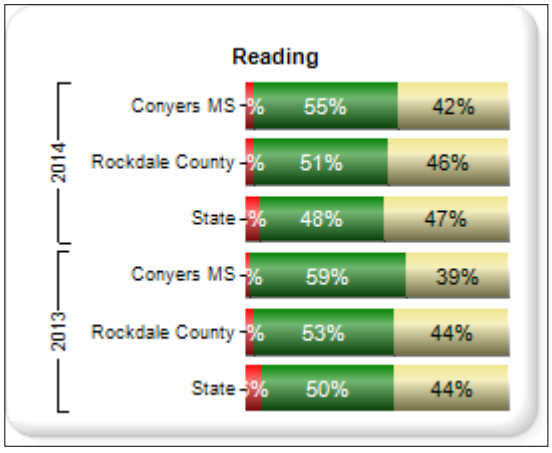
Conyers Middle School used the analysis of applicable data along with the literacy needs assessment to develop the goals and objectives identified in the Project Plan section.

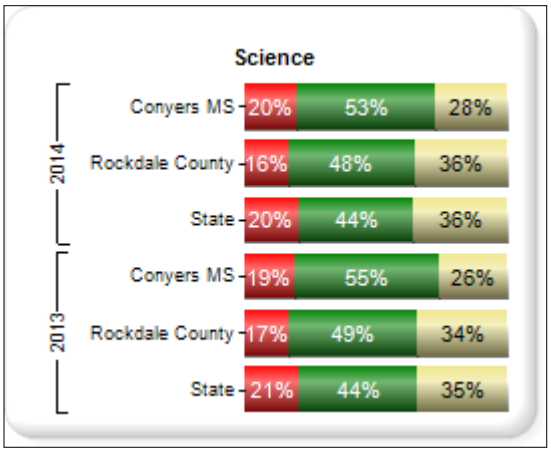
Conyers Middle School has over the past 2 years remained relatively consistent in the percentage of students Meeting/Exceeding the standard in language. However, the CRCT data shows a downward trend in social studies, science, and reading. This trend indicates a weakness in the area of comprehending informational texts. Additionally, CMS continues to perform below both the district and the state on the Georgia 8th Grade Writing Assessment. A significant gap exists between the SWD and all other subgroups on all assessments.

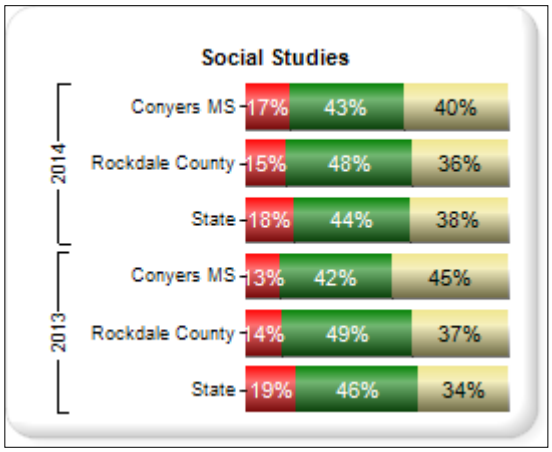
A. Assessments by Grade Level

CRCT by Subject Area









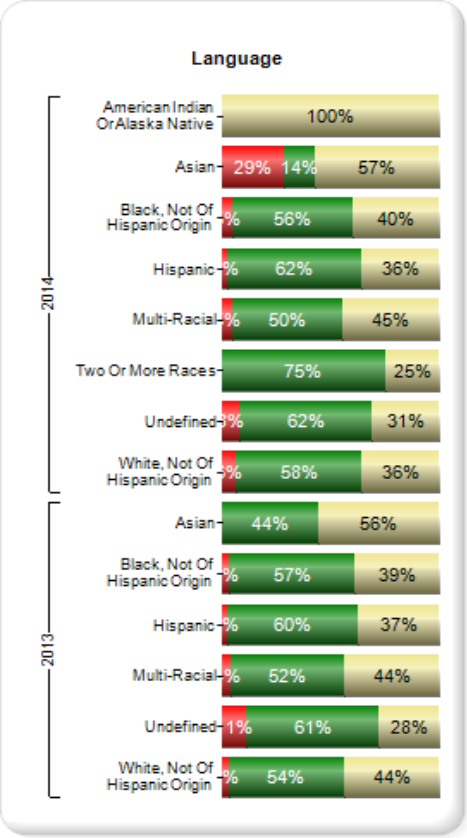
Georgia 8th Grade Writing Assessment

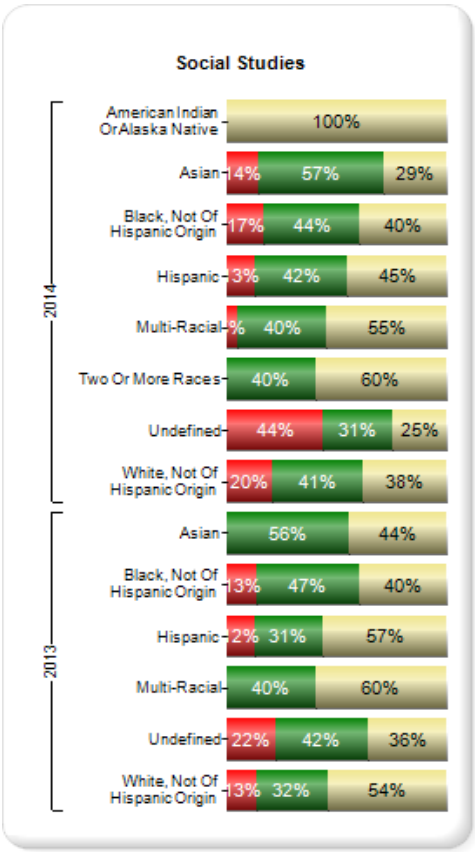
	2012-2013		2013-2014	
	DNM	**M/E**	**DNM**	**M/E**
CMS	23%	77%	30%	70%
RCPS	14%	86%	23%	77%
State	18%	82%	20%	80%

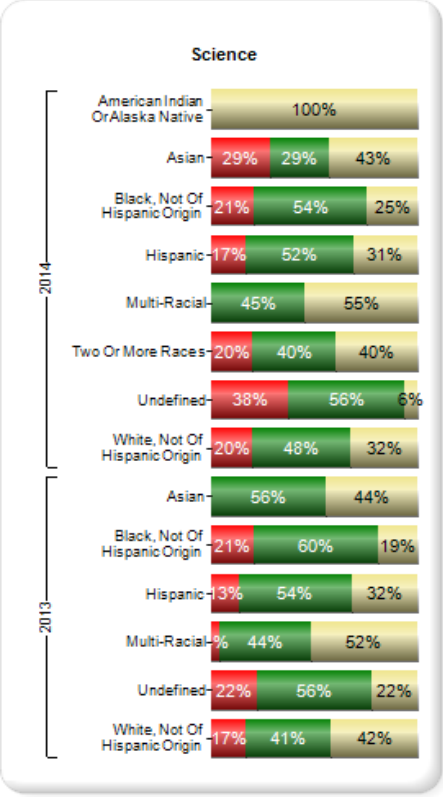
School Year	Subgroup	Did Not Meet	Meets/Exceeds
2013-2014	Total Population	30%	70%
	SWD	*65%*	*35%*
	Non-SWD	27%	73%
	ED	*32%*	*68%*
	Non-ED	23%	77%
	White	33%	67%
	Black	31%	69%
	Hispanic	24%	76%
	Asian	0%	100%
2012-2013	Total Population	23%	77%
	SWD	*66%*	*35%*
	Non-SWD	16%	84%
	ED	*24%*	*76%*
	Non-ED	17%	83%
	White	20%	80%
	Black	22%	78%
	Hispanic	32%	68%
	Asian	0%	100%
	Multi-racial	20%	80%

B. Disaggregated Data

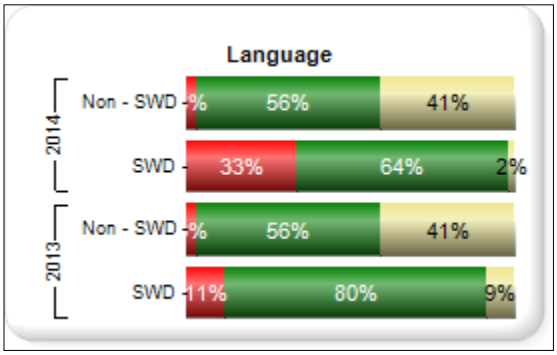
Ethnicity Data (CRCT)

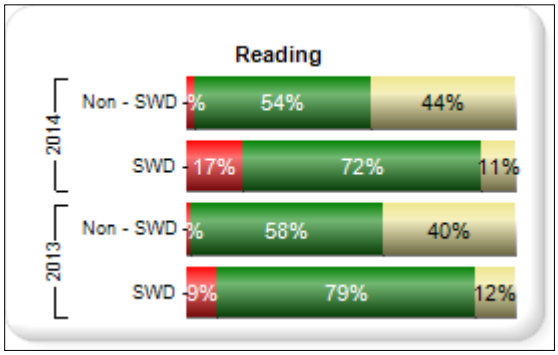

Language
2014
American Indian Or Alaska Native 100%
Asian 29% 14% 57%
Black, Not Of Hispanic Origin 56% 40%
Hispanic 62% 36%
Multi-Racial 50% 45%
Two Or More Races 75% 25%
Undefined 62% 31%
White, Not Of Hispanic Origin 58% 36%
2013
Asian 44% 56%
Black, Not Of Hispanic Origin 57% 39%
Hispanic 60% 37%
Multi-Racial 52% 44%
Undefined 1% 61% 28%
White, Not Of Hispanic Origin 54% 44%

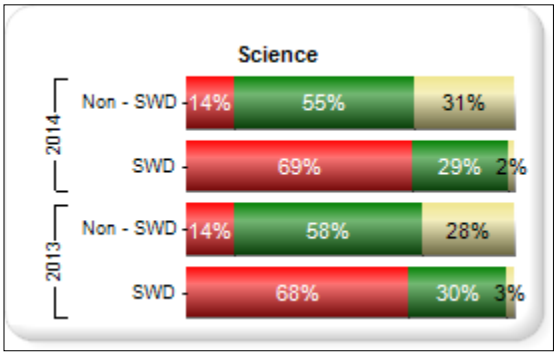

Social Studies
2014
American Indian Or Alaska Native 100%
Asian 14% 57% 29%
Black, Not Of Hispanic Origin 17% 44% 40%
Hispanic 3% 42% 45%
Multi-Racial 40% 55%
Two Or More Races 40% 60%
Undefined 44% 31% 25%
White, Not Of Hispanic Origin 20% 41% 38%
2013
Asian 56% 44%
Black, Not Of Hispanic Origin 13% 47% 40%
Hispanic 2% 31% 57%
Multi-Racial 40% 60%
Undefined 22% 42% 36%
White, Not Of Hispanic Origin 13% 32% 54%

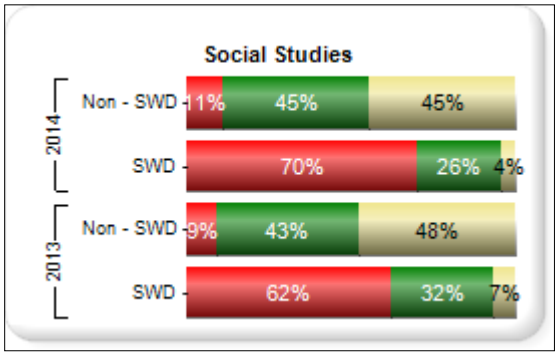

Science
2014
American Indian Or Alaska Native 100%
Asian 29% 29% 43%
Black, Not Of Hispanic Origin 21% 54% 25%
Hispanic 17% 52% 31%
Multi-Racial 45% 55%
Two Or More Races 20% 40% 40%
Undefined 38% 56% 6%
White, Not Of Hispanic Origin 20% 48% 32%
2013
Asian 56% 44%
Black, Not Of Hispanic Origin 21% 60% 19%
Hispanic 13% 54% 32%
Multi-Racial 44% 52%
Undefined 22% 56% 22%
White, Not Of Hispanic Origin 17% 41% 42%

Students with Disabilities









Socio-Economic Status

School Year	Subject	Subgroup	Did Not Meet	Meets/Exceeds
2013-2014	Reading	*ED*	*3%*	*97%*
		Non-ED	3%	97%
	Science	*ED*	*21%*	*79%*
		Non-ED	15%	85%
	Social Studies	*ED*	*17%*	*83%*
		Non-ED	17%	83%
2012-2013	Reading	*ED*	*1%*	*99%*
		Non-ED	3%	97%
	Science	*ED*	*20%*	*80%*
		Non-ED	14%	86%
	Social Studies	*ED*	*14%*	*86%*
		Non-ED	10%	90%

C. Identified Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

CMS has worked diligently to close the gaps between the economically disadvantaged (ED) subgroup and their peers. In all areas except science, the ED subgroup performed on par with their peers in the 2014 CRCT.

Weaknesses

Large disparities exist between the SWD and non-SWD populations. In all areas, there is a downward data trend for the SWD subgroup on the CRCT between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. The ED and SWD subgroups were both outperformed by their grade-level peers on the Georgia 8th Grade Writing Assessment. While no large disparities exist between racial subgroups on the Georgia 8th Grade Writing Assessment, CMS's students continue to score below the district and the state on this assessment.

D and E. Teacher Data

Teacher Data

Number of Years of Experience	Administrators	Teachers
0-3 years	0	34
4-10 years	3	33
11-15 years	1	3
15 or more years	0	2
Certificate Level	**Administrators**	**Teachers**
BT-4	0	5
BT-5	0	1
T-1	0	1
T-4	0	9
T-5	1	42
T-6	2	11
T-7	1	2

G. District-Prescribed Data

Universal Screeners (SRI)

School Year	Grade Level	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient
2014-2015	6	42%	36%	14%
	7	36%	35%	17%
	8	24%	34%	24%
	Total	*34%*	*35%*	*18%*
2013-2014	6	61%	28%	7%
	7	47%	36%	10%
	8	30%	37%	42%
	Total	*46%*	*34%*	*12%*
School Year	**Grade Level**	**Below Basic**	**Basic**	**Proficient**
2014-2015	6	42%	36%	14%
	7	36%	35%	17%
	8	24%	34%	24%

Benchmark Assessments *(% of meets/exceeds)*

School Year	Grade Level	Month	Does Not Meet	Meets
2014-2015	**6**	September	15%	85%
	7	September	23%	77%
	8	September	15%	85%
2013-2014	**6**	September	28%	72%
		December	36%	64%
		March	22%	78%
	7	September	18%	82%
		December	16%	84%
		March	18%	82%
	8	September	21%	79%
		December	11%	89%
		March	19%	81%

F. Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate an increase in writing skills across content areas.	**Goal 2: Students will improve reading fluency as shown on the Scholastic Reading Inventory.**	**Goal 3: Students will demonstrate increased reading comprehension and writing skills on district-wide assessments.**
Objective 1: Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas.		
Objective 2: Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams.		
Objective 3: Establish an infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.		
Objective 4: Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students. (The What, p. 9)		
Objective 5: Use information developed from the school-based data teams to inform the RTI process.		

H. Professional Learning

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) allow educators the opportunity for collaborative planning, data meetings, and intervention development to improve literacy across content areas. At Conyers Middle School, teachers meet weekly with trained professionals in content, grade level, and/or teams to analyze data, provide knowledge, plan rigorous and engaging lessons, monitor student progress, and determine areas of growth and weakness for both teachers and students. On a district level, educators are exposed to a monthly selection of learning opportunities to enhance instruction through assessment strategies, reading and writing strategies across the curriculum, and new instructional approaches to teaching and learning. All administrators participate in the district Instructional Support Team, which provides administrators and district staff, such as curriculum coordinators, with monthly professional learning. Administrators also attend monthly principal meetings where they engage in and lead professional learning with principals from all over the district. Teachers and administrators attend annual district-wide professional learning days which provide individualized options for various grade levels and subject areas. Participation in school and district collaboratives are required of all teachers.

Georgia K-12 Literacy Plan

Building Block 1. Engaged Leadership

A. Action: Demonstrate commitment to learn about and support evidence-based literacy instruction in his/her school

"Why?"

Leadership is a crucial component to having a successful literacy program. Engaged leadership at the school and county level is essential to providing continuity of instruction and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders. According to our reading data, a significant percentage of our students are not reading on a level that would be considered college and career ready. Our administrative team is fully committed to the enhancement of literacy for our students.

"What" we are doing now:

The leadership team at Conyers Middle School strives for and promotes professional development opportunities for faculty in the areas of reading comprehension, fluency, and composition. The leadership team participates in literacy instruction with his or her school (The What, p. 5). The elements of these professional development opportunities include:

- Promoting advancements in literacy through involvement in state-sponsored trainings
- Improving student literacy through researched-based strategies
- Differentiation across content areas to increase the literacy of students of various learning abilities

"How" we plan to move forward:

To increase student literacy, the Conyers Middle School administration will implement the following instructional strategies:

- Professional development for all teachers from a nationally renowned trainer in the area of literacy
- Built in, dedicated protected reading time daily for all students and staff to focus on literacy instruction and pleasure reading (The What, p. 5)
- Regular analysis of data regarding literacy will be used to drive planning and instruction across all content areas including connections courses (The What, p.5)
- Follow up professional learning training provided for all new teachers on an as needed basis to ensure that all teachers are engaged in the school efforts to increase literacy (The How, p. 20)

Georgia K-12 Literacy Plan

B. Action: Organize a Literacy Leadership Team

"Why?"

In alignment with Georgia's Literacy Plan: The Why, the goal of our school-developed literacy plan is that students at Conyers Middle School will become lifelong learners who have a yearning for reading. We want them to become self-sustaining learners that will become substantial contributors to their societies and to the international global society.

"What" are we doing now:

Our leadership team has worked diligently to divide the plan to implement best practices and strategies to improve literacy instruction.

- First, the administration has assimilated a list of current strategies and literacy initiatives at the school.
- A literacy team was formed with membership from each grade level, content area and connections teachers along with the RTI coordinator and the Media Specialist.
- Procedures to collect data regarding the analysis of school, teacher, and student level data have been utilized with the mindset of edifying and enhancing student achievement.

"How" we plan to move forward:

The Conyers Middle School Literacy Leadership Team, under the leadership of the administration, will guide the development of a literacy plan at the school level in the following ways:

- Implement school-wide Professional Development to train all teachers in strategies for teaching literacy and writing.
- Formalize the usage of data collection, analysis, and usage in data related to literacy goals (The What, p. 5).
- Assess the needs of teachers and students for materials to support literacy initiatives.
- Acquire resources to meet literacy needs, through purchasing, implementation of available technology tools, and engagement of community organizations.
- Engage parents and community stakeholders in the literacy plan, with the goal of increasing literacy for all students, across all subject areas.
- Select or develop a walk-through observation form, such as the Literacy Instruction Checklist, to ensure consistency of effective instructional practices (The How, p. 21; The What, p. 5)

C. Action: Maximize the use of time and personnel through scheduling and collaborative planning

"Why?"

Our school's focus is literacy instruction. Planning instruction is concentrated so that CCGPS are fully implemented with fidelity. Taken into consideration are unique learning needs of English Language Learners, Tier 2 and 3 students in the RTI process, and Special Education Population.

Georgia K-12 Literacy Plan

The need for extended time for literacy has been identified based on the CRCT data for science and social studies, which reveal an increased number of students in the Did Not Meet category. The incorporation of literacy skills into the content areas had been clearly articulated in the CCGPS.

"What" are we doing now:

It is vital to maintain stability in the promotion of literacy instruction across content areas with fidelity to ensure our students—who have major skill deficits in literacy—receive the necessary strategies for improvement. This is dependent upon the frequent, effective management of scheduled time for literacy intervention and systematic collaboration among educators.

- Professional Learning Communities (PLC) allow educators the opportunity for collaborative planning, data meetings, and intervention development to improve literacy across content areas.
- Response to Intervention (RTI) strategies are chosen based on individual student skill deficits. These strategies help facilitate personalized instructional plans which cater to the development of literacy skills that students have not yet mastered.
- Academic Power Period (APP) is used as a means to bridge content specific gaps in education with a literacy focus. Each content area has incorporated both reading and writing strategies to assist students in literacy development across the curriculum (The What, p. 6).

"How" we plan to move forward:

In order to maximize literacy instruction during the school day, we will take the following steps:

- Teachers at CMS will be trained during designated PLC time to integrate literacy instruction into lesson plans and everyday scholarly activities. (The How, p. 23; The What, p. 6)
- A portion of RTI and team data meetings will be used to analyze Scholastic Reading Inventory, RTI intervention data, and other literacy data for use in all subject areas.
- The Academic Power Period (APP) will be used as protected time for reading and literacy instruction, to ensure that all students receive direct instruction in targeted literacy strategies, according to need. Students will also have designated time to individually read materials of their choosing (The What, p. 6).
- Ensure that schedules provide for a protected 2-4 hours of literacy instruction across content areas (The How, p. 22; The What, p. 6).

D. Action: Create a school culture in which teachers across the curriculum are responsible for literacy instruction as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

"Why?"

At Conyers Middle School, we realize that reading instruction is an area in which we need great improvement.

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- One in four students in grades four through twelve was a struggling reader in 2005, and fewer than one-third of public school 8th graders read at or above grade level (Perie, Grigg, & Donahue, 2005).

- Sixty-nine percent of 8th grade students fall below the proficient level in their ability to comprehend the meaning of text at grade level (Lee, Griggs, & Donahue, 2007; NAEP, 2007).

- Twenty-five percent of students read below the basic level, which means they do not have sufficient reading ability to understand and learn from text at their grade level (Kamil et al., 2008).

"What" are we doing now:

The Conyers Middle School faculty has participated in professional development opportunities which had a literacy emphasis and provided strategies and instructional practices to motivate student achievement.

- Grade-level meetings have been conducted for collaboration among content areas. These meetings were held not only to strengthen student abilities in reading and writing, but to also increase the effectiveness of literacy instruction in all classrooms.
- Student data is being used as a means to assess areas of growth and to develop interventions which will be implemented within the classroom to promote increases in literacy. These interventions will be reinforced by day tutors who will provide academic support for a small group of students within the classroom. This data is presented and evaluated in team meetings to determine interventions that may be used across content areas to maximize the percentage of student increase in mastery.
- The literacy and administrative team has met to identify areas of concern as it pertains to Benchmark, SLO, and 4.5 assessment scores. These teams have collaborated and begun the implementation phase (instructional must haves) in preparation for the Georgia Milestones assessment. These teams have also compiled a list of areas which need professional learning development.

"How" we plan to move forward:

As stated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS), it is the responsibility of all teachers to incorporate aspects of literacy development into their teaching. This is evolving from a model where literacy strategies were primarily seen as the domain of ELA teachers. As this evolution continues, it is imperative that all teachers become familiar with both the literacy needs of our students, as well as best practices for meeting these needs, and do so in similar ways to ensure continuity of instruction across content areas. In order for this to occur the following steps will be taken:

- School-wide ongoing professional development from outside experts in the literacy field. This will increase teacher familiarity with activities and strategies to teach literacy across content areas. (The How, p. 24-25; The What, p. 6)
- The importance of literacy for college and career readiness will receive emphasis through expanding various existing school initiatives—the AVID program, Career Day, mentoring programs, and our future STEAM school specialty program. These initiatives will include staff, as well as parents and other community stakeholders in becoming responsible for literacy instruction. (The How, p. 24)
- We will increase the use of information text to support instruction occurring in classrooms. As access to technology increases in our building, we will use existing resources, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) lessons, and eventually the 1:1 technology initiative scheduled for our school in 2016 technology will be used to widen access to resources,. In addition, print resources related to all subject areas will be purchased for our media center, based on areas of deficit according to collection analyses and teacher needs assessment. (The How, p. 25)

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- Monitor the effectiveness and consistency of effective instructional practices through the use of a literacy walk-through checklist (The How, p. 25; The What, p. 6)

E. Action: Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas

"Why?"

Extended time for literacy, which includes approximately two to four hours of literacy instruction and practice that takes place in language arts and content-area classes (The Why, p. 67). Teacher teams, which are interdisciplinary teams that meet regularly to discuss students and align instruction (The Why, p. 67). A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program, which is interdisciplinary and interdepartmental and may even coordinate with out-of-school organizations and the local community (The Why, p. 67).

"What" are we doing now:

In order to efficiently and sustainably increase literacy across content areas at Conyers Middle School, the administration team has established a concrete focus on literacy

— by evaluating literacy development strategies through the use of TKES Performance Standards during walkthroughs in the areas of

- Assessment Uses
- Assessment Strategies
- Instructional Planning
- Instructional Practices
- and Differentiated Instruction

— by assisting teachers who need additional professional development to fully endorse the literacy vision and implementation

— by encouraging Common Assessment development to ensure that all students in a specific content area are being assessed using the same instructional practices and assessment criteria

— by using PLC time to introduce and train teachers on researched-based strategies to incorporate in classroom instruction

— by participating in Professional Development opportunities available through Rockdale County Public Schools Professional Learning department

"How" we plan to move forward:

In addition to the continuing each of the existing leadership protocols already in place, Conyers Middle School will

- Engage outside experts in school-based Professional Development for all teachers, focused solely on literacy strategies, with time dedicated to specific activities to be used in each subject area including all Connections courses.
- CMS will host family literacy nights. (The How, p. 27)
- As our STEAM school specialty is implemented and classes are developed, the Leadership Team will collaborate with STEAM teachers to incorporate a focus on literacy within the program
- CMS will incorporate a school wide writing rubric (The What, p. 6)
- The literacy team will ask teachers to identify exemplary samples of students work to model features of quality writing (p.26)
- CMS will expand the types of writing across the subject areas (The What, p. 6)

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F. Action: Enlist the community at large to support schools and teachers in the development of college-and-career-ready students as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

"Why?"

ALL stakeholders, including educators, media specialists, and parents of PreK, primary, adolescent, and post-secondary students, are responsible for promoting literacy (p. 31). Lacking a solid mobilization effort, common interests cannot be pursued in a collaborative, synergistic way (Academy for Educational Development & Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, 2003). Community mobilization is a proven strategy for addressing complex problems that can't be solved by short term, isolated interventions (Health Communication Partnership, 2002). Although similar in purpose to *community engagement* and *community involvement*, the term *mobilization* implies a proactive role for multiple community constituencies. Mobilization seeks to create a dynamic, synergistic, multi-constituency, and sustained effort based on a shared commitment and sense of urgency about the goal. It builds from awareness and ownership to political will, action, and accountability.

"What" are we doing now:

The administration and literacy teams at Conyers Middle School have developed a variety of viable opportunities to involve community stakeholders in the framework of literacy instruction by

- encouraging opportunities to connect grade-level content with the surrounding community
- seeking qualified guest speakers that present content which coincides with curriculum being studied
- welcoming parent and community volunteers to partner with teachers to promote literacy across content areas
- the implementation of Parent Shadow Day twice a semester where parents can learn strategies they can use at home through classroom instruction
- development of a Community Involvement Committee
- monthly Coffee and Conversation Chats with Principal
- Technology Boot Camp where parents can learn how to assist their children in Study Island, USA Test Prep, and other tools used in school to promote student literacy
- Lunch and Learns which teach parents helpful academic tips
- Monthly Parent University Courses which cover a plethora of tools, strategies, and resources to bridge the academic gap from home to school

"How" we plan to move forward:

In order to involve an increasing number of community members in supporting our students, we will continue to communicate with families to encourage participation in all of our existing programs. We will also encourage:

- Expansion of our Partners in Education program to involve local partner businesses more directly in instructional opportunities (The What, p. 7)
- Encourage guest speakers and mentors to incorporate a literacy focus into their programs. (The What, p. 7)
- Continue to improve and increase attendance for curriculum events to increase student and parent involvement.
- Continue to increase school-side usage of AVID strategies.
- Begin to form partnerships with local businesses and community members as part of our future STEAM school specialty program.
- Incorporate a literacy component into existing Career Day events.

- For students that show growth in reading, we will acknowledge them on social media (The What, p. 7)
- Foster relationships among schools, postsecondary education institutions, the workforce, families, and communities (The How, p.28)

Building Block 2: Continuity of Instruction

A. Action: Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams (See Leadership Sections I. D., E.)

"Why?"
All stakeholders, including educators, certified and classified staff, community members and parents are responsible for promoting literacy education. All staff members must be knowledgeable advocates of endorsing literacy by aiding students in developing schemes and skills for accessing texts and media, articulating ideas in writing, communicating ideas orally, and using sources of information resourcefully and efficiently.
Data must be easily accessible to all school personnel in order for it to drive decision making. Educators and instructional support personnel must be able to sort, aggregate,

Grade level teams will continue to meet at regularly scheduled times for collaboration and examination of student data and work. At grade level meetings and in Literacy Committee meetings, teachers will continue to identify gaps in learning using School Net, pre- and post-tests and OAS benchmarks. After analyzing data, teachers will continue to plan and implement lessons that meet the literacy needs of students.

Effective collaborative planning and examining of student data/work during scheduled times will be a protected part of the school-wide calendar and essential to the success of the literacy plan.
Administration and the Literacy Team will maximize the use of scheduled times for collaborative meetings by preparing agendas for meetings, use protocols to examine student work, identify effective strategies for differentiating instruction, and continue to study formative student assessment results to drive future instruction.

"What" are we doing now:

Conyers Middle School faculty and staff are working to maintain consistency across content areas in the promotion and sustainability of literacy instruction by:

- utilizing data briefings to discuss statistical evidence from assessments (school-wide and county-wide)
- having weekly content meetings for collaborative planning and research-based strategy implementation
- analysis of formative assessments to gauge authenticity in grade-level, team, and content meetings
- reconstructing assessments if necessary to maximize validity
- using data to drive instruction and assessment development
- aligning lesson plans to fit the backwards planning method
- discussing effective lesson activities to reinforce cross-curricular configuration

"How" we plan to move forward:

To maintain consistency and increase the focus on literacy, we will:

- Continue data briefings, and begin utilizing a shared online tool for agendas, minutes, and feedback to maximize collaboration between teams. (The How, p. 29; The What, p. 7)

- View model lessons through peer observation and expert videos available online to help all teachers implement best practices in literacy instruction (The How, p. 29)
- Literacy Leadership Team members, Language Arts teachers, Reading Specialist, and/or Instructional Coaches will assist as needed with the incorporation of literacy instruction into all subject areas, especially in areas where only one or two teachers may teach a give subject, and collaborative opportunities are limited.
- Showcase evidence of student learning success on the school or class websites and through blogs, e.g., writing assignments, improved test scores, awards or recognitions (The How, p. 29)

B. Action: Support teachers in providing literacy instruction across the curriculum

"Why?"

All CMS teachers in grades 6-8 will persist in using core programs that provide continuity and a carefully articulated scope and sequence of skill that is integrated into a rich curriculum of literacy and informational text. Obtaining those literacy skills should provide the student with the ability to transfer those skills in to the workplace or college. The CCGPS expects students to read and analyze a wide range of print and non-print materials that foster reading closely and the ability to think, speak, and write with textual evidence that supports an assertion. Literacy includes not only written texts, but also the viewing and representing of digital images, aural images, and other special effects used in various forms of media. In order to provide students with adequate opportunities to practice and master skills related to literacy, additional professional learning and resources are needed at CMS.

Administration will continue to design and implement infrastructure to provide guidance and support for students and families and evaluate the school culture and current practices by surveying strengths and weaknesses regarding literacy instruction. In addition, administration along with the Literacy Support Team will analyze survey data to develop a list of prioritized recommendations and goals for improvement. Based on the survey, a plan for targeted, sustained professional learning for the staff on literacy strategies and deep content knowledge must be scheduled in order to become fully operational. In addition, all teachers must engage in professional learning with a focus on the facilitation of instructional technology and literacy, and walk-throughs and/or observations should note consistency of effective literacy practices observed such as disciplinary literacy, active student engagement across content areas

"What" are we doing now:

The Conyers administration team has placed extraordinary emphasis on the significance of aggregating content areas through a literacy focus for concentrated student growth. They are providing the instructional staff with the necessary support to bridge the gap and tighten the fluidity of cross-curricular literacy instruction through:

- employing content-wide writing rubrics and student checklists which align to the Georgia Milestones constructed and extended response format and CCGPS standards which encourages systematic and consistent expectations for student writers (The How, p. 30; The What, p. 7)
- providing strategies where students are able to participate in rigorous, student-centered instruction which promotes hands-on activities and learning (The How, p. 30)
- incorporating vocabulary development in every classroom, every day for maximal content-specific and academic vocabulary comprehension
- providing specific instructional areas of improvement that need to be taught with fidelity to ensure students are provided with the appropriate interventions and instruction

- promoting consistency in instructional collaboration across content areas
- encouraging co-teaching in same content and cross-content activities

"How" we plan to move forward:

The work of the Conyers Middle School administrative team will be supported by the Literacy Leadership Team to increase the focus on literacy in the following ways:

- Facilitate research and discussion from teachers and outside experts on best practices to meet the individual literacy needs of all students, Tiers I-IV.
- As more technology becomes available, CMS will increase use of collaborative tools for students and teachers. Students will use online tools such as videos, My Big Campus, Microsoft OneDrive, and social media to interact with their teachers, other CMS students, and individuals beyond our school building. Teachers will use these same tools to collaborate with each other, and with professionals and experts in their field. (The What, p. 7)
- Allow for some flexibility of scheduling to increase collaboration between classrooms and students. Students will have the opportunity to showcase and use their strengths to help others by modeling literacy strategies, peer-teaching, and technology training.
- Use a school-wide writing rubric that is aligned with the CCGPS to set clear expectations and goals for performance (The How, p. 31; The What, p. 7)
- Host family nights that engage parents in activities that demonstrate the importance of literacy proficiency (The How, p. 31)
- provide English language services that extend beyond the classroom and provide family-focused services that engage parents and family (The Why, p. 26).
-

C. Action: Collaborate with supporting out-of-school agencies and organizations within the community

"Why?"

Georgia's Literacy Task Force established content literacy as a goal for each Georgia student; consequently, a common understanding of literacy must be recognized and valued by all stakeholders, including all teachers, students, parents, and community members.

Most teachers at CMS believe the community supports the school and teachers through convening advisory board meetings. However, to create a shared vision for literacy for the school and community we must make the vision tangible and visible to community at large. The Literacy Leadership Team will identify key members of the community, governmental and civic leaders, business leaders, and parents to serve as members of a community advisory board and actively seek avenues to promote literacy within the school and community as articulated in the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (The Why, p. 57). The Literacy Leadership Team will contact potential Members of the Community Advisory Board and schedule at least two meetings annually to identify learning supports in the community that target student improvement (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, afterschool programming) and publish a list of those resources for parents (The Why, p. 51).

"What" are we doing now:

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- Communication (Remind 101, web calendars, teacher feedback on assignments, teacher websites, email, etc.) between parent and school is a paramount strategy which promotes consistency and stability for students and has been customary for both administration and teachers
- Instructional support is initiated through teachers and counselors and provided by community support to promote student achievement (e.g., mentoring program, tutorial sessions, buddy study).
- Adopting popular technological avenues to innovatively and efficiently support the engagement of all stakeholders (i.e., Facebook, electronic news blasts, My Big Campus)
- Providing students with various opportunities through extra-curricular and club activities to promote student involvement and community awareness
- Creating and sustaining a school program which supports literacy development and advancement using statistical data, research-based instructional practices, and responsibility.

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Form a partnership with the local public library (Nancy Guinn Library), to increase student and family awareness of programs and resources available to all county residents.
- Ask local bookstores and libraries to donate discarded books to CMS (The How, p. 33)
- Identify specific student/family literacy needs and locate community organizations to help fill these needs (i.e. classes for adult literacy, book donations directly to families, Little Free Library on our campus modeled after the Rockdale Career Academy)
- Continue to foster relationships/networks among schools (particularly within feeder patterns), families, and communities. (The How, p. 33)
- Increase communication with our feeder elementary schools, high school, and also local afterschool program providers to discuss areas of need.
- Widen partnerships of extracurricular and club activities with both local Partners in Education businesses and community organizations, allowing students to participate in service learning opportunities. (The What, p. 8)
- Ask local businesses to help heighten awareness about reading or literacy topics (e.g., a supermarket chain may agree to print a literacy message on its shopping bags; utility suppliers might feature tips in their monthly statements (The How, p. 33)
- Increase opportunities for students to see literacy in action outside of school, through community visits, community service, and field trips.
- Ensure that an emphasis on literacy is included in our school-based mentoring program.

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Building Block 3. Ongoing formative and summative assessments

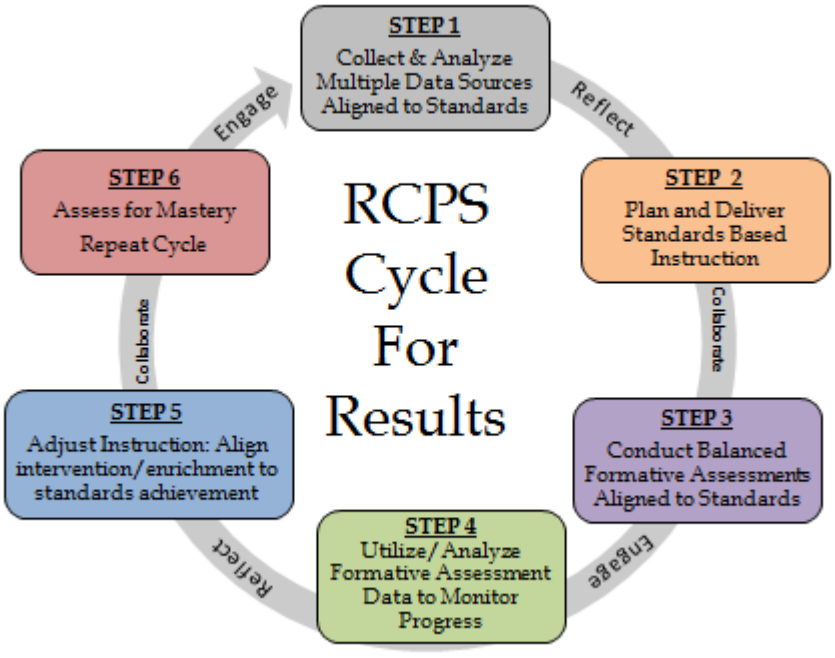
A. Action: Establish an infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction

"Why?"

Effective reading and writing instruction requires both summative and formative assessments. In Rockdale County, all schools are active participants in the Cycle for Results. **Georgia Performance Standards (GPS)**

- provide clear expectations for instruction, assessment, and student work in all other program content areas not named above
- define the level of work that demonstrates achievement of the standards, enabling a teacher to know "how good is good enough"
- isolate and identify the skills needed to use the knowledge and skills to problem-solve, reason, communicate, and make connections with other information

Within those state-mandated learning expectations, teachers must have a clear understanding of *what to teach*, *how to teach it*, *when to teach it*, and *how to determine if students have learned* the material. We rely on a process known as the **Cycle for Results** to ensure that our students master the required standards.



"What" are we doing now:

- Using exemplars to model and promote student comprehension and mastery across content areas.

- Collaboratively creating both pre and post assessments which guide and drive instruction.
- Aligning power standards with units, lessons, and activities to maintain solid instruction across contents.
- Consistently planning with content team to determine areas of growth using data and instruction, create assessments with cogency, and to participate in Common grading to ensure fair and appropriate grading across classrooms in the same content area.
- After assessments, collaboratively discussing areas which need re-teaching, strategies for remediation for students who haven't mastered the skills, and strategies for acceleration for students who have mastered the skills.

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Continue implementation of team data meetings. The Digital Learning Specialist (DLS) will continue to coach teachers in accessing, analyzing, and using all available data to drive instruction.
- Continue all efforts for collaborative planning with content teams, and increase collaboration across the curriculum so that teachers across subject areas will be working towards the same literacy goals for students.
- Extended training for new teachers on technology tools available for assessment and data collection.
- Continue use of the RTI process to provide needed interventions based on student data.
- Continue to purchase assessment and intervention materials aligned with students' needs (The How, p. 34; The What, p. 8)
- Define a process for selecting appropriate interventions for struggling readers (The How, p. 35)

B. Action: Use universal screening and progress monitoring for formative assessment

"Why?"

The Literacy Team recommends the need for a universal screener at all ages and grades. Universal screenings are typically administered to all students at a grade level three times per year. The information gained from this screening, helps teachers answer the question, "Is this student on track to meet end of the year expectations?" The data reflects only who is on track/off track for meeting end of the year expectations; it does not inform teachers as to what to teach next.

According to Jenkins (2007), the key feature in a screening measure is the accuracy in classifying a student as "at risk" or "not at risk." Additionally, a strong screener will address the issue of false negatives (students not identified as at risk who truly are at risk) and false positives (students identified as at risk who are not). A district can risk wasting intervention resources if attention is not given to false positives and false negatives. In a 2009 Practice Guide for implementation of RTI, Gersten, et al advised caution with screeners stating that these, "measures tend to consistently over-identify students as needing assistance". In spite of that, Gersten's panel strongly recommended screening as an important and necessary step for identifying students in need of help. (The Why, p. 99)

CMS uses universal screeners (Scholastic Reading Inventory) for all three grade levels three times per year. However, teachers need additional professional learning in how to analyze the results of the SRI and how to match students to texts and interventions.

"What" are we doing now:

- Using Benchmark and SRI data to recommend students for RTI services
- Using Lexile scores to provide students with appropriate reading materials and assignments
- Administering 4.5 Assessment ever four and a half weeks to assess comprehension gains
- Providing frequent opportunities for various types of formative assessments to maximize student performance on summative assessments
- Using RTI interventions to reinforce skills and maximize positive learning outcomes

"How" we plan to move forward:

Our school currently uses the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) as our universal screener for all students. Students are screened three times per year. Students also take regular Benchmark assessments, and data from both sources are used for placement in remediation or enrichment as needed. To improve our use of the screening process, we will:

- Continue to use the SRI test as our universal screener, and communicate test results with parents. (The What, p. 8)
- Provide more in depth training for teachers, especially non-ELA teachers, on data available from the SRI program, and how to use this data in planning instruction.
- Provide continued professional learning to staff who administer assessments to maintain use of standardized procedures and accurate data recording (The How, p. 36)
- Increase discussion with students about their lexile scores, progress, and grade level expectations.
- Media Specialist will increase the availability of lexile information for media resources, and work with students to increase their expertise in selecting resources.
- Teachers and the SRI coordinator will continue to refer students to the reading class and other interventions based on data from SRI and other screeners.
- The Media Specialist and teachers will seek and purchase age appropriate texts and other materials for students scoring well above grade level on the screener. (The What, p. 8)

C. Action: Use diagnostic assessment to analyze problems found in literacy screening

"Why?"

Diagnostic assessments are typically administered to students at a grade level three times per year. The information gained from this assessment helps teachers answer the question, "What and how do I need to teach tomorrow based on the student's individual strengths and needs? What problems are occurring?" The data gained from this assessment gives teachers specific information for an instructional focus and reflects each student's current strengths and weaknesses

"What" are we doing now:

- Analyzing diagnostic data in content teams to determine direction of instruction and when determining intervention strategies
- Examining interventions for RTIs every 3-4 weeks in team meetings to decide the next course of action for improvement

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Reading interventions and diagnostic assessments will continue to be performed as part of the RTI process. (The What, p. 9)
- During collaborative planning, analyze data from all available sources including benchmarks, SLOs, 4.5 assessments, as well as universal screenings and other data for students engaged in the remediation process. (The How, p. 37)

D. Action: Use summative data to make programming decisions as well as to monitor individual student progress

"Why?"

Summative assessment is assessment *OF* learning, which is often contrasted with assessment *FOR* learning. Summative assessments are used to evaluate student learning, the acquisition of identified skills, and/or general academic achievement at the end of a pre-determined period of instruction. The period of instruction might be a content-based unit, a semester, a school-year, or even the entirety of a high school course of study. Summative assessments are characterized by three main criteria:

- They are designed to determine if students successfully met established learning objectives.
- They are evaluative as opposed to formative or diagnostic because they occur at the end of instruction.
- The scores on summative assessments are typically recorded and used in some way to measure achievement at some level.
- Data is disaggregated to ensure the progress of all students (The What, p. 9)

At CMS, we utilize state-mandated assessments, such as the CRCT/Milestone, in order to monitor student attainment of grade level standards. While the administration routinely assesses this data, teachers need professional learning on how to analyze this summative data and adapt instruction for the coming year.

"What" are we doing now:

- Conducting team, content, and grade-level meetings to discuss Benchmark, SLO, 4.5, and other assessment data to determine areas of growth and improvement. Once areas of improvement are determined, students are provided with interventions within the classroom, pull outs, or afterschool tutorial. The data is also scrutinized to discover the CCGPS standards students struggle to master and then retaught through mini-lessons across content areas.
- A variety of data is used to determine academic choices for students who require interventions or enrichment. Academic Power Periods provide both struggling and advanced students with instruction that will differentiate based on need and ability.

"How" we plan to move forward:

To increase the quality and efficiency of our summative data and its usage, we will:

- Continue and deepen the focus of team data meetings to ensure data driven instruction (The What, p. 9)
- Teachers will continue to access data from Schoolnet as well as other available sources. Students will be referred to RTI, READ180, Math Support classes, Program Challenge (gifted program), and Honors classes as needed.

- Use technology for communicating data to the district literacy leadership team in a timely manner (The How, p. 37)

Action 3.E.: Develop a clearly articulated strategy for using data to improve teaching and learning (See V. A.)

"Why?"

Student achievement data offers invaluable support for making good decisions about instruction, but how that data are used is critical. In order for data to be useful, data must be part of the ongoing cycle of instructional improvement. State mandated assessments offer a cumulative body of evidence to support students' current reading skills status. Teachers should actively seek critical data and continually review and update students' profiles to adapt their instruction to meet individual needs. These summative, high-profile assessments need to be complemented by a coordinated system of assessments that are ongoing and of smaller scale to direct instructional decision making. (The Why, p. 99)

To help all students achieve, teachers need to systematically and routinely use data to guide instructional decisions and meet students' learning needs. Data use is an ongoing cycle of collecting multiple data sources, interpreting data to formulate hypotheses about strategies to raise student achievement and implementing instructional changes to test hypotheses. At CMS, teachers need additional professional learning in how to analyze data and how to use the data to address their instructional practices.

"What" are we doing now:

- Data teams meet consistently to review and analyze data to determine new strategies for instructional purposes and to close the achievement gap.
- Content teams meet to analyze data from 4.5, pre, post, and Benchmark assessment to determine instructional and differentiation needs for students.
- The administration team presents proven researched-based strategies for all faculty to promote and support literacy in all content areas. These strategies assist students in successful practices in reading and writing and allow teachers to skillfully train students to become fluent readers and writers.
- Students are provided with ample writing opportunities within the classroom and these writing pieces are scored through the Common grading strategy where content teachers meet to strategically assess student writing by rotating a handful of papers among all content teachers to maintain validity across classes. Students are provided with commentary using the Focus Correction Areas strategy for monitoring writing.
- Teachers participate in school-wide and county-wide writing workshops that assist teachers in monitoring student writing progress and target composition deficits.

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Continue and deepen the focus of team data meetings to ensure data-drive instruction. (The What, p. 9)
- Include connections teachers and other school staff as needed in data training and/or meetings to improve school-wide understanding of progress and goals. (The How, p. 39)

- As part of Professional Learning, new teachers will receive further training on incorporating constructed response questions into assessments, and how to measure achievement on these responses according to CCGPS standards.
- Increase use of online writing assessment tools for practice at school and at home.
- We will increase focus on student writing samples and reading comprehension in student placement.
- Collaborative use of data from SRI screener and other sources to plan differentiation of instruction. As technology becomes more available, we will increase usage of online teaching tools such as My Big Campus to assign differentiated activities.
- During teacher team meetings, focus discussions on changes that can be made to improve the instructional program for all students (The How, p. 38; The What, p. 9)

Building Block 4. Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

A. Action: Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students

"Why?"
The research on high-progress literacy classrooms indicates teachers in these classrooms are knowledgeable about the teaching of reading and writing.

In addition, high-progress literacy classrooms devote significant time to actual reading and writing, provide high-quality instruction in reading skills and strategies, demonstrate a prevalence of small group and individualized instruction, feature numerous books matched to the students' reading levels, and attend to both in focus and intensity to the changing needs of students.

Providing instruction that is explicit individualized, and responsive to the particular needs of learners requires much more than quality programs and quantities of reading materials. One of the characteristics of teachers in high-progress literacy classrooms is that these teachers possessed the knowledge and capacity to customize instruction for their students—especially those who struggle to learn and who require extra help. Customizing instruction for readers and writers who struggle to learn cannot be accomplished without knowledgeable teachers.

Conyers Middle School recognizes the diverse needs of our student population. In order to meet these diverse needs, instruction must be data driven, explicit and systematic. Teachers must provide targeted instruction of skills and strategies, including multiple opportunities to read and write continuous text.
In order to meet the needs of this diverse population, differentiation must occur in the classroom. To begin the process, teachers must assess their students in a variety of ways. Initial assessments might include interest inventories, learning style. This will allow students to be grouped by need, and interest as well as level. Differentiation can include re-teaching with other modalities and/or materials, new or multiple demonstrations, alternative assessment opportunities, peer teaching and conferencing, and/or think-alouds. Differentiation may also occur through choice, levels of text and the complexity of academic tasks. Small group instruction is a structure that offers opportunities to meet with students to support them as they work to acquire new learning and to support them as they transition into their own independence.

"What" are we doing now:

- Students are provided with various opportunities to enhance reading skills through guided reading, directed listening-thinking activities, assisted reading approach, text look back, and other reading strategies to promote reading fluency and comprehension.
- Teachers are encouraged to provide students with opportunities to think about thinking through think aloud demonstrations, modeling, and ample practice.
- Students use annotations to demonstrate comprehension when reading a text through questioning, summarizing, paraphrasing, and connections to real world occurrences.
- Teachers provide students with unambiguous instruction which allows students to effectively build their vocabulary knowledge and analysis.
- Teachers use data to create mini lessons to increase academic success for all students.
- Teachers participate in recurrent school or county professional development opportunities to enhance teaching skills and strategies for maximal student performance.

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Further development of the media center collection and classroom libraries to provide more print and digital resources to support the curriculum, and pique student interest in reading for pleasure.
- Provide training for students and teachers on using tools available in Media Center e-books such as highlighting, note taking, annotation, dictionary hyperlinks, and read aloud features. (The What, p. 10)
- Optimize student and teacher usage of lexile scores to select instructional materials and choice reading materials. (The How, p. 40)
- Enlist outside experts to provide school based Professional Development on teaching literacy and writing strategies for all teachers. (The How, p. 40)
- Provide support to new teachers on differentiated instruction for all learners, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities (The How, p. 40; The What, p. 10)

B. Action: Ensure that students receive effective writing instruction across the curriculum

"Why?"

Educators need to help developing writers become competent writers. We need to make sure that all students are taught how to write using effective practices. Writing is a complex skill. It requires considerable effort and time to master. While a single, effective teacher can have a strong impact on a child's writing development, the Herculean efforts of a few are no match for the sustained and concerted efforts of an entire organization. However, many teachers do not receive ample training in how to teach writing during their teacher preparation programs. With this in mind, Conyers Middle School's administration and staff recognizes the need for ongoing professional learning in order to provide students with effective writing instruction.

It is especially important that students get off to a good start in writing. Waiting until later grades to address literacy problems that have their origins in the primary grades is not particularly successful. As students move toward the middle school grades, the teaching of writing becomes more complex, as it no longer revolves around a single teacher at each grade level. Writing and writing instruction become a shared responsibility across disciplines. English, science, social studies, and other content teachers must all devote significant attention to the teaching of writing, if they expect students to learn how to write effectively within their discipline.

Administrators and teachers at Conyers Middle School agree with the importance of effective writing instruction and practice during the middle school years. While the English/Language Arts teachers at

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CMS provide students with frequent opportunities to write, the practices and opportunities are not consistent across content areas. The creation of a school-wide writing rubric, as well as ongoing professional learning in instructional strategies as they relate to writing, would strengthen the experience of students at CMS and ensure a consistent focus across the building. The addition of a formative writing assessment, which we propose to purchase with the SRCL funds, would provide us with a method of determining student needs and monitoring progress during the school year.

"What" are we doing now:

- Teachers meet weekly to discuss and evaluate instructional application and student performance to determine strategies that work and strategies that may not have produced the expected outcomes.
- Teachers utilize Units of Study strategies to engage reluctant writers and to provide interactive writing instruction.
- Teachers collaborate to share best practices in writing instruction. At times, teachers may provide presentations on these strategies for colleagues to effectively incorporate in their classes.
- Teachers use checklists for students to monitor their progress during compositions as rubrics are often intimidating and or confusing for students.
- Teachers meet to discuss areas of concern before, during, and after composition to ensure students are receiving the most effective writing instruction.

"How" we plan to move forward:

We will continue strategies currently in place, and begin to supplement and enhance this process with technology tools and best practices learned through Professional Development:

- Use of online writing tools to engage students in the writing process, and provide immediate feedback. (The What, p. 10)
- Use of collaborative programs such as Google Docs or Microsoft OneDrive to efficiently collaborate with and receive feedback from students and teachers in our school. (The How, p. 42)
- Continued focus on writing standards for every subject as part of the CCGPS.
- All teachers will participate in school-wide Professional Development on teaching writing, with strategies and activities that could be used for each specific subject area. Literacy Leadership Team members, Instructional Coaches, and others will act as coaches to facilitate uniform implementation of writing strategies. (The How, p. 42; The What, p. 10)
- Encourage students to seek out opportunities to "publish" their writing outside of school through writing contests and other publications for student work such as Scholastic and Teen Ink magazine.

C. Action: Teachers work to develop and maintain interest and engagement as students progress through school.

"Why?"

The correlation between planning instruction and effectively teaching the CCGPS is apparent. While planning lessons, many factors need to be taken into consideration such as the students with IEPs, the ELL population, Tier 2 and Tier population, and the learning styles of students.

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Based on the motivational research for students, the literacy team will provide technology to allow students to access electronic texts, devise plans that include student collaboration, and provide students with opportunities to have choice in reading options.

"What" are we doing now:

- Students consistently use technology to engage in learning and productivity.
- Students participate in peer collaboration to complete assignments, assess skills, and/or provide feedback.
- Students use interactive notebooks in all content areas.
- Teachers use technology as a means to enhance students' learning abilities and to promote increases in academic performance.
- Teachers provide incentives for academic growth to encourage and promote students who are excited about learning.
- Academic classes engage students through hand-on, interactive activities to promote student interest and success. (The What, p. 11)

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Use of online collaborative tools for writing to increase collaborative opportunities for students, and to provide feedback from teachers, or other professionals outside our school. (The How, p. 42; The What, p. 11)
- Continue and increase use of e-books and other digital resources. Increase the number and scope of e-books, databases, and other resources available to students both in and out of school. (The How, p. 41; The What, p. 11)
- Widen the opportunities for students to engage with professionals from outside the school, through guest visits and online conferencing tools.

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

A. Action: Use information developed from the school-based data teams to inform RTI process (see Section 3. E.)

"Why?"

Conyers Middle School currently employs an RTI process that includes four tiers. Administrators, teachers, and support staff use data to monitor student progress and to determine student placement in each tier. Instructional support is modified as students are identified at each tier. Providing ongoing support for teachers and interventionists (Title I personnel, reading coaches, literacy coaches, etc.) is critical for the intervention strategies to work (Gersten et al., 2007, as cited in The Why, p. 132). In order to fully implement the RTI process with fidelity, additional professional learning is needed for our teachers and support staff.

"What" are we doing now:

- Teachers meet frequently with RTI coordinator to discuss the proper ways to use data to identify learning gaps. (The What, p. 11)
- The RTI coordinator consistently meets with grade levels to train teachers on the RTI process.
- Teams are required to meet weekly to discuss student growth and/or to reconstruct interventions.

- Teachers are required to implement interventions with fidelity and properly maintain documentation throughout students' intervention.

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Continue to implement and monitor effectiveness and fidelity of the RTI process of interventions. (The How, p. 43)
- Use technology tools, or written bulleting to notify Connections teachers and other school staff as needed of student goals and progress to ensure consistency of interventions.
- Provide training to new teachers on data collection and the RTI process. (The How, p. 43)
- Budget for recurring costs of data collection, intervention materials, and technology used for implementation (The How, p. 43)

B. Action: Provide Tier I Instruction based upon the CCGPS in all grades to all students in all classrooms (See Sections 4. A & B)

"Why?"

Tier 1 instructional practices are utilized in the general education content classes. Teachers continuously monitor students to determine their needs to provide effective instruction. Included in the Tier 1 interventions are collaborative grouping, flexible grouping, preferential seating, pacing guide adjustment, differentiated instruction and student feedback. Because "instruction and learning which focus on the GPS and include differentiated, evidence-based instruction based on the student's needs are paramount" (The Why, p. 132), professional learning in how best to provide differentiated instruction is a must at CMS.

"What" are we doing now:

- Teachers participate in consistent professional development on effective teaching practices aligned with CCGPS standards.
- Collaborative teaching is used to ensure that Tier 1 students are provided with the necessary assistance to succeed academically.
- Scholastic Reading Inventory, Benchmark and 4.5 assessments are used to identify struggling students. (The How, p. 44)

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Provide ongoing school-based Professional Development for all teachers on literacy instruction and strategies to help students meet CCGPS standards. (The How, p. 44)
- Increase collaboration across subject areas to plan instruction that will enable students to meet CCGPS standards.
- Widen staff and student use of Lexile scores to select materials, both for instruction and for choice reading.
- Use lesson plans and walk-throughs to ensure that teachers consistently provide instruction that includes explicit instruction designed to meet the individual students' needs (The How, p. 43; The What, p. 11)

C. Action: Implement Tier 2 needs-based interventions for targeted students

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"Why?"

Cooperative collaboration among the RTI coordinator and the team teachers is mandatory. The most important tool in the RTI process is the monitoring of progress for students. The frequency and duration will be determined by the intervention team. Based on student progress, a meeting will be held to determine if the interventions are effective and if the student should be moved to Tier 3 or back to Tier 1. CMS will continue to use state data, such as the CRCT/Milestone assessments, and universal screeners to determine student progress toward mastery of standards (The Why, p. 133).

"What" are we doing now:

- Tier 2 students are provided with interventions based on previous standardized test scores.
- These interventions are implemented with fidelity within the regular classroom during individual or small group instruction.
- Teachers document that the time spent improving skill deficits coincide with the original RTI documentation. (The How, p. 45)
- Instruction is also differentiated using RTI data to maximize student performance and drive instruction.

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Increase use of technology tools to enhance efficiency of providing and documenting Tier 2 interventions. (The How, p. 45)
- Use My Big Campus or other online teaching tools to differentiate instruction and provide remediation for Tier 2 students in the regular classroom. Training on online tools will be provided as needed to teachers.
- Escalate use of universal screener data in all subject areas to identify students needing intervention.
- Ensure communication with all teachers, including Connections teachers, on the interventions and progress taking place in the RTI process.
- Provide sufficient resources (time, training costs, materials, and implementation of interventions) (The How, p. 45; The What, p. 12)
- Provide professional learning to ensure school-wide understanding of assessment data and anticipated levels of student mastery during the school year (The How, p. 45-46; The What, p. 11)

D. Action: In Tier 3, ensure that Student Support Team (SST) and Data Team monitor progress jointly

"Why?"

Student movement to Tier 3 will be monitored by the school's RTI coordinator. The RTI coordinator will confirm with teachers that they are implementing research-based strategies with fidelity by observing, planning, and meeting with teachers (The Why, p. 134). Student progress will continue to be assessed using state-level, district-level, and universal screeners.

"What" are we doing now:

- The student support team and the data team meet to discuss interventions and monitor progress to ensure fidelity. (The How, p. 46)
- These teams also meet with teachers to ensure Tier 3 students are receiving individualized instruction for the predetermined amount of time with fidelity.

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"How" we plan to move forward:

- Continue Student Support (SST) and data team meetings, and communicate results to other teachers and staff as needed. (The How, p. 46)
- Use technology resources such as READ180 to track interventions and communicate results.
- Purchase other technology and/or print resources as needed to assist with interventions.
- Verify implementation of proven interventions (The How, p. 46-47)
- Ensure that T3 includes proven interventions that address behavior (The How, p. 46)

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

"Why?"

In order to meet the needs of the Tier 4 population, a specialized approach is necessary. Tier 4 students have an individualized educational plan in place that specifically outlines the needs of each student. Interventions and strategies that aid student achievement are determined annually on the eligibility date. To meet the needs of these students, interrelated teachers, tutors, paraprofessionals a and study skills classes are utilized. Students may also receive further assistance in targeted connections classes if deemed necessary by the IEP.

"What" are we doing now:

- Case workers conduct consistent meetings with teachers, parents, counselors, and other personnel.
- Building level administration are acquainted with subsidy methods to fund special programs within the school. (The What, p. 13)
- Students with IEP's are provided with case managers who organize communication between home and school as well as between teachers who serve the student. (The How, p. 47)
- Students are provided with the least restricting educational environment, but still receive the necessary interventions to maximize individualized success. (The How, p. 47)

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Include literacy and writing strategies for Tier IV students in school wide professional development on literacy. (The How, p. 47)
- Use subsidy and other monies to buy print and/or technology resources to support interventions for students.
- Ensure use of all data available during meetings with teachers, parents, counselors, and others.
- Provide training to new teachers on available sources for data collection and analysis.
- Case managers regularly participate in open houses, parent conferences, and college and career planning activities (The How, p. 47)

Building Block 6. Improved Instruction through Professional Learning

A. Action: Ensure that pre-service education prepares new teachers for all the challenges of the classroom

"Why?"

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In an effort to meet the needs of students, teacher competency is a crucial component. Research shows that effective professional learning is linked to higher student achievement (The Why, p. 141). Therefore, new teachers will have in service professional development that will be ongoing throughout the school year that offers instructional reading strategies. Teachers should employ strategies such as close reading strategies to help students break informational text into smaller chunks that are easier to comprehend. CMS will include any pre-service teachers assigned to the building in all professional learning provided to CMS's staff.

"What" are we doing now:

- New teachers are provided with a mentor to assist with the development of classroom norms, instructional strategies, school-based information, and professional advice. The mentor regularly meets with the mentee to ensure consistent communication and to provide support when necessary.
- New teachers attend New Teacher Orientation at the school and county level for professional develop.
- New teachers are given the opportunity to observe a veteran teacher in the classroom to witness best practices in education.

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Offer professional development in literacy for all teachers, in a school-based format. New teachers would receive additional coaching from a mentor teacher, as well as members of the Literacy Leadership Team. (The How, p. 48)
- Emphasize literacy strategies as part of New Teacher Orientation, and during meetings with mentor teacher.
- Utilize videos, both recording of teachers in our school and experts online, to allow new teachers to watch others model best practices in literacy instruction.
- Continue to monitor and support the integration of disciplinary literacy (The How, p. 48)

B. Action: Provide professional learning for in-service personnel

"Why?"

Because we live in a continuously growing society, students of today need must be equipped and well versed in the area of literacy with a focus on fluency, comprehension, speaking, listening, and college preparedness. In this modern global world, students will need critical thinking skills. For the purpose of ensuring that our students are afforded every opportunity to be successful, our teachers will require professional learning instruction that educates them on how to facilitate teaching students how to think critically. The ultimate goal is to have all content area teachers earn a reading endorsement to empower students across the curriculum.

According to the National Staff Development Council (NSDC, 2001), substantiated academic growth will occur only when professionals receive ongoing, targeted professional learning (The Why, p. 142). Therefore, the administrators at CMS feel that the best use of the SRCL grant funds would be to provide teachers with ongoing professional learning.

"What" are we doing now:

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- Teachers develop a professional growth plan which aligns with the TKES Performance Tasks and professional needs. (The How, p. 49)
- Teachers meet weekly with trained professionals in content, grade level, and/or team to analyze data, provide knowledge, plan rigorous and engaging lessons, monitor student progress, and determine areas of growth and weakness for both teachers and students.
- Teachers attend RTI training to learn how to develop appropriate interventions for struggling students.
- Administration provides effective feedback and suggestions using the TKES checklist during walkthroughs to improve instructional practices and strategies. (The What, p. 13)

"How" we plan to move forward:

- Provide ongoing school-based professional development from an outside expert on incorporating literacy strategies in all subject areas. (The How, p. 48)
- Use videos of CMS teachers and/or outside experts showcasing best practices in literacy instruction. Use My Big Campus or our school portal webpage to share videos and information with all staff members. (The How, p. 49)
- Monitor the implementation of a formal school literacy plan that aligns with goals outlined in our school improvement plan.
- Literacy Leadership Team members act as facilitators to promote literacy goals during weekly PLC meetings, and team data meetings.
- Administration will continue to provide feedback and suggestions on literacy strategies during walkthroughs. (The How, p. 49)
- Encourage all teachers to share information learned in professional learning sessions (The How, p. 49)

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

A, B, and C: Implementation Plan

Conyers Middle School's goals, objectives, and tasks are informed by the research and Building Blocks in the "What" and "Why" documents. At Conyers Middle School, we realize that reading instruction is an area in which we need great improvement. According to our reading data, a significant percentage of our students are not reading on a level that would be considered college and career ready. Effective reading and writing instruction is essential in ensuring a successful future for our students. (The Why, p. 44)

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate an increase in writing skills across content areas.	**Goal 2: Students will improve reading fluency as shown on the Scholastic Reading Inventory.**	**Goal 3: Students will demonstrate increased reading comprehension and writing skills on district-wide assessments.**
Objective 1: Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas. • Action 1: Engage outside experts in school-based professional development for all teachers, focused solely on literacy strategies, with time dedicated to specific activities to be used in each subject area including all Connections courses. (The What, p. 13) • Action 2: Implement a school-wide writing rubric aligned to the CCGPS. (The How, p. 27) • Action 3: Ask teachers to identify exemplary samples of student work to model features of quality writing. (The How, p. 26)		
Objective 2: Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams. • Action 1: Continue data briefings, and begin utilizing a shared online tool for agendas, minutes, and feedback to maximize collaboration between teams. • Action 2: Analyze formative assessment results during collaborative data meetings, using data to drive instructional planning. (The How, p. 29) • Action 3: View model lessons through peer observation and expert videos available online to help all teachers implement best practices in literacy instruction. (The How, p. 29) • Action 4: Share student work exemplars. (The How, p. 29)		
Objective 3: Establish an infrastructure for ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. • Action 1: Purchase assessment and intervention materials appropriate to student needs as defined by the assessment process. (The How, p. 34) • Action 2: Provide ongoing professional learning on selecting and implementing appropriate interventions. • Action 3: Define a process for selecting appropriate interventions for struggling readers. (The How, p. 35)		

- Action 3: Provide ongoing coaching for teachers in accessing, analyzing, and using all available data to drive instruction. (The How, p. 34)

Objective 4: Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students. (The What, p. 9)

- Action 1: Use data to identify students needing intervention.
- Action 2: Provide school-based ongoing professional development on teaching literacy and writing strategies. (The How, p. 40)
- Action 3: Share effective direct instruction lessons and strategies in collaborative teams. (The What, p. 9)
- Action 4: Optimize teacher, student, and family usage of Lexile scores to select differentiated instructional materials and choice reading materials. (The How, p. 40)
- Action 5: Monitor the effectiveness and consistency of literacy instruction through lesson plans and walk-throughs.

Objective 5: Use information developed from the school-based data teams to inform the RTI process.

- Action 1: Purchase any necessary assessment materials and train teachers to administer any new assessments.
- Action 2: Continue implementation of the RTI process of interventions.
- Action 3: Use technology tools, or written bulleting, to notify Connections teachers and other school staff as needed of student goals and progress to ensure consistency of interventions. (The How, p. 43)
- Action 4: Provide training to new teachers on data collection and the RTI process. (The How, p. 43)

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

Formative Measures	**Goals**	**Summative Measures for Students**	**Goals**
4.5 Assessments	Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas. Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams.	Milestones	Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas. Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams.
ACCESS	Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students.	ACCESS	Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students.
District Benchmark	Establish an infrastructure for	District Benchmark	Establish an infrastructure for

	ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.		ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine the need for and the intensity of interventions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.
Scholastic Reading Inventory	Use information developed from the school-based data teams to inform the RTI process. Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams.		Optimize literacy instruction across all content areas. Ensure a consistent literacy focus across the curriculum through the use of collaborative teams.
SLO (Student Learning Objective)	Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students.	SLO (Student Learning Objective	Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students.
WriteScore	Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students.		Provide direct, explicit literacy instruction for all students.

D and E: Tiered Instruction and RTI Model

Conyers Middle School will provide literacy instruction in a tiered instruction protocol through a differentiation model. The model presented below provides an overview of how interventions in each of the four tiers are provided based on the RTI model. In addition, literacy instruction will be provided across content areas.

Grade Level	Tier 1 Personnel	Tier 2 Personnel	Tier 3 Personnel	Tier 4 Personnel
6-8	Teacher & Paraprofessional 115 minutes	Teacher & Paraprofessional 10-25 minutes, 3-5 days per week	Teacher & Paraprofessional 15-30 minutes, 5 days per week	Teacher • Learning Support • Gifted • ESOL 50+ minutes daily

F: Inclusion of all Teachers and Students

Our School Literacy Plan will include all teachers, students, and grade levels at Conyers Middle School. All students will receive grade-level core literacy instruction and appropriate interventions.

G: Practices Currently in Place

Currently we are using data from the district benchmarks and Scholastic Reading Inventory to recommend students for RTI services. Our school currently uses the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) as our universal screener for all students. Students are screened three times per year. Lexile scores from this assessment are used to provide students with appropriate reading materials and assignments. Students also take regular Benchmark assessments and 4.5 assessments to assess comprehension gains in several subject areas. Data from all three sources is used for placement in remediation or enrichment as needed. Interventions and instructional strategies are in place, but are not consistent between or across grade levels.

H: Goals Funded with Other Sources

District funds will continue to pay for formative and summative assessments such as CRCT/Milestones, district Benchmarks, WriteScore, and the Scholastic Reading Inventory, which will support our goal and all objectives. No charges to the grant will be made for in-place instructional materials or district-wide professional development. District funding of ESPLOST technology funding will support our plan.

I: Sample Schedule

Conyers Middle School 2014-15 Bell Schedule

50 Minute Academic & Connections

B.I.C. = Breakfast Inside Classrooms

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	Connections
HOMEROOM/ B.I.C.* 8:15 – 8:45	HOMEROOM/ B.I.C.* 8:15 – 8:45	HOMEROOM/ B.I.C.* 8:15 – 8:45	8:10 – 8:45 Planning (Use PL planning matrix)
1 ACADEMICS 8:50 – 9:40	1 ACADEMICS 8:50 – 9:40	1 CONNECTIONS 8:50 – 9:40	1 8TH CONNECTIONS 8:50 – 9:40
2 ACADEMICS 9:45 – 10:35	2 ACADEMICS 9:45 – 11:20 Includes Lunch *Lunch 10:40 – 11:15*	2 CONNECTIONS 9:45 – 10:35	2 8TH CONNECTIONS 9:45 – 10:35 LUNCH/PLAN 10:40 – 11:20
3 ACADEMICS 10:40 – 12:15 Includes lunch *Lunch 11:20 – 11:55*	3 CONNECTIONS 11:25 – 12:15	3 ACADEMICS 10:45 – 11:35	3 7TH CONNECTIONS 11:25 – 12:15
4 ACADEMICS 12:20 – 1:10	4 CONNECTIONS 12:20 – 1:10	4 ACADEMICS 11:40 – 1:10 Includes lunch *Lunch 12:00 – 12:35*	4 7TH CONNECTIONS 12:20 – 1:10
5 CONNECTIONS 1:15 – 2:05	5 ACADEMICS 1:15 – 2:05	5 ACADEMICS 1:15 – 2:05	5 6TH CONNECTIONS 1:15 – 2:05
6 CONNECTIONS 2:10 – 3:00	6 ACADEMICS 2:10 – 3:00	6 ACADEMICS 2:10 – 3:00	6 6TH CONNECTIONS 2:10 – 3:00
7 A.P.P./Advisement 3:05 – 3:55	7 A.P.P./Advisement 3:05 – 3:55	7 A.P.P./Advisement 3:05 – 3:55	7 Planning (use PL planning matrix) 3:05 – 3:55
AFTERNOON DUTY 3:55 – 4:10	DISMISSAL 3:55 – 4:10	DISMISSAL 3:55 – 4:10	AFTERNOON DUTY 3:55 – 4:10

For example, a student on Team B (8th grade) would follow the schedule below:

	SUBJECT	ROOM #	TEACHER	TIME
1st Period	Math Connections	E117	Mr. Cowles	9:00 a.m.
2nd Period	Read 180 Connections	E118	Dr. Wingate	9:50 a.m.
3rd Period	Language Arts	C15	Ms. Walker	10:35 a.m.
4th Period	Coordinate Algebra	C18	Mr. Ward	11:30 a.m.
5th Period	Georgia Studies	C22	Mrs. West	1:10 p.m.
6th Period	Physical Science	D114	Mr. Crook	2:05 p.m.

7th Period	Academic Power Period	C15	Ms. Walker	3:05 p.m.

Additional technology, software, literacy materials, and professional development are needed to support all objectives. Stipends or substitutes to release teachers for professional development will also be needed.

J: Reference Research-Based Practices in "What" and "Why"

See references in Section A: Implementation Plan

VI. Assessment/Data Analysis Plan

A. Current Assessment Protocol

Assessment	Grade Level Assessed	Purpose	Skills Assessed	Frequency
WriteScore	6,7,8	Measure mastery of writing standards	Writing	1 time per year
SRI	6,7,8	Measure student Lexile level	Reading comprehension	3 times per year
CRCT/Milestones	6,7,8	Measure student mastery of content standards	Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies	1 time per year
ITBS	7	Measure student progress in multiple academic areas	Vocabulary, Reading, Language Conventions, Math, Social Studies, Science, Sources of Information	1 time per year
Benchmarks	6,7,8	Measure student progress in mastering content standards	Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts	3 times per year
ReadiStep	8	Measure student academic skill level	College and Career Readiness	1 time per year
SLOs	6,7,8	Measure student growth and learning in a specific subject	Varies	Dependent upon subject area
EXPLORE	8	Identify academic strengths and weaknesses	English, math, reading, science	1 time per year
ACCESS for ELLs	6,7,8 ELL students only	Measure student proficiency in English language skills	Reading, writing, speaking, listening	1 time per year
EOC	8 (Carnegie courses only)	Measure student mastery of content standards	Carnegie Coordinate Algebra, Carnegie Spanish	1 time per year

B. Comparison of Current Assessments to SRCL Assessments

Our current assessments and assessment schedule will remain the same. No additional assessments will be added; however, improvements will be made in the ways in which assessment data is analyzed and used to drive instruction. We will also add additional administrations of the WriteScore to provide ongoing data for teachers to drive writing instruction. Professional development provided through the SRCL grant will assist teachers in more effectively utilizing data from current assessments to incorporate appropriate reading and writing instruction into lessons. SRI data will be utilized in a more effective manner due to professional development to be received from a Scholastic trainer and redelivered to all staff. Staff access to SRI student Lexile results will continue to widen through the use of data imports from Infinite Campus and also training provided by Scholastic.

C. Implementation of New Assessments into Current Assessment Schedule

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

Assessment	Grade Level Assessed	Persons Responsible	Frequency
WriteScore	6,7,8	Classroom teacher, ELA coordinator	**3 times per year**
SRI	6,7,8	Classroom teacher, ELA coordinator	3 times per year
CRCT/Milestones	6,7,8	Classroom teacher, testing coordinator	1 time per year
ITBS	7	Classroom teacher, testing coordinator	1 time per year
Benchmarks	6,7,8	Classroom teacher, curriculum department, testing coordinator	3 times per year
ReadiStep	8	Classroom teacher, testing department, testing coordinator	1 time per year
SLOs	6,7,8	Classroom teacher, testing coordinator	Dependent upon subject area
EXPLORE	8	Classroom teacher, testing department,	1 time per year

		testing coordinator	
ACCESS for ELLs	6,7,8 ELL students only	Classroom teacher, ELL department	1 time per year
EOC	8 (Carnegie courses only)	Classroom teacher, testing coordinator	1 time per year

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

We will continue to implement our assessments as outlined by our district. No assessments will be discontinued when SRCL is implemented.

E. Professional Learning for Teachers for Assessment Implementation

In order to fully utilize the Scholastic Reading Inventory, teachers will need professional learning in understanding Lexiles and in matching students' reading levels to texts. A system team will be trained on SRI by a Scholastic consultant, and all schools will receive additional on-site support. In order to effectively utilize the data from additional administrations of the WriteScore formative assessment, teachers will attend professional learning on writing instruction.

F. Presentation of Data to Parents and Stakeholders

Parents/guardians receive information about school-level data at the Title I Annual Meeting each fall. In addition, data points are shared with families through family academic events, PTO meetings, and parent-teacher conferences. Conyers Middle School also presents general data announcements on our public website, and plans to also utilize social media as part of our School Literacy Plan. The Rockdale County Public School District compiles data summaries on assessment results of each school to report to the media.

G. Data Used to Develop Instructional Strategies

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

("Why," p. 96)

H. Assessment Plan and Personnel

At Conyers Middle School, our school assessments include multiple formative assessments (benchmarks, SLOs) as well as summative assessments (Milestones, EOCs), and the universal screener (SRI) to

determine student Lexile levels. All assessments are coordinated and overseen by our Assistant Principal for Instruction, who acts as the school testing coordinator. All assessments and assessment protocols are overseen in conjunction with the district testing coordinator. All teachers are trained in testing procedures during grade level meetings, prior to administration. Results of all assessments are communicated to parents through letters sent home, parent conferences, and academic nights.

The universal screener (SRI) is also coordinated by the Media Specialist, under supervision of the API, and is administered three times per year by classroom teachers. The testing window for the first administration is normally in August, 2-3 weeks after school begins. Students receive their Lexile level automatically at the end of the assessment. Lexile scores are available for teachers to view immediately through the SRI program. As part of SRCL implementation, further training will be provided on analyzing and using SRI data to drive instruction. Teachers will continue to analyze all assessment data and will increase incorporation of reading and writing strategies in all subject areas as part of our school Literacy Plan.

Resources, Strategies, and Materials

A. Resources Needed to Implement the Literacy Plan

- Research-based literacy instructional materials
- Professional learning –consultant fees, stipends, or release time (subs), and materials
- Literary and informational texts on various levels (specific focus on student interests) for classrooms and media center
- Updated reading materials for the media center and classroom libraries
- Travel expenses for conferences and training
- Training on the analysis of Scholastic Reading Inventory data
- Research-based intervention materials and/or software with necessary professional learning (to include all content areas)
- Grant administrator/district-based literacy specialist
- Family involvement activities
- Transportation for extended day/year activities
- Transportation for students to participate in community visits, community service, and other field trips related to literacy
- Stipends for extended day and summer programs
- Online databases to support and enhance student research
- Subscriptions and/or software licenses for technology-based reading and writing programs

B. Activities that Support Literacy Intervention Programs

- Dedicated scheduled time for reading instruction
- Flexible, needs-based grouping
- Formative assessment in writing
- Development of a school-wide writing rubric
- Use of data to drive instruction
- Research-based intervention materials
- Professional learning on strategies for teaching reading/writing strategies and skills
- Parent education through family academic night
- Community involvement in literacy focus
- Mentoring and tutoring programs for struggling programs

C. Shared Resources

Conyers Middle School has three shared computer labs with an average of twenty-eight computers, one mini-lab in the Media Center with sixteen computers, one Business Lab currently dedicated to CTE (Career and Technical Education), and one additional CTE lab under construction. There is also one set of iPads with five tablets available for teacher check out. The Media Center has 437 sets of print books for classes to check out. These range in size from a minimum of ten to a maximum of thirty-five books per set. The genres of books in these sets include fiction, non-fiction, and reference materials such as dictionaries, and atlases. Teachers at CMS also have a set of CPS student response clickers and a document camera available to them for yearly classroom use. A limited number of Interwrite Pads are available for teacher check out. Interwrite software is available to all teachers. Each teacher has an LCD projector in his/her classroom.

D. Library Resources

- 15,037 books in the media center
- Average publication of books in the media center is 1997
- 925 videos in the media center
- Online databases are available through GALILEO (http://www.galileo.usg.edu); CMS does not purchase additional database subscriptions
- 14 purchased magazine subscriptions, 2 donated magazine subscriptions, 1 local newspaper delivered periodically
- 17 student computers in media center, 4 computers for library functions (i.e. circulation, catalog search, ID printing)
- 1 LCD projector mounted in the media center, 8 portable LCD projectors
- Surround sound system

E. Activities that Support Classroom Practices

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

F. Strategies Needed to Support Student Success

- Strategies for increasing student engagement
- Scholastic Reading Inventory –full use of data
- Effective use of flexible grouping based on formative data
- School-wide writing rubric
- Writing in all content area classes

- **Professional Learning in the following areas:**

  --Reading strategies
  --Writing instruction across content areas
  --Understanding Lexiles and matching readers to texts
  --Strategies for student engagement and motivation
  --Integration of technology in instruction (especially for student and teacher collaboration and production)
  --Literacy across all content areas
  --Effective data usage for planning instruction, implementing interventions, and monitoring student progress
  --Interventions for all tiers of RTI
  --Differentiation and small group instruction

G. List of Current Classroom Resources

Each subject area classroom at Conyers Middle School has 1-2 computers with Internet access. Connections classrooms (READ180, Math Support, and CTE) have additional computers for student use. Language Arts and Social Studies teachers have class sets of textbooks in each room. Students receive a consumable Math textbook, and each student has a Science textbook which they check out for the year. Additionally, all subject area textbooks are available to students and teachers online. In Connections classes, Spanish and Technology teachers each have a class set of textbooks. These texts are available in print only.

H. Alignment of SRCL Funding with District Funding

Resources, Strategies, and Materials	SRCL will fund…	Other Funding Sources
Professional Learning	Literacy specific PL costs—consultant fees, stipends, materials, and travel costs Training on data analysis	Title II funds will be used to provide district-wide professional learning
Instructional Technology	Literacy specific technology—ebooks, electronic texts, subscription costs for reading/writing software compatible with tablets	ESPLOST funds will be used to upgrade school computers and wireless connectivity and to purchase tablets for the 1-to-1 initiative according to district schedule
Instructional Materials	Explicit literacy materials, such as informational and literary texts	District funds will continue to be used to purchase district-supplied materials, such as textbooks
Literacy Assessments	Professional learning in the analysis of data provided by universal screeners	District funds will continue to be used to purchase universal screeners that are currently in place
Family Literacy Materials	Literacy materials to be used during family/parent workshops and to be checked out by parents	
Extended Day/Year Activities	Provide stipends to teachers for extended day activities and to provide literacy camps during non-school times	District funds will be used to pay for extended day personnel related to the regular activities of the school
Transportation	Provide transportation for students to participate in extended day and summer programs Provide transportation for students to participate in community involvement	

	events/field trips with literacy focus	

I. Explanation of Proposed Technology

In a research paper presented at the 2011 International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Ray Doiron presented the following information:

Researchers have explored how e-books have benefits for children's reading engagement (Moody, Justice, & Cabell, 2010) and how they may actually help readers better understand the texts they are reading (Larson, 2009). The rich multimedia features in many newer e-books (such as audio narration, sound effects, animations, links to dictionaries, etc.) support the reading of the text and help readers visualize meaning and comprehend more easily (Grimshaw, 2007).

http://conference.ifla.org/past-wlic/2011/143-doiron-en.pdf

As our school moves toward a 1:1 initiative, funded by our local ESPLOST, it is important that we tie technology into our literacy plan by providing students access to literacy tools on their devices. Ebooks, other electronic texts, and databases allow literacy resources to be available to students 24/7, not just during the school day. Online reading and writing programs purchased with SRCL funds would be an important part of our intervention process, and would provide individualized support. All students, from struggling readers needing practice with specific strategies to strong readers who require enrichment as they continue to improve their skills, could benefit from the integration of technology into our literacy plan. Results of our universal screener indicate that we have high percentage of students reading below grade level expectations per the CCGPS lexile bands. Having ebooks with interactive features available on their 1:1 devices would increase engagement and access for struggling readers. However, we also have students meeting and exceeding grade level expectations. Ebooks, other electronic texts, digital databases, and reading/writing software would allow for a great deal of differentiation while also supporting the intervention process.

VIII. Professional Learning Strategies

A. Past Professional Learning

Topic/Focus	Time Frame	Participants	Facilitator/Provider	Delivery Format
TKES Training	August 2013	*All certified teachers*	Torian White, Fannetta Gooden	*1 day session*
ITBS Training	October 2013	*All certified teachers*	Fannetta Gooden	*1 day session*
ReadiStep Training	October 2013	*All certified teachers*	Fannetta Gooden	*1 day session*
Advanced Ed Training	December 2013	*All certified teachers*	Torian White	*1 day session*
Gradebook Training	August 2013	*All certified teachers*	Patryce Harvey	*1 day session*
Explore Training	November 2013	*All certified teachers*	Fannetta Gooden	*1 day session*
CRCT Training	April 2014	*All certified teachers*	Fannetta Gooden	*1 day session*
Assessment Reimagined	September 2014 November 2014	*All certified teachers*	Andrea Pritchett	*PLC-grade level teams*

B. Percentage of Staff Attending Professional Learning

All instructional staff attended assigned professional learning.

C. On-Going Professional Learning (2014-2015)

Topic/Focus	Time Frame	Participants	Facilitator/Provider	Delivery Format
Technology	Monthly	*All certified teachers*	Patryce Harvey	*PLC-grade level teams*
Reading and Writing Strategies Across Curriculum	Monthly	*All certified teachers*	County-level personnel, Fannetta Gooden	*PLC-grade level teams*
Assessment Training	Monthly	*All certified teachers*	Fannetta Gooden	*PLC-grade level teams*

D. Professional Learning Needs

- Understanding Lexile scores
- Core literacy program
- Interpreting and using assessment data
- Differentiating instruction
- Writing across the curriculum
- Vertical alignment

- Professional Learning on RTI interventions
- Reading strategies
- Implementing effective writing strategies

E. Evaluation of Professional Learning

- Participants will provide feedback on PL sessions via a survey.
- Formative and summative assessment data, along with district walkthrough data, will be utilized to determine effectiveness of strategies presented during professional learning.
- Teacher lesson plans and TKES observation data will be utilized to determine the consistency of the presented strategies.

F. Professional Learning Plan

Topic	Project Goal(s)	Objectives
Core Literacy Program	• All teachers will be instructed in effectively teaching literacy and writing strategies. • All teachers will participate in training that provides best practices in teaching students how to effectively participate in advanced reading, writing, listening, and speaking.	• Students will receive literacy and writing instruction in all classes. • Similar best practices will be used in all classrooms for continuity of instruction.
Understanding Lexile scores	• All teachers will be effectively trained in implementing literacy instruction that enhances reading fluency for students. • All teachers will participate in training to understand Lexile scores to meet the needs of students.	• Students should read written texts within the "stretch" Lexile band for each year in order to be on the pathway to be college or career ready upon high school graduation.
Interpreting and using assessment data	• All teachers will be trained to use data to drive instruction based on the RCPS Cycle for Results. • All teachers will use assessment data to create differentiated groups for instruction.	• Students will utilize and maintain data notebooks to set learning goals.

Differentiating instruction	• All teachers will learn how to provide students with experiences and tasks that will improve learning. • All teachers will learn how to effectively provide students with numerous possibilities for obtaining information	• Students will receive consistent instruction using differentiation techniques to maximize learning outcomes. • Students will be exposed to differentiated practices across contents.
Writing across the curriculum	• All teachers will learn how to integrate writing in their content areas to increase students' writing abilities and enhance the understanding of content-specific topics. • All teachers will learn how to implement pedagogical strategies to develop critical thinking skills through writing across contents.	• Students will be exposed to writing instruction across the curriculum to enhance writing skills and content-specific comprehension. • Students will enhance their critical thinking skills by participating in writing across contents.
Vertical alignment	• All teachers will be instructed on best pedagogical practices in adopting vertical alignment strategies for literacy instruction. • Teachers will learn how to transform traditional instruction using innovative strategies which promotes student mastery across contents.	• Students will benefit from consistent and systematic instruction that allows for opportunities to develop and master skills across contents and grade levels.
Reading endorsements	• All teachers will obtain a reading endorsement through onsite professional learning. • Teachers will learn how to implement instructional practices which ensures learning that allows students to effectively construct meaning from all texts across contents.	• Students will receive effective and sustainable literacy instruction across contents.

G. Effectiveness of Professional Learning

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

- Observe teachers using the Georgia Literacy Instruction Observation Checklist three times per year.
- Create and implement a professional learning rubric aligned to goals and objectives.
- Use teacher data (surveys and observations) to identify key areas for professional learning.
- Use teacher data (surveys, observations, and lesson plans) to monitor effectiveness of professional learning.

Conyers Middle School's Sustainability Plan

The needs assessment process has afforded the Conyers Middle School literacy team the opportunity to have critical conversations about what can be done to meet the needs of our students. Conversations and survey results have consistently led us to believe that professional learning opportunities are essential to ensuring our literacy efforts are sustained far beyond the expiration of grant funding.

a. Extending the Assessment Protocol

All current assessments, such as benchmarks and the SRI in grades 6-8, will continue to be funded by the district. Using SRCL grant funds, the formative writing assessments will be expanded to include all grades. Data will be monitored using the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), which is provided at no cost to the school. However, SRCL grant funds will be used to train teachers in accessing and analyzing the data in SLDS.

b. Developing Community Partnerships

In order to create and support a shared view of student literacy, we will expand partnerships in our community. During the grant writing process we have already begun looking outside of the school to help build our students' literary proficiency. Establishing and maintaining community partnerships will allow us to continue to support literacy efforts beyond the life of the grant.

c. Sustaining the Literacy Plan

Conyers Middle School is focused on sustaining the initiatives outlined in the School Literacy Plan beyond the life of the grant. We will review the goals of the grant, as well as the School Literacy Plan, annually with all staff. We will continue to formatively and summatively assess our students' literacy levels and growth through the use of benchmarks, SRI, and the Milestones. We will analyze relevant data to determine which materials and professional learning are not having the desired effectiveness on student learning. Our district's grant writing department will allow us to utilize data collected during this process to seek and apply for additional grant funds.

e. Extending Professional Learning

An identified key component of our literacy initiative is ongoing teacher professional development. By recruiting and developing leaders at Conyers Middle School, we ensure that our literacy initiative has continuous support even as new teachers are hired. Allowing master teacher leaders to redeliver content and support teachers creates ownership and provides for sustainability.

g. Expanding Lessons Learned with other Schools and New Teachers

Conyers Middle School's literacy plan was crafted utilizing Georgia's Literacy Plan as well as our School Improvement Plan. The result of these efforts has led to the creation of a literacy plan that can be adapted and replicated to improve literacy achievement across our district. Teachers

and administrators in our district meet monthly to share best practices and receive direct support from the curriculum department as well as Cabinet members. Because our literacy initiative is centered around professional development, we hope to build capacity within our school and to encourage teacher leaders to redeliver content to others at district professional learning days, collaboratives, and New Teacher Orientation.

d and f. Maintaining Resources and Technology

Conyers Middle School will enlist the support of the Digital Learning Specialist, Media Specialist, and Instructional Technology Support Specialist to ensure the software programs and technology are running effectively and to support teachers in monitoring students' progress.

Because the district is dedicated to supporting a 1-to-1 technology initiative, any technology purchased through the SRCL grant will be subsumed under the district's technology replacement plan. We will allocate money from our Title I and school-level budgets to replace literacy resources as needed.

CMS Budget Summary

As a result of a comprehensive review of literacy efforts at Conyers Middle School, needs have been assessed and identified, data and available resources have been analyzed, and plans have been made to utilize funding from the Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy Grant. Based upon the Fall 2014 FTE count of 859 and an estimated award of $600 per student, the total funds received over a five year time frame are anticipated at $515,400.

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

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

- Leveled texts for classrooms and media center across all content areas
- Consumable materials
- Informational texts for classrooms and media center across all content areas
- Formative writing assessments

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

- Consultant fees (i.e., writing across curriculum, understanding SRI data, effective reading instruction)
- Instructional materials for training
- Stipends for off-contract training
- Funding for substitutes
- Training in implementing appropriate writing instruction based on identified needs

Response to Intervention: Rockdale County Public School System recognizes a lack of uniformity in the implementation of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process across the district. Efforts are necessary to insure the consistency of the effective use of data to inform instruction and the application of intervention strategies to improve student learning. In order for the RTI process to truly impact student learning and achievement, teachers and interventionists must be provided ongoing professional learning and support. To do so, 20% of the grant funding will be used to purchase the following:

- Screening and assessment tools—Scholastic Reading Inventory (funded by the district)
- Intervention resources, materials, and programs
- Progress monitoring tools

Personnel Needs: In light of recent financial constraints and the impact that has had on the number of personnel employed by the district, using grant funding to hire a literacy specialist for the district would be beneficial. In addition, a grant administrator will be necessary during the first two years of grant implementation in order to monitor funding and implementation. Five percent (5%) of the grant funding will be used to fund the following:

- Grant administrator for the first two years of the grant
- Literacy specialist for the district (to assist with monitoring implementation and effectiveness of SRCL initiatives)

Technology Needs: While the SRCL grant is not a technology grant, the innovative use of technology will promote student engagement and motivation while also enhancing instruction. Rockdale County Public School System is committed to providing students with 1-to-1 technology, but the technology plan spans multiple years, with several schools and students not receiving individual devices for several years. Because RCPS is using ESPLOST funds to purchase 1-to-1 technology for every student in the district, we are not requesting technology funds for computers or tablets. However, 5% of the SRCL grant will allow Conyers Middle School to provide students with access to technology to support and enhance literacy instruction and to increase student engagement.

- E-readers
- Online databases
- Software (such as online reading programs)