



Race to the Top

Scope of Work

Cecil County Public Schools

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**CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RACE TO THE TOP NARRATIVE
SECTION A**

A. State Success Factors

The mission of the CCPS states that we will “...provide an excellent Pre-Kindergarten through graduation learning experience that enables ALL students to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for lifelong learning and productive citizenship in an ever changing global society.” This mission is represented by three primary goals:

GOAL 1: All students will meet or exceed high academic standards.

GOAL 2: All students will learn in safe, secure and inviting environments.

GOAL 3: All students will benefit from effective and efficient support and services provided by a learning organization.

This mission and the goals of Maryland’s RTTT program are fully and mutually supportive of each other. We are proud of the progress shown by the students in CCPS over the last several years of reform and improvement. It is important that all RTTT activities be transparent to the American public and the citizens of Maryland, so **we also commit to participate in all national and statewide evaluation studies related to RTTT.**

Each section of the RTTT application was chaired by a member of the system leadership team who convened a representative stakeholder team of teachers, administrators and support staff

Over the most recent years, Cecil County’s reform efforts have been aimed at improving classroom instructional practice to **reduce or eliminate the achievement gaps among student subgroups**. In 2009-10, we rewrote the role of our former instructional support teachers into the role instructional coaches, following the coaching principles espoused by the Strategic Instructional Model from Kansas University. The work of these 24 coaches, the direction of our curriculum revisions and the expansion of Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies programs are all evident in the changing focus of the district. These changes are represented in table A.1 below.

CCPS is changing FROM a focus on.....	... TO a focus on....
...an analysis of final, summative assessments...	...using many levels of formative assessment to adjust instruction daily.
...static curriculum outlines...	... interactive unit organizer devices.
... correcting student behavior with office referrals...	...empowering teachers to manage class interactions through engaging instruction.
... judgmental evaluation of teaching performance...	... reflective feedback to help teachers work on their craft of teaching.
... addressing the deficits of the lowest performing students...	... addressing the full range of student needs through differentiated instruction.
... comparing cohort test performance annually..	...monitoring individual student growth.

Cecil County RTTT Table A.1

Our own internal review of our current performances over recent years has informed our reform and continuous improvement efforts. We have presented here a Scope of Work document that will extend the work we have done in each of the RTTT priority areas. *Our proposed RTTT actions address specific objectives of the Cecil County Strategic Plan for Student Success (aka BTE Master Plan), referenced in the discussion that follows. The 2011-12 revision of this plan will clearly include the initiatives addressed in this Scope of Work narrative. This revision will culminate June 2011.*

See Appendix or <http://pio.ccps.org/strategicPlan/index.html>

STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS:

In **MSA and HSA results**, we have seen slow, steady improvement in scores that put us on a trajectory of meeting 2014 federal targets, but there are remaining **achievement gaps** in the scores of special education and poverty students. As we refine and deploy our Response to Intervention protocol in all schools, we will attend to the needs of these special audiences and we will equip our teachers to meet their needs with engaging instruction and proven intervention strategies. *CCPS Objective: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3*

In other courses not tested by MSA or HSA, **local assessments** devised by teachers have not always met grade level state standards. With the adoption of the Common Core Standards, (CCS) we need to make adjustments to our local assessments. *CCPS Objectives: 1. 1, 1.2*

Our local curriculum documents have been aligned with the Maryland state curriculum and Core Learning Goals. The major textbooks we have adopted were chosen based upon their alignment with these aligned curricula. The selection of textbooks is an ongoing process. Through a process that includes community input, texts are first reviewed for alignment of content and pilot tested in limited settings before being approved for purchase. Using the same public vetting of new texts, **we will review current texts and adopt new titles where necessary to support any revision of curriculum required by adoption of the CCS.** *CCPS Objectives: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.3.2*

Teachers need both content and instructional process **professional development** in order to provide the most effective instruction to students. Content support comes from content coordinators, adhering to Maryland's Standards for High Quality Professional Development. Teachers also receive support from our cadre of Instructional Coaches as they learn to select and utilize the most effective instructional strategies needed to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Teachers and their content leaders will need professional development addressing the content of course curricula written to address the CCS. *CCPS Objectives: 1.1, 1.2, 3.1*

DATA SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION

Cecil County Public Schools are committed to using integrated data systems to support high quality instruction addressing the Common Core Standards and to enhance student achievement for all learners, thereby reducing or eliminating achievement gaps among student subpopulations. Our current infrastructure to support this effort includes a variety of purchased data systems that are consistent with the spirit with Maryland State Department of Education's plan as articulated in Maryland's Race to the Top application. The **Maryland Longitudinal Data System** contains eight components in the Instructional Improvement Process and the Supporting Technology Subsystems. The Section C subcommittee of stakeholders addressed the system's current capacity in each of the eight areas and intends to use funds allocated through this grant to augment and sustain our current efforts. *CCPS Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 3.1*

In coordination with any subsequent state direction or purchase of a universal data system, our actions will allow us to address four initiatives: (A) Expand the use of our robust **data warehouse** (currently Pearson Inform) to link student performance to the appropriate teachers, to allow data transfer to MSDE, and to develop local assessments that can be captured digitally in student files; (B) Select and deploy a **Learning Management System**, e.g., for teacher portfolios, delivering professional development and instructing students; (C) Continue to expand our use **RTI** by supporting **universal screening and progress monitoring tools**, to provide intervention resources and to design additional formative assessments; and (D) **Purchase additional equipment and infrastructure** supports classroom instruction and formative instructional assessments, conduct professional development and give teachers access to student data. *CCPS Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 3.1*

GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS

Using a collaborative process with all key stakeholders and representative associations, CCPS will design **new processes and protocols to address teacher and principal evaluations**. While student growth gains will comprise 50 percent of the teacher and principal evaluation frameworks, 30 percent of the evaluation will be based on the final approved regulations of the Maryland State Board of Education anticipated in early 2011. For the remaining 70 percent, CCPS is committed to developing an evaluation system for teachers and principals that is rigorous, transparent, and fair. We will establish broad based committees that will develop these evaluation tools and processes, using the best practices from the pilot studies that are occurring in the seven systems in Maryland. *CCPS Objective 3.1, 3.3*

We have experienced great progress over the last 5 years, in recruiting and retaining a highly qualified teaching force. Our most recent Bridge to Excellence update reported that 96.8% of our core academic classes are taught by highly qualified teachers. These are currently distributed rather equitably among our schools, though we do see slight differences in the proportion of experienced staff in our schools. Our lower performing and high poverty schools frequently see a higher turnover rate, yielding more inexperienced teachers. CCPS fully supports MSDE's plan for the equitable distribution of teachers and principals and plan for **increasing the number and percentage of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects** such as STEM. Various incentives will be investigated as a means to encourage "highly effective" teachers and principals to voluntarily transfer to schools or subject determined to be in need. *CCPS Objectives 3.1, 3.3*

In order to increase teacher and administrator effectiveness, we will implement a comprehensive, **high quality professional development plan** that will include, but is not limited to: ongoing teacher institutes, online course work, an expanded coaching model to provide targeted support for teachers at all success levels, and new roles for the professional mentors to work with teachers and administrators, whether new or experienced. *CCPS Objectives 3.1, 3.3, 3.3.2*

The management and coordination of these personnel functions will require that we enhance our ability to collect and archive human resources data on our staff. This software upgrade will help us monitor teacher certifications, pay steps, professional development and staff deployment plans. *CCPS Objective 3.1, 3.3*

TURNING AROUND THE LOWEST PERFORMING SCHOOLS

While Cecil County does not have any of the state's 5% **lowest performing schools**, we have schools in advanced stages of improvement status that warrant our support. As an outcome of a recent Teacher Capacity Needs Assessment exercise, we have concluded that the most impactful interventions needed relate to **aligning our daily instruction with rigorous state curriculum and assessment standards** in a way that addresses the diverse needs of our students. *CCPS Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3*

The Cecil County plan for **supporting the lowest performing schools is part of a four phase continuum of services and supports**. At each ascending level of improvement status, the schools will receive additional resources, guidance and oversight to select and implement effective strategies to address the root causes of their performance results. Current support staff roles may require redefinition to provide content and instructional process training at the direction of the building principal and content coordinators. *CCPS Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1*

We look forward to benefiting from our participation in the **technical assistance** related to the Breakthrough Center, as MSDE resources can allow, and our attendance at the Principal Academy for Low Achieving Schools. *CCPS Objective 3.1*

APPENDIX

The Cecil County Strategic Plan for Student Success was first assembled in 2002 to meet and exceed the requirements of the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan. Each element discussed here is linked to one or more of the objectives included in our plan. Those objectives are identified here. Additions or changes in our strategies will be included in the 2011 revision of the Master Plan.

Cecil County Strategic Plan for Student Success

GOAL 1: All students will meet or exceed high academic standards.

- Objective 1.1 Students will meet or exceed state proficiency levels in tested areas.
- Objective 1.2 Students will graduate from high school prepared for college and/or the world of work.
- Objective 1.3 Students will enroll in rigorous academic programs.
- Objective 1.4 All students will use technology to enhance their learning.

GOAL 2: All students will learn in safe, secure and inviting environments.

- Objective 2.1 Students will abstain from violent and disruptive behaviors.
- Objective 2.2 Students will abstain from harmful behaviors associated with substance abuse.
- Objective 2.3 all schools will demonstrate a readiness to address emergency situations.
- Objective 2.4 Parents and guardians will support the Cecil County Public Schools
- Objective 2.5 Students will support the Cecil County Public Schools.

Goal 3: All students will benefit from effective and efficient support and services provided by a learning organization.

- Objective 3.1 Students will be taught by highly qualified professional and support staff.
- Objective 3.2 Students will learn in clean, well maintained and instructionally conducive facilities.
- Objective 3.3 Students and staff will have access to high quality, productive support services.
(Sub-Objectives)
 - 3.3.1 Students and staff will have access to high quality, productive technology.
 - 3.3.2 Students and staff will have access to current and complete curriculum manuals and recent copyright teaching materials.
 - 3.3.3 Students and staff will have access to high quality, productive business systems and services enabling financial accountability and fiscal responsibility.
 - 3.3.4 All students, regardless of economic circumstance, will have access to high quality, appealing, cost-effective breakfasts and lunches that meet USDA nutritional requirements.
 - 3.3.5 Students will be transported to and from school and activities safely, efficiently and professionally.
- Objective 3.4 all staff will utilize systems thinking approach in daily operations.

Section A: State Success Factors

Action Plan: After the narrative, the LEA will complete the below action plan for Section C, following the directions provided for Section A.

Action Plan: Section A

LEA: Cecil County Public Schools Date: November 3, 2010

Goal(s):

- **Comply and cooperate with all evaluation and reporting procedures**

Section A: Success Factors	Correlation to State Plan	Project. #	Timeline	Key Personnel	Performance Measure	Recurring Expense: Y/N
<i>MOU Requirements: (Yes)</i>						
<i>Activities to Implement MOU Requirements</i>						
1 Compliance with MSDE reporting and evaluation documentation	A		November 15, 2010 – Sept 30, 2014, as requested by MSDE	Jeffrey Lawson Executive Director for High School Education Tom Kappa Chief Financial Officer	Meet timelines of reports Accurately report financial data	N

Cecil County Ambitious Goals for 2015 and 2020

[to accompany Race to the Top Scope of Work Nov 2010]

Maryland School Assessments

Percent of students performing at proficient or advanced levels:

	2010 Actual	2015 Target*
Grade 5 Reading	91.1	100
Grade 5 Math	79.7	100
Grade 8 Reading	78.7	100
Grade 8 Math	67.2	100

*HSA and MSA tests will likely be replaced or altered significantly before 2015 to align with Common Core Standards curriculum.

Advanced Placement Participation and Performance

	2010 Actual	2020 Target
Number of AP Exams Taken	627	800
Percent Scoring 3 or Above	65.9	75

Graduation Rate: 4 and 5 Year Adjusted Cohorts

	2010 Actual	2020 Target
4 year Adjusted Cohort Rate	80.84	90
5 Year Adjusted Cohort Rate	83.91	95

Rigorous and College Ready Graduates

	2010 Actual	2020 Target
Percent of Graduates Meeting University System of Maryland Entry Requirements	48.4	70

**CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RACE TO THE TOP NARRATIVE
SECTION B**

B. Supporting the Transition to Enhanced Standards and High Quality Assessments

Section (B) (3) Transitioning to Higher Standards and Assessments

Cecil County Public Schools will support MSDE's efforts regarding the use of data to improve instruction. Cecil County Public schools will fully align curriculum, instruction, and assessment with the Core Maryland Standards which ensure that students are college and career ready upon graduation from high school.

Challenging and Engaging Curriculum:

Leadership from each school and content area will collaborate with teachers to update curriculum, resources and instructional materials to align with the Core Maryland Standards. This work will be initiated in the summer of 2011 once the Core Maryland Standards and curriculum resources have been released by MSDE. Cecil County Public Schools will fully participate in MSDE led sessions, including, the Educator Instructional Improvement Academies and the Teacher Induction Academies. School and central office leadership is currently receiving training in the use of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework and intend to use this framework to ensure that all curricula is differentiated, challenging, and addresses the learning needs and learning styles of all students. We plan to use the Intensive Learning Team (ILT) Professional Development model to provide the teachers with the training necessary for a smooth transition in the use of the new Core Maryland Standards. This model includes all teachers at a grade level or course to build their capacity in content and pedagogy; the training will occur during the summer of 2011 and will continue throughout each school year.

High Quality Assessments:

In MSA and HSA results, we have seen slow, steady improvement in scores that put us on a general trajectory of meeting 2014 federal targets; however, there are remaining achievement gaps in the scores of special education and poverty students. The work ahead of us includes ongoing professional development to help teachers provide truly differentiated instruction that prepares all students to succeed on state assessments, revisions of curriculum documents with principles of Universal Design for Learning embedded, and attention to selecting appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with special needs.

In other courses not tested by MSA or HSA, we have created common assessments in many, but not all courses, both for end of course and at formative stages along the course sequence. To align with the adoption of the Common Core Standards and the subsequent work of the national assessment consortia, we will need to make adjustments to our local assessments. Moreover, we will use the opportunity to have students take common assessments using a computer model that will identify standards in such a way that item analyses will occur to support teacher instruction and subsequent student achievement. This work is currently on hold and will resume once we see the final state curriculum and a plan of action on common state assessments. We anticipate that significant work awaits local curriculum and assessment teams as we plan for technology assistance in administering our exams and collating results digitally in our student data base. A new and more robust learning management system will play a key role in both our professional development and our student instruction efforts.

Effective Teachers and Administrators:

A long range professional development plan has been established for content and school-based administrators. This plan includes training in the areas of 1) Differentiated of Instruction, 2) Collaborative Teaching, 3) Effective Observation/Evaluation Processes and Practices; and 4) School and System Improvement. Principals participated in a four day Leadership Academy during the summer of 2010. Participants will receive ongoing training in these areas on a monthly basis. Upon receipt of the Core Maryland Standards, we will infuse training in the new curriculum into these training modules. Administrators will be expected to use the training that they receive to develop and implement a comprehensive, job-embedded professional development plan that supports system and school goals. Leadership from the Division of Education Services meets monthly to develop the modules for each professional development session.

Understanding the necessity and the complexity of differentiated instructional practices and the connection with UDL was part of the system's 2010 Summer Leadership Academy. Moreover, instruction on differentiation and UDL is part of the monthly on-going district level training of content and school-based administrators. Administrators are expected to provide professional development for all staff on the foundational and sequential beliefs regarding differentiating instructional practices. Administrators observe and evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices within classrooms where well-designed differentiated lessons occur within Tier One of the RtI framework. Teachers develop differentiated lessons by identifying the crucial disciplinary concepts articulated in the state curriculum and then developing with team members and instructional coaches clear statements of what they want every student to know, understand, and be able to do. Beginning with student readiness, teachers then integrate information regarding student interests and learning profiles. This process will enable them to address the achievement gaps that exist between subgroups of students as well as meet the individual needs of each student within their classroom to ensure growth in achievement.

This work will begin in 2010-11 by training our curriculum writers and a core of teacher leaders in the principles of differentiation, UDL and content based instruction. This training will include the administrators' monthly professional development, regional (feeder system) leadership learning communities, and the summer 2011 curriculum workshops sponsored by MSDE. The costs for these curriculum adjustments are supported heavily with four years of RTTT funding. We will be able to support the ongoing, extended work beyond these years with local allocations for professional development and curriculum revision, as we have done in the past.

STEM Curriculum

Leadership from content areas will support the plan developed by the MSDE STEM Coordinator to ensure alignment of our current program with any adjustments associated with a state model that is focused on interdisciplinary performance tasks or projects. We will build upon the interdisciplinary curriculum development that Cecil County Public Schools initiated in 2009 with the eSTEM units for kindergarten. Moreover, we will use RTTT funds to support a single lead teacher stipend at each of our five high schools to support student progress through the STEM curriculum as well as serving as a liaison as students complete steps towards their Senior Capstone Project. These positions will be recurring and will be absorbed by the Cecil County Public Schools local budget in the years ensuing RTTT.

eSTEM is a UDL designed curriculum that builds students' background in engineering while providing hands on experiences that integrate science, math and engineering in everyday life to elementary aged

students. eSTEM is an integrative curriculum that reflects principles of engineering and that integrates the 7 learning behaviors of Primary Talent Development (PTD) with its 5 essential strategies of observation and description, concept attainment, critical thinking analogies, and creative thinking analogies. Moreover, eSTEM uses the highly effective concept devices from the University of Kansas' Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) as tools for planning and teaching. In 2010-2011, eSTEM will be taught in all kindergarten classes, with the goal to add a grade level each year through grade 5. Using RTTT resources, we plan to support continued development of curriculum writing and subsequent lesson plans to continue our momentum in this area

Primary Talent Development is a collection of prekindergarten through grade 2 science-based curriculum modules that contain instructional guidelines and strategies for open-ended problem-solving learning experiences in order to provide challenges for all children. The program is based on the principle that all primary students (Prek-2) require opportunities to develop talents and abilities to the fullest extent possible. PTD identifies student strengths and potentials and provides enrichment and differentiation for students who have been traditionally underserved and underrepresented in GT programs. Our system has embedded the PTD modules into our existing math, language arts, and science curriculums for grade PreK-2. Efforts such as the ones described above also support our goal of closing existing achievement gaps by exposing young students to a STEM culture, which supports higher level thinking and student development.

High School Graduation Requirements:

Cecil County Public Schools will fully align Prekindergarten through grade 12 curricula and graduation requirements with the Core Maryland Standards. Students graduating from our system area required to complete four credits in math, language arts, and social studies, as well as three credits in science. Students will also complete two credits in a world language or in the advanced technology courses. After completing all of the required courses and electives, students will graduate with a minimum of 26 credits. In addition to the required courses, students will need to have a combined score of 1602 on the High School Assessments and complete all of the service learning requirements. We fully support and will adopt the assessments developed by MSDE to determine college and career-readiness.

Professional Development:

Cecil County Public Schools will expand our Intensive Learning Teams to engage all teachers in understanding the new curriculum and to foster capacity in the creation of lessons that support the Core Maryland Standards. Specifically, this training will focus on the use of the UDL framework to differentiate the new curriculum based on student needs and within their particular schools, how to differentiated based on the needs of specific students, within particular content areas, and/or with specific subgroups.

System-wide professional development will focus on the use of vertical teams to ensure the articulation of the new Core Maryland Standards in each content area. Initial work will focus on ensuring that all prerequisite content has been addressed, given the gap analysis report which indicates that, in some areas, the Core Standards and Maryland State Curriculum are not directly aligned at all grade levels. Within each school, vertical teams will be used to ensure the articulation of the new curriculum within each content area and their effect on particular students, content areas, grade levels, and/or subgroups.

The system will continue to provide training in the Content Enhancement Routines to ensure teacher understanding of what students should know, understand, and be able to do within each content area. Schools will be expected to use the content enhancement routines to foster cross-curricular connections

vis-à-vis interdisciplinary STEM curriculum. Additionally, schools will be required to use content enhancement routines to address particular students, content areas, and/or subgroups.

System wide professional development will be implemented in the use of the MSDE Online Instructional Toolkit to enhance daily instruction of the new curriculum. School personnel will be trained in the use of a longitudinal data system to track student progress and identify instructional needs. Administrators and teachers will be expected to use the longitudinal data system to track student progress and identify areas for intervention, extension, and/or enhancement. The use of effective use of data will be critical to our ongoing efforts to close the achievement gap that exists for some subgroups of students. The target instructional behaviors will be built into the revised teacher observation/ evaluation instruments referenced in section D, below. Section D also describes “instructional audit” visits that will occur using walk-through tools that will include the specific strategies/skills that are supported with the professional development sequence described above.

System-wide professional development will be implemented in order to align our STEM curriculum with Maryland STEM curriculum expectations. Vertical teams will be used to ensure the articulation of the modifications involved in the STEM curriculum (pre-k to 12). System training will include a focus on the use of the MSDE Online Instructional Toolkit to enhance daily instruction of the STEM portion of the Core Maryland Standards. System training will include a focus on the use of a longitudinal data system in order to enable administrators and teachers to track student progress and identify instructional needs. System training will include a focus on the use of the tools in the proposed Maryland STEM Innovation Network.

Once the new high quality assessments are identified, Cecil County Public Schools will provide administrators and teachers with training in the new assessment format, content, and procedures. Early training in the use of the Longitudinal Data System will support administrators and teachers as they work to track student progress on the new state assessments. This training will include the development of system and school-based processes to ensure consistent, periodic reflection on student progress and its implications to provide feedback on state curriculum and assessments.

Section B: Data Systems to Support Instruction

Action Plan: After the narrative, the LEA will complete the below action plan for Section B, following the directions provided for Section A.

Action Plan: Section B

LEA: Cecil County Public Schools

Date: November 3, 2010

Goal(s):

- Implement a high-quality plan for system transition to and implementation of the Core Maryland Standards and assessment instruments.
- Implement a comprehensive professional development plan for administrators and teachers which will provide them with the capacity to fully implement the new curriculum and associated assessments.
- Implement a comprehensive professional development plan for administrators and teachers which will enable to them to fully use the Maryland Online Instructional Toolkit and longitudinal data system to ensure daily implementation of a high quality instructional program for students.
- Implement a comprehensive professional development plan for administrators and teachers that increases their capacity in using effective continuous improvement processes to ensure student academic growth and to address achievement gap issues.

Implement a high-quality plan for system transition to and implementation of the new STEM curriculum. Section B: Standards and Assessment	Correlation to State Plan	Project #	Timeline	Key Personnel	Performance Measure	Recurring Expense: Y/N
1. Curriculum Alignment and Professional Development in the Core Maryland Standards and provide training in Core Maryland Standards and Instructional Tool Kit, UDL, Content Enhancement Routines, Differentiation, assessment processes, and use of the longitudinal data system	B3	1	October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2014	Stacey Rakaczky, Instructional Coordinator for Performance Excellence Jeff Lawson, Pete McCallum, and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Feedback Survey of participants • Review of observation reports • Data collection and observations within classrooms at each school 	N
2. Identify STEM Lead Teacher in each of CCPS five high schools	B3	2	December 1, 2010 – September 1, 2014	Georgia Wensell, Instructional Coordinator for Mathematics Frank Cardo, Instructional Coordinator for Science	STEM Lead Teacher in each CCPS High School to support Core Curriculum integration into STEM Academies	Y

CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RACE TO THE TOP NARRATIVE
SECTION C

(C)(3) Data Systems to Support Instruction:

Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) are committed to using data systems to support instruction and student achievement for all learners. Using data to support school improvement is a contemporary issue and CCPS has already taken steps in this direction as evidenced through the system-wide use of Response to Intervention for all elementary students K-5 for reading. This voluntary initiative illustrates the county's focus on data use as it relates to supporting student learning through data-based instruction on the part of teachers. Moreover, it has required the system to provide teachers with data that includes DIBELS, Scholastic Phonics Inventory, Scantron Computer Adapted Assessments and others. Incorporating such practice requires a series of pieces in terms of aligning assessments with curriculum, interpreting data, training teachers, and creating a technology infrastructure that compliments these efforts. Steps taken such as these also support the larger countywide efforts in the areas of STEM and closing achievement gaps that exist among different sub-groups of students.

The current infrastructure to support this effort includes a variety of purchased data systems that are consistent with the spirit with Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) plan as articulated in the MSDE Race to the Top (RTTT) Application. CCPS data related to students is hosted by different data systems depending on the nature of data. For instance, CCPS is currently in the third year of a three year roll-out of Power School, which is used to host data related to student demographics and school management to include discipline data and school scheduling information. Student achievement data is hosted by Inform which is in its second year of operation. Inform hosts a variety of student achievement data including, but not limited to MSA, HSA, Scantron, DIBELS and countywide Unit Assessments. A recent review of training data and usage statistics reveal a less than ideal rate of acceptance on the part of school leaders, which implies data use incorporated into classroom and school decisions is limited. Any paradigm shift, such as developing a culture that embraces using data to support instruction will take time, patience, and training. However, CCPS is convinced that the organizational and cultural infrastructures are in place to accommodate this new era of instructional practice.

Access and usage of the data warehouse is trackable via secure sign in protocols. Principals will meet with teams of teachers first to demonstrate and model use of the data system and later to share in the instructional decisions they make based upon this data. Similarly, principals will also meet with their next-in-line executive directors to review access and usage data as well as the instructional initiatives conducted at each school

Incorporating the Maryland Longitudinal Data System into Cecil County Public Schools

The vision for CCPS aligns with the vision of MSDE as articulated in the RTTT Application. For instance, on p. 123 of the application, it notes that "The development and implementation of a high-quality Instructional Improvement System is the centerpiece of Maryland's reform agenda." A further review of the document shows the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS), which Cecil County is poised to support to the extent that resources allow. A group of county stakeholders to include central office and school level officials identified a current infrastructure as a starting point for developing a system that is aligned with and able to support the MLDS. As required in the Memorandum of Understanding, CCPS will support the MSDE RTTT Application. Our system is also committed to incorporating Sections C (3) i-iii in this document by articulating our intent in action plans.

The MLDS contains eight components in the Instructional Improvement Process and the Supporting Technology Subsystems. The Section C Subcommittee of stakeholders addressed the system's current capacity in each of the eight areas and intends to use funds allocated through this grant to augment and sustain our current efforts. It is important to note at this point that purchases made using RTTT funds are predicated on the extent to which support from MSDE RTTT funds are serviceable to CCPS. Lack of which will require expenditures using RTTT funds to purchase systems that can effectively interface with the MLDS. In the following section a brief overview of the CCPS status followed by an intended path forward will be described for each of the eight areas.

1. Student Performance Dashboard – This feature is available primarily through Inform whereby teachers are able to search for students and see their students' historical data. A variety of achievement pieces are available including MSA, HSA, DIBELS, and Scantron. The county committed to a three year contract, which expires in 2011 – 2012. The primary challenge now faced by our county is relatively low usage statistics that limit the degree to which data is being considered in classroom and school based improvement efforts. Funding for this option is complete, which positions CCPS to use RTTT funds to continue its use or explore other options through existing vendors.
2. Instructional Intervention Planning - This is an area in which development is needed. Such developmental efforts will be completed with existing resources until such time use of INFORM is extended or another Instructional Planning System is located either through support from MSDE or local purchase using RTTT funds. STEM students in Cecil County will benefit from these efforts by having a process that will allow for e-portfolios to be hosted in such a way that supports students' work towards their Capstone Project during their senior year in the STEM Academy
3. Benchmark Progress–CCPS currently relies on county developed unit assessments that are scored and disaggregated by teachers along with computer adapted assessments to serve as benchmarking processes. The county is also in its first full year of Response to Intervention (RtI), which uses different benchmarking and progress monitoring measures to support classroom instruction. RTTT funds will be used to refine this process, which includes providing rich data aligned with state curriculum that can be used for a myriad of purposes that align with MSDE RTTT. It is fully expected that incorporation of Benchmarking data as used in RtI is an integral component to closing the achievement gap in Cecil County.
4. Item Test Bank – Similar to the benchmarking process used in CCPS, each instructional coordinator has developed a rich test bank of questions in all content areas that teachers use to conduct summative unit assessments. This system is augmented through the use of a nationally recognized computer adapted assessment system used in all classrooms in grades three through eight and targeted high school students. The internal capacity of the school system to host this process needs to be developed both in terms of continuing to build the data bank and using the data bank in such a way that improves classroom practice in terms of student achievement. It is expected that RTTT funding will support this effort in a way that merges efforts realized through the benchmarking process.
5. Adaptive Testing–CCPS is relatively well-developed in this aspect of the MLDS. A computer adapted testing model and product are now used by all elementary schools in CCPS as the universal screening tool for our RtI implementation and all middle schools for school-based improvement efforts. We are excited to incorporate its current use into the larger system as articulated through MLDS. Future plans include continuing its use and extending the degree to which it is used at the high school level.

6. Remedial / E-Learning—Many different approaches are taken to support students and teachers in the area of remedial instruction and e-learning opportunities. This area will benefit from RTTT / MLDS by providing a system for compilation, dissemination, and evaluation of the variety of tools used by CCPS. The county is currently exploring different learning management systems that are capable of hosting remedial and e-learning tools to better support schools. Such tools will benefit various county improvement efforts by allowing for distance learning for STEM and other high level students while at the same time providing historically low achieving students with data based interventions.
7. Curriculum Management—This component of the MLDS needs considerable attention in CCPS. While RTTT funds could support this, the county will in all likelihood wait at least one year until the Core Content Standards have been articulated while at the same time, LEAs will learn how they will be supported by MSDE RTTT. Once this information has been determined, CCPS will decide to what extent local RTTT funds will be used to support the online management of curriculum.
8. Grade Management—CCPS is currently in its second year of system-wide implementation of a data system, which serves as the data warehouse for all student demographic data. All elementary and middle schools are in full used this school year with full high school implementation planned for school year 2011–2012. Funds have been procured for future use of the current system. However, if MSDE’s application of MLDS provides alternative systems, then they will be reviewed for their ability to serve the county needs.

Cecil County Public School system is a progressive organization that embraces research based practices and is committed to implementing the Maryland Longitudinal Data System with fidelity. Our implementation of such a system has far reaching impacts to include student achievement, assessments for accountability purposes, student demographic data, and other school operational functions. Moreover, it compliments and supports other sections of the MSDE RTTT efforts. For instance, achievement data used from this system may be useful as the county and state systems implement new educator evaluation systems. The MLDS also presents as a support for accommodating needs arising from new common core standards and ensuing assessments from the state level.

Locally, the MLDS serves as a support for teacher development in the areas of incorporating data into classroom instruction and school decision making. These organizational behaviors represent a culture shift in the field of education. For any such shifts to sustain and affect students, resources and program commitment are required. CCPS is poised and eager to begin these efforts on behalf of our community. Finally, it is the full intent of Cecil County Public Schools to cooperate with and provide data to state and/or federal agencies seeking to determine program effectiveness and fidelity.

Student achievement results will reflect improved teaching and this will, of course, be part of the teacher and administrator evaluation systems. The instructional audits and an examination of the online resources and discussion threads will give anecdotal evidence of the deployment of the LMS.

Section C: Data Systems to Support Instruction

Action Plan: After the narrative, the LEA will complete the below action plan for Section C, following the directions provided for Section A.

Action Plan: Section C

LEA: Cecil County Public Schools

Date: November 3, 2010

Goal(s):

- Improve Teaching and Learning through Use of a Data Management System
- Improve Teaching and Learning Implementation of a Learning Management System
- Incorporate the Maryland Longitudinal Management System into Cecil County Public Schools
- Provide High Quality Professional Development to Cecil County Educators to Support Data Systems Use

Section C: Data Systems to Support Instruction	Correlation to State Plan	Project. #	Timeline	Key Personnel	Performance Measure	Recurring Expense: Y/N
1. Conduct system wide computer based instruction and assessment audit for potential alignment with Maryland Longitudinal Data System	C(3)		December 15, 2010 – June 1, 2011	Bill Ide, Coordinator for Testing and Assessment; Kyle Rickansrud, Instructional Coordinator of Educational Technology; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum, Executive Director for Elementary and Middle School Education	Audit findings reveal potential for compatibility with MLDS	N

2. Determine priorities for supplemental support of instructional and assessment data systems	C(3)		March 1, 2011— April 15, 2011	Earle Miller, Director of Technology; Kyle Rickansrud, Instructional Coordinator of Educational Technology; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Mark Zawislak, Executive Director for Elementary and Middle School Education; Tom Kappa, Chief Financial Officer; Pete McCallum, Executive Director for Elementary and Middle School Education	Development of RFP that reflects needs of CCPS to implement MLDS	N
3. Create Data Systems Implementation Team	C(3)		May 1, 2011 - Ongoing	D’Ette Devine, Superintendent; Vince Cariello, Associate Superintendent for Administrative Services; Carolyn Teigland, Associate Superintendent for Education Services	Team of county educational stakeholders charged with leading data systems implementation process	N

<p>4. Conduct RFP process for services &/or products to include but not limited to Learning Management System, Instructional Computer Units with corresponding support hardware, Computer Adapted Assessment System</p>	<p>C(3)</p>		<p>January 1, 2011 – June 1, 2011</p>	<p>Kelly Wood, Purchasing Agent; Tom Kappra, Chief Financial Officer; Earle Miller, Director of Technology; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Mark Zawislak, Executive Director for Elementary and Middle School Education</p>	<p>Selection of vendor(s) &/or services to provide products &/or processes necessary to support implementation of MLDS</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>5. Implementation &/or installation of learning management and other data system(s) as selected through the RFP process</p>	<p>C(3)</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>June 1, 2011 – December 31, 2014</p>	<p>Earle Miller, Director of Technology; Rick Ortiz, Applications/ Database Manager; Kyle Rickansrud, Instructional Coordinator for Educational Technology; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary and Middle School Education</p>	<p>Selected products or services have been installed and implemented for system wide use</p>	<p>N</p>

6. Create student based E-Portfolio for all STEM students in preparation of Capstone Projects	C(3)		September 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012	Frank Cardo, Instructional Coordinator for Science; Georgia Wensell, Instructional Coordinator for Mathematics; Joanna Sieberling, Coordinator of Guidance Services; Kyle Rickansrud, Instructional Coordinator for Educational Technology	Online portfolio created for all CCPS STEM Students to host appropriate resources in preparation for Senior Capstone Project	N
7. Populate online assessment service with county based Unit Assessments for use by classroom teachers in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies	C(3)	4	February 1, 2011 – January 31, 2014	Georgia Wensell, Instructional Coordinator for Mathematics; Frank Cardo, Instructional Coordinator for Science; Jim Zimmer, Instructional Coordinator for Social Studies; Martin Haberl, Instructional Coordinator for English/ Language Arts; Maureen North, Instructional Coordinator for English/ Language Arts	All unit assessments in the four core content areas will be taken online with appropriate item analysis used for instructional purposes	N
8. Provide professional development to stakeholders in use of learning management system and application as it relates to data interpretation for school and county based improvement efforts	C(3)	5	November 1, 2011 – Sept 30, 2014	Kyle Rickansrud, Instructional Coordinator for Educational Technology; Bill Ide, Coordinator of Testing and Assessment; Rick Ortiz, Applications/ Database Manager	Systemwide use of learning management system and evidence of classroom use through teacher observations and data system usage statistics	N

**CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RACE TO THE TOP NARRATIVE
SECTION D**

D. Great Teachers and Leaders

D (1) Cecil County Public Schools will Support MSDE’s Efforts Regarding Alternative Pathways for Teachers and Principals.

D (2) Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance:

Student achievement and academic growth are both functions of effective instruction. Cecil County Public Schools believes that measures of student growth belong in all evaluative models throughout the school system to include but not limited to, administrator evaluations, teacher evaluations, program evaluations, school improvement planning, and strategic plan development. The school system has an instructional data set that is deep and rich and will benefit greatly by investing RTTT funds to provide an instructional data system whereby incorporating student achievement growth into practice will continue and mature into the system culture.

CCPS is committed to incorporating student achievement data into teacher and principal evaluation systems through implementation of an annual evaluation model. Moreover, the system believes that assistant principals and other administrators who are charged with improving student achievement should be held to the same standard as are teachers and principals. CCPS is well-positioned to incorporate the twenty percent local measure for teacher and principal evaluation that is articulated under Maryland’s Third Wave of Reform. Data ranging from county based unit assessments, DIBELS, Scholastic Phonics Inventory, and Scantron Computer Adapted Assessments provide an excellent starting point from which discussions can begin with the teachers’ association in order to generate an evaluation model that is rigorous, fair, and provides opportunities for continuous improvement. Currently, representatives from CCPS serve as process observers in Kent County, one of Maryland’s teacher evaluation pilot counties, as they develop a teacher evaluation model that meets their needs.

The county school system is prepared to begin the process whereby articulation of process with regards to incorporating Charlotte Danielson’s Framework of Instruction into the required fifty percent of the new evaluation instrument. This along with the new instrument’s process in terms of number of classroom evaluations, timeline requirements, conferencing requirements, and construct of the evaluation forms are all part of the larger evaluation process that is set to occur. Cecil’s observations of the Kent County process are proving valuable by providing a conceptual framework that will guide the county from this point forward. Preliminary discussion has thus far focused primarily on the twenty percent of the process that is expected to be comprised of “Local Measures” of student achievement. As previously mentioned, there is a level of comfort with such indicators particularly in the areas of mathematics and reading / language arts. There is also an acceptable level of comfort in the areas of social studies and sciences given the county’s extensive work in the area of common unit assessments. However, there remains tremendous uncertainty for the remaining teachers who teach contents outside of the “Big Four”. CCPS finds comfort in its long history of excellent relationships with the local collective bargaining units to the extent that a working solution to this challenge can be reached through collaborative efforts.

CCPS is well-positioned as a learning organization to develop its own teacher and principal evaluation instruments as there are numerous school and administrative officials who are well-versed in Charlotte Danielson’s Framework of Effective Instruction and its ensuing four domains of planning and

preparation, classroom management, instruction, and related responsibilities. The system also has internal capacity in the areas of Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework, formative classroom measures, and processes of educator evaluation that are grounded in best practice. The school system is committed to facilitating a collaborative process whereby teacher leaders and administrators articulate those local measures that may be considered reliable, rigorous, and fair to educators. CCPS intends to provide significant professional development to all levels of the school hierarchy in preparation for implementation of the new evaluation systems. Moreover, Section C of the CCPS LEA application addresses the intention of developing a data warehouse that will include both quantitative and qualitative data relevant to teacher performance.

It is incumbent upon educational leadership to articulate those instructional practices that are believed to be effective and expected in all classrooms. The process whereby these areas of instructional focus are determined may vary from system to system, however once determined, it is believed in CCPS that such practices are to be communicated to teachers and school leaders and that sustainable high-quality professional development is delivered to both parties. These classroom practices should be monitored for implementation, and addressed in subsequent educator evaluations. Once this cycle is complete, each school will conduct an instructional audit of their evaluation findings to determine if expected practice is occurring and if not, what professional development would support continued and pervasive best practice. The extent to which and the process for determining how teacher evaluations are incorporated into teacher transfers, promotion, and retention will be addressed through a representative stakeholder workgroup. However, the county has established a level of precedent for this practice as two teachers at a low-achieving middle school were re-assigned as per the superintendent's prerogative after school year 2009 – 2010. So that the practice can be sustainable, it will be more formally articulated through a memorandum of understanding with the Cecil County Classroom Teachers Association. Building administrators and teacher leaders will assist in developing the instructional audit criteria by identifying those classroom practices that are deemed effective and are consistent with the CCPS Philosophical Framework document. Principals will become familiar with the final document through monthly administrative meetings and they will, in turn, share the protocol with teachers in school based training events.

Using teacher evaluations to inform the tenure process is currently accepted practice in Cecil County. Moreover, close attention and supervision are provided to school-based administrators to ensure that appropriate timelines and processes are adhered to during the evaluation process. There is a long history in the county of using the teacher evaluation instrument as the centerpiece on which tenure determination and potential teacher dismissal are premised. Using the teacher evaluation process to support or otherwise inform regarding teacher certification is not as clear and will require further direction from the Maryland State Department of Education in order to assimilate this aspect into the teacher certification process.

D(3) Ensuring Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals

Monitoring teacher and principal distribution to schools as it relates to their performance effectiveness is a culture change that is necessary and will be implemented. Such practice requires that evaluators of both groups are well-versed in the process of educator evaluation to the extent that superintendents and school boards can be assured that the evaluative data is accurate, fair, and consistent across the entire school system. Incorporating this best practice into real practice will require commitment and training across the county. Current practice at the central office level reveals a system where the number of effective teachers and administrators is monitored, however, there is a level of frustration with educator evaluators being insufficiently candid to the extent that the vast majority of evaluations are absent of genuine critical feedback.

By implementing the aforementioned instructional audit that will occur at each school, there is an implicit product that will allow school and county based administrators an opportunity to specifically quantify the extent to which specific educator behaviors are occurring. This data will subsequently provide as a basis to make specific evaluative decisions regarding educator performance to better ensure that the county equitably distributes its effective teachers and principals to all schools particularly those serving poor and/or minority children. This practice will be augmented by the aggressive recruiting and hiring practices of the Cecil County Public School system. Instructional coordinators in hard to staff areas (i.e. special education, mathematics, sciences) aggressively seek excellent candidates. Moreover, instructional coordinators serve as a resource and participate in the interviewing process to the extent that all potential candidates are screened for both content and pedagogical knowledge and expertise. Once hired, new teachers are supported through professional development that aligns with county expectations and instructional areas of focus. Evaluations and classroom observations of all new teachers are conducted using school-based administrators and instructional coordinators. This practice benefits teachers and principals as well since principals are able to view the evaluative process through the lens of a content expert (instructional coordinator). Finally, new teachers have access to mentors and instructional coaches who deliver instructional support in a non-threatening and supportive way upon request of the teacher. This coach is not an arm of the administration and does not report back to any administrator regarding teacher performance unless the teacher requests such communication. The same influx of physical resources and the support services that are intended to entice teachers to come to low performing schools (Section E) will provide an incentive to retain currently assigned, effective teachers. We are also aware of the rather intangible aspects of working with a supportive administrator in a cohort of high performing professional colleagues that would similarly serve as an incentive to remain.

D(4) Improving the Effectiveness of Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs

D(5) Providing Effective Support to Teachers and Principals

A multi-pronged approach to professional development will be delivered that focuses on evaluation models as developed by the county and required through the Maryland Education Reform Act. Cecil County's wealth of expertise in Danielson's Four Domains of effective instruction, the Maryland Instructional Framework, and the Interstate School Leaders and Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) position the county very well to incorporate these sets of information into the educator evaluation processes. Moreover, this internal capacity will allow for pervasive application of the best practices highlighted above to be incorporated into school improvement plans and other supportive efforts designed to improve student achievement.

CCPS will utilize the services of its instructional coaches and content coordinators to deliver high quality professional development in the areas of Danielson's Four Domains and how those areas are defined within the function of classroom practice. Each of the four domain areas will be defined through more detailed components. For instance, the first Domain of Planning and Preparation can be further narrowed to Selecting Appropriate Instructional Goals that will then be defined by a specific teacher behavior in the classroom that might occur during an observation. Effective training and implementation of this model is predicated on the model being communicated to teachers and principals in such a way that judgments are made on clear evidence gathered from classroom observations as opposed to broad rhetorical judgments that are too frequently the common tendency.

This model is a logical parallel to professional development that will be delivered to principals and assistant principals in preparation for the implementation of the new administrative evaluation system. The Maryland Instructional Framework clearly articulates the expectations for successful administration of schools. Cecil County will provide professional development to its administrators so that these expectations can be defined through specific practice. For instance, Align All Aspects of a School Culture to Student and Adult Learning is articulated as an expectation for effective practice. However, it is helpful for administrators, particularly new administrators, to digest this information in such a way that expectations are related to specific practice.

Section D. Great Teachers and Leaders

Action Plan: After the narrative, the LEA will complete the below action plan for Section D, following the directions provided for Section A.

Action Plan: Section D

LEA: Cecil County Public Schools **Date:** November 3, 2010

Goal(s):

- Collaborate with stakeholders to determine accepted achievement measures by which student growth will be measured
- Implement a teacher and principal evaluation system that incorporates percentages as articulated in Maryland’s “Excellence in Education Act”
- Establish process linkage between educator evaluations and ensuing professional development
- Monitor teacher quality ratings and subsequent distribution across county to ensure equity in teacher quality in all schools
- Provide ongoing training to teachers in K-12 in STEM related areas
- Articulate professional development goals, measures, and program evaluation processes

Section E: Turning Around Lowest- Achieving Schools	Correlation to State Plan	Project #	Timeline	Key Personnel	Performance Measure	Recurring Expense: Y/N
<i>MOU Requirements: (Yes) Activities to Implement MOU Requirements</i>	D(2)					
1. Establish workgroup of CCPS stakeholders to articulate evaluation processes within construct provided by MSDE that will include accepted measures of student growth	D(2) i – iii		February , 2011	Vince Cariello, Associate Superintendent for Administrative Services; Bob Davis, Executive Director for Human Resources, Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education	Workgroup established, process for product is articulated, and meeting schedule is determined	N

2. CCPS Evaluation Workgroup creates evaluation documents for teachers, assistant principals, and principals	D(2) ii – iv	6	March 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011	Bob Davis, Executive Director for Human Resources Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Director s for Elementary & Middle School Education; Lori Hrinko, President of Cecil County Classroom Teachers Association (CCCTA); selected stakeholders as appropriate	Teacher and principal evaluation document that maintains fidelity of expectations as articulated through MSDE’s RTTT application	N
3. Train teachers and all administrators under Division of Education Services in new evaluative instrument	D(2) iv		December 31, 2011 – August 15, 2012	Bob Davis, Executive Director for Human Resources; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Lori Hrinko, President of CCCTA; selected stakeholders as appropriate	All professional educators effected by new evaluation instrument will be trained and prepared for full implementation in school year 2012 - 2013	N
4. Articulate memorandum of understanding with Cecil County Classroom Teachers Association regarding process for promoting, assigning, and compensating teachers based on evaluation	D(2) iv		November 1, 2011 – April 12, 2012	Lori Hrinko, President CCCTA; Denise Beattie, Univserv representative for Cecil County; D’Ette Devine, Superintendent; Carolyn Teigland, Associate Superintendent for Education Services; Vince Cariello, Associate Superintendent for Administrative Services; selected stakeholders as appropriate	Memorandum with Cecil County Teachers Association and Cecil County Board of Education	N

5. Conduct annual system wide review of teacher ratings relative to equitable distribution of effective teachers in schools with high minority and a high rate of poor children	D(3) i		June 15 – August 31 of each year	Michael Schmook, Director for Strategic Planning; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Bob Davis, Executive Director for Human Resources	Report findings each year to superintendent	N
6. Conduct annual monitoring review of system effectiveness with respect to staffing low achieving and poor schools in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	D(3) ii		June 15 – August 31 of each year	Michael Schmook, Director for Strategic Planning; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Bob Davis, Executive Director for Human Resources	Report findings each year to superintendent	N
7. Articulate instructional audit process to gather classroom data	D(5) i-ii		March 1, 2011 – May 31, 2011	Carolyn Teigland, Associate Superintendent for Education Services; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Stacy Rakaczky, Instructional Coordinator for Performance Excellence	Report instructional audit process to superintendent	N

8. Conduct instructional audits in all schools and use subsequent data to generate professional learning opportunities for teachers and administrators	D(5) i-ii	7	Annually beginning September 2, 2011	Carolyn Teigland, Associate Superintendent for Education Services; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Stacy Rakaczky, Instructional Coordinator for Performance Excellence; Principals; Instructional Coaches	Instructional practice data used to support professional learning, program evaluation, and school improvement planning	N
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CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RACE TO THE TOP NARRATIVE
SECTION E

E. Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools

(E)(1): Intervention Authority in Lowest-Achieving Districts and Schools

Cecil County Public Schools does not have a uniformly diverse school population throughout all of its schools. The schools located in the more densely populated areas of the county have a diverse demographic; while the schools located in more rural settings tend to be less diverse. Therefore, some schools have a wide range of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) cells and others have relatively few subgroups. Furthermore, small schools with diverse populations may have a minimal number of students within each subgroup. The small number of students in subgroups increases the likelihood that relatively few students scoring in the basic range could result in a school not making AYP in that subgroup.

This dynamic presents a variety of ways in which a school in Cecil County may enter into a level of school improvement status. Larger schools with diverse populations may not make AYP in multiple cells for a variety of root causes. Smaller schools may have very focused root causes in as few as one cell that prevents them from making AYP. Therefore, Cecil County Public Schools scope of work for turning around its lowest performing schools will be a differentiated plan based on the level of school improvement (years not making AYP) and the number of subgroups in need of improvement. This plan is consistent with the Maryland Differentiated Accountability Plan and State Race to The Top Application.

Cecil County Public Schools' differentiated approach consists of four phases of school improvement. Each phase includes a description of the technical assistance, resources, and monitoring that will be provided to schools. The resources made available in each phase of this plan are designed to enhance or improve curriculum and instruction, student achievement, leadership and professional development. These components are identified as critical aspects of school reform in the State's RTTT plan. In the accompanying action plan, some costs have been identified as recurring beyond RTTT funding years. In those instances, it is expected that those efforts will continue to be supported through local funding sources.

In regards to sustainability of these recurring costs, the ideal scenario is that the support received in the four years of RTTT support will have a lasting impact on the instructional programs that will remain once the funds have expired. With all programs in CCPS, we annually set budget priorities that cause us to "sunset" some initiatives in favor of those that demonstrate more value and impact. Our natural budget alignment procedures will allow us to continue efforts that pay dividends.

Phase I Schools: Schools not making AYP (year one) and schools making AYP through safe harbor.

Each school is required to develop a school improvement plan that identifies the root causes effecting student performance and the strategies that will be used to overcome the root causes as well as the indicators by which the school will monitor implementation and measure success. Each school improvement plan must include long range strategies designed to close the achievement gap for minority

and low income students, as well short term goals designed to improve instruction in specific areas in which AYP was not achieved.

To assist the school leadership in developing and monitoring effective school improvement plans a monitoring team consisting of the Associate Superintendent for Education Services, Executive Director, Director of Strategic Planning, Director of Special Education and appropriate coordinators and facilitators will meet with the school leadership team on a quarterly basis to review student performance data, professional development activities, teacher observation data and the measure of success indicated in the school improvement plans

Phase II Schools: Schools not making AYP (two years)

Schools entering this phase of school improvement will be required to develop a comprehensive school improvement plan similar to a Phase I school. A school monitoring team will also be established. In addition to the quarterly meetings to review improvement plans, the monitoring team will ensure that the following resources are available to school leadership team:

- Instructional coaches to assist teachers in planning for differentiated instruction, classroom management, and collaborative teaching.
- Content coordinators to assist teams in reviewing student performance data to develop targeted interventions during the school days.
- Content coordinators to assist in designing and implementing effective instructional programs for targeted interventions.
- Central office administrators, content coordinators and program facilitators will conduct joint observations designed to enhance teacher capacity and improve student performance.
- Technology staff will provide assistance and professional development in data collection, reporting and analysis designed to monitor student progress and inform instructional activities.
- The Office of Performance Excellence will provide professional development designed for the specific needs of the school staff to be delivered throughout the school year.
- An academy for targeted students to assist them in achieving benchmarks commonly associated with those measures necessary to support school accountability

e II of school improvement, the deployment of the resources described above will be at the direction of the school improvement team and/or leadership team. The monitoring team will ensure that the resources are made available and that appropriate measures of success are incorporated into school improvement plans and monitored on a regular basis.

Phase III Schools: Schools in Corrective Action (year one)

Schools entering into this stage of improvement often need immediate and focused interventions. Some schools will need comprehensive reform for failing to meet multiple targets over a period of time, while others will focus on deficiencies in specific subgroups. However, all schools within this phase of improvement will require highly coordinated efforts, and additional resources to enhance teacher capacity and maximize student performance.

These schools will be required by State regulation to complete the comprehensive Teacher Capacity Needs Assessment and develop a school based action plan with technical assistance from MSDE or the Breakthrough Center. In addition to this plan, the school leadership teams must conduct a needs assessment that examines current structures and barriers that inhibit student performance and make recommendations for removing those barriers. This may include the redeployment of a limited number of

staff, the restructuring of the school day to accommodate instructional needs, or the reassignment of administrative responsibilities.

The administrative monitoring team described previously will evaluate the recommendations made by the school leadership and incorporate approved recommendations into the school improvement plan. The monitoring team will meet monthly with the school based improvement team.

Schools in this phase of improvement will have the following resources available:

- Instructional resource teacher(s) assigned to the school to assist teachers in planning and implementing quality, differentiated, rigorous instructional activities.
- Enhanced access to instructional technology has a “drawing” value to attract teachers to low performing schools.
- Content coordinators to assist teachers in targeted content areas in prioritizing the curriculum and developing units of instruction based on student data specific to the school.
- Additional administrative support that enables the current school leadership to focus on reform efforts, professional development, teacher performance, and student improvement.
- A Summer Academy focused on Science Technology Engineering Mathematics designed to assist the lowest performing students close or minimize the achievement gap.
- A Summer Academy for targeted students as preparation to begin middle school.
- After school, intensive professional development activities for teachers.
- Central office support to create school /community partnerships to engage students, families and the community in the school improvement efforts.

The proposed use of the above resources must be incorporated into the school improvement plan with specific goals, activities and measures of success and shall be approved by the administrative monitoring team prior to implementation.

Phase IV Schools: Schools in Corrective Action (two years or more)

Schools at this stage of improvement will be entering into comprehensive reform efforts with significant oversight and regulation from MSDE and the Breakthrough Center. Schools in year two of corrective action will continue to implement their action plans developed through the Teacher Capacity Needs Assessment process. The resources outlined in phase three of the CCPS plan will also be incorporated into the school improvement plan.

In addition to the above, schools in this phase of improvement will work with the central office monitoring team to select one of the restructuring options specified in State regulations (COMAR 13A.01.04.07(C)(3)).

Section E. Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools

Action Plan: After the narrative, the LEA will complete the below action plan for Section E, following the directions provided for Section A.

Action Plan: Section E.

LEA: Cecil County Public Schools Date: 11/3/10

Goal(s):

- Conduct school based needs assessment to identify root causes of low student performance.
- Develop and implement school improvement plans designed to overcome root causes and improve student performance in targeted areas.
- Target and coordinate supports and services needed to implement school improvement plans or if necessary restructuring plans.
- Develop targeted interventions designed to close or eliminate the achievement gap for low income, minority and special education students.

Section E: Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools	Correlation to State Plan	Project #	Timeline	Key Personnel	Performance Measure	Recurring Expense: Y/N
<i>MOU Requirements: (Yes) Activities to Implement MOU Requirements</i>	(E)(2)					
1. Develop central office monitoring and support teams to provide technical assistance in developing school based improvement plans.	E(2)		Phase I and II schools quarterly meetings during each school year	Carolyn Teigland, Associate Superintendent for Education Services; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of performance data submitted in PDSA format at quarterly meetings. • Revision of action steps based on data review 	N

				Mike Schmook, Director of Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data may include Scantron scores, benchmark assessments, teacher observations, PBIS data, etc. 	
2. Conduct comprehensive needs assessment with MSDE (TCNA) or Breakthrough Center to identify root causes and develop action plans.	E(2)		Phase III and IV schools: Completed assessment and action plan by Dec. 15. During each school year	Mike Schmook, Director of Strategic Planning; Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Principals	Completed TNCA behavior statements incorporated into school improvement plan	N
3. Provide professional development activities to enhance teacher capacity to deliver effective, collaborative and differentiated instruction designed to close the achievement gap	E(2)	8	Ongoing Professional Development throughout the school year	Stacey Rakaczky, Office of Performance Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of teachers working with Instructional Coaches Increased number of differentiated lessons documented in teacher observations Increased proficiency levels in benchmark 	Y

					assessments of minority, low income and special education students	
4. Develop a Summer Academy for at risk students entering Middle School to focus on engaging students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics	E(2)	9	Summer 2011 and ongoing	Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Principals; Tim Corder, Instructional Coordinator for CTE; Georgia Wensell, Instructional Coordinator for Mathematics; Frank Cardo, Instructional Coordinator for Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a three week program of differentiated and motivating activities to engage students in higher order thinking in STEM activities. • Identify students using the risk indicator report in MSDE IDEA scorecard database, Scantron reports and MSA reports. 	Y
5. Develop other Academies during summers, after school, and weekends to support students who have difficulty meeting AYP related benchmarks	E(2)		January 1, 2011 – Sept 30, 2014	Jeff Lawson, Executive Director for High School Education; Pete McCallum and Mark Zawislak, Executive Directors for Elementary & Middle School Education; Principals	Academies will be established and centrally located to serve students who demonstrate need	Y

<p>6. Develop intensive instructional teams in targeted content areas to prioritize the curriculum and develop differentiated instructional activities to be used in intervention programs provided during the school day.</p>	<p>(E)(2)</p>		<p>Phase II and III schools Quarterly meetings to develop marking period units of instruction</p>	<p>Stacey Rakaczky, Office of Performance Excellence; Content Coordinators, listed above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed grade level curriculum and lesson plans • Increase proficiency in unit assessments and benchmark scores. 	<p>N</p>
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