



PART II: YEAR 2 ALLIANCE DISTRICT PLAN AMENDMENT

1. District Contact Information

Instructions: Using the space provided below, please identify a main point of contact for the year two Alliance District plan amendment and provide that individual's contact information.

Name of School District:	Meriden		
Name of Grant Contact Person:	Robert J. Angeli, Associate Superintendent		
Phone # of Contact Person:	203.630.4185		
Email of Contact Person:	robert.angeli@meridenk12.org		
Address of Contact Person:	Street Address:	22 Liberty Street	
	City:	Meriden	Zip Code: 06450
Name of Superintendent:	Mark D. Benigni, Ed.D.		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	
Name of Board Chair:	Mark A. Hughes		
Signature of Board Chair:		Date:	
Local Board Approval of Plan: ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
Date of Plan Presentation to the Local Board:	July 16, 2013		
Priority School District?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

¹ Due to the iterative process by which Alliance District plans will be submitted, reviewed, and re-submitted, seeking local board of education approval may be most appropriate toward the conclusion of the application process. Districts must obtain board approval, but should submit completed plans regardless of whether approval has been obtained.

2. District Vision, Mission & Values

Instructions: Please provide the district's vision and mission statements below. Insert the district's core values or guiding beliefs that are to be embodied by all staff, students, and members of the district community. This can come directly from your district strategic plan or district Improvement Plan.

What is the district's **vision statement**?

The Meriden Public Schools' vision statement is "Pride In All We Do." This statement appears on our website, stationery, and all printed materials. What we are most proud of is that we are providing all students with the knowledge that they need to have a choice at a better life.

What is the district's **mission statement**?

Board of Education Mission Statement: We will provide all students with educational opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to lead productive and self-sustaining lives in a democratic, multicultural society.

What are the district's core **beliefs or values**?

District core values are:

- All children can achieve at high levels
- Effective teaching and learning take place in positive, caring environments where all cultures are valued and respected
- Families are essential partners in the success of our students
- The teacher has the greatest impact on a child's learning
- Strong administrator leadership fosters quality educational experiences
- The needs of the student are the basis for all decisions
- Effective leadership and collaboration will create bold initiatives and positive change

Describe the district's overarching strategy and/or **theory of change** to dramatically improve student achievement district-wide. The theory of change should describe a core set of inputs or strategies leading to several desired outcomes. What major changes or shifts will result in improved student outcomes district-wide?

1. If we focus on early learning, Full-Day kindergarten and Common Core State Standards implementation, we will provide our students with rigorous instruction and the tiered support required for success.
2. If we collect, analyze, and use student performance data to guide and instruct them, we will improve student outcomes.
3. If we embrace a "no zero" grading policy and encourage work completion, we will motivate students to learn.
4. If we implement expanded learning time in our schools, we will increase student achievement.
5. If we develop an internal talent pool, in collaboration with the CT Center for School Change and Connecticut Association of Schools, we will have the high quality leadership required for change.
6. If we provide a student-centered learning environment, we will engage student in the learning process and foster responsibility.
7. If we focus on collaboration, sharing best instructional practices and effective teacher evaluation, we will develop a cadre of exemplary teachers to act as mentors, coaches, and professional developers to improve teacher effectiveness.

Theory of Change

We believe that IF we create positive school climates, which challenge and support students and staff and IF we utilize timely student performance data to guide core instruction, intervention, and enrichment, we will create a school district of which we can all be proud!

- Weekly PLC/DATA TEAMS
- School Climate Survey

We believe the following initiatives will improve student achievement district-wide.

1. Early Learning
 - Full day Kindergarten
 - Extended School days
 - Community schools
2. High School Reform
 - Student-Centered Learning/Nellie Mae Foundation Grant
 - iPad Pilot
 - Freshmen team
 - League of Innovative Schools
3. Talent Development
 - Leadership Academy
 - Peer Coaching
 - CCSS – Lesley University, revised curricula



3. District Data Profile

Instructions: Complete the district data profile below by providing student and staff information for the current school year (2012-13), and aggregate performance data from the past four school years (2009-10 to present).

District Overview (2012-13):					
Total Enrollment:	9107	Per Pupil Allocation: ²	\$12,888		
Total # Schools:	12	Operating Budget:	\$99,608,340		
# Review Schools: ³	6	# Turnaround Schools:	0		
Student Demographics (2012-13):					
% White:	35.9	% F/R Lunch:	70.0		
% Black:	6.6	% IEP:	15.5		
% Hispanic:	46.2	% ELL:	11.5		
% Other:	11.3	Attendance Rate:	91.4%		
District Personnel (2012-13):					
# Certified School-Based Staff:	642	Median Teacher Salary: ⁴	\$78,661		
Student/Teacher Ratio: ⁵	12.8/1	# Central Office Administrators:	16		
# School Administrators:	20	# Central Office Support Staff:	41		
Student Achievement:	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	
District Performance Index:	N/A	N/A	64.6	N/A	
Math	Gr. 3 at/above Goal:	50.2%	48.6%	51.5%	N/A
	Gr. 5 at/above Goal:	59.5%	57.5%	56.7%	N/A
	Gr. 8 at/above Goal:	47.4%	48.2%	48.8%	N/A
	Gr. 10 at/above Goal:	24.0%	27.1%	27.3%	N/A
Reading	Gr. 3 at/above Goal:	36.7%	39.4%	37.5%	N/A
	Gr. 5 at/above Goal:	44.8%	40.2%	52.0%	N/A
	Gr. 8 at/above Goal:	50.8%	51.5%	54.9%	N/A
	Gr. 10 at/above Goal:	22.4%	21.9%	20.5%	N/A
Chronic Absenteeism Rate: ⁶	16.3%	15.3%	10.1%	N/A	
Graduation Rate:	74.0%	88.5%	N/A	N/A	
% Pursuing Higher Education:	71.6	75.7	74.5	68.5	

² Per pupil allocation should include all sources of funds (including local operating, state, federal, and private funds).

³ Review category includes "Review" and "Focus" schools.

⁴ Median salary should reflect the median for all certified staff.

⁵ Ratio should include all certified staff.

⁶ Chronic absenteeism is defined as the percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of school days.

4. District Needs Analysis

Instructions: Using the spaces provided below, identify the district’s greatest strengths and areas of need using findings from the CSDE planning site visit and other relevant district information and data. Be sure to include a root cause analysis identifying the factors contributing to current performance levels. Although you are encouraged to consider strengths and growth areas across all four district domains, you may choose to prioritize and are not required to cite strengths and growth areas in each of the four areas.

For the following domains, identify the district’s greatest **strengths**.

Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of expanded school day model at one elementary school • Strong central office facilitation of curricula revision across grade levels and content areas • Technology initiatives being implemented across grade levels and content areas • Strategic Common Core State Standard Implementation Plan • School-level data dashboards available to principals • Implementation of Full-Day kindergarten for all students • Secondary academic levels reorganized to emphasize college and career readiness skills • Growth models shared openly with staff
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Leadership Academy to build capacity of aspiring administrators and teacher leaders through targeted professional development • Create a robust talent development program including: Peer Coaching, Executive Coaching, New Teacher Induction, Instructional Associate Leadership Development Program • Strong TEAM system • Creation of staff development program for clerical and custodial staff
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlined technology systems and support across the district • Support for development initiatives and grant opportunities • Bold and innovative technology initiatives and use of technology in the classroom • Enhanced facilities and increased learning space at several school sites • Added a sensory room and an adaptive playground for autism program
Culture and Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant support, strategy, and resources allocated to increasing parent involvement • Efficient systems to track bullying and attendance issues • Strong family school liaison department to promote and facilitate parental involvement • Added PBIS rooms at our secondary schools • Turned a few outdated libraries into research centers



For the following domains, identify the district's most significant **growth areas**.

Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completing curricula transition to CT Common Core State Standards for all content areas• Completing Key Concepts online, common assessments for all content areas• Disseminate expanded school day model to other schools• Continue to develop student-centered learning and blended learning environments
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase participation of teachers, both new to the district, and new to the profession, to participate in the new Teacher Induction Program• Increase and enhance professional development opportunities to current administrators
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Renovate two high schools according to established building plans
Culture and Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving the organization and effectiveness of School Governance Councils• Fully implementing PBIS throughout the district and improving practices• Continue to transition outdated libraries into state-of-the-art research centers

5. District Strategy and Year 1 Reflection

Instructions: Summarize the district's overarching strategy and key initiatives from year one of the Alliance District program. Describe successes and progress made in year one. Provide specific data points to support the analysis.

Articulate the **district's key initiatives from year one** of the Alliance District program.

The Meriden Public Schools has four key initiatives:

1. Strengthening fundamental program in K-3
 - a. Implemented Full-Day kindergarten for all students
 - b. Implemented new K/1 reading and math curricula based upon CCSS
 - c. Established appropriate home-school activities through Family School Coordinator and principal collaboration
 - d. Contracted with CT Center for School Change to provide training in Learning Walks
 - e. Improved data team work by providing CALI in-service for instructional data teams
2. Additional Learning Time
 - a. Implemented expanded learning time at Casimir Pulaski School
 - b. Established a Planning Committee at John Barry and Casimir Pulaski in collaboration with NCTL to study and develop a staggered schedule for implementation in 2013-2014
 - c. Applied for TIME Collaborative for two additional expanded time elementary schools
 - d. Expanded Saturday STEM Academy and Middlesex Community College Enrichment Program for grades 3-8
3. Talent Strategy
 - a. Provided administrators with professional development at two-day Administrators' Retreat in August 2012
 - b. Implemented New Teacher Induction Program
 - c. Refined Peer Coaching with training to start earlier for both teachers and administrators
 - d. Refined Leadership Academy related to project work starting earlier
 - e. Collaborated with Connecticut Center for School Change to develop and implement a new Principal/Mentor Executive Coaching Program
 - f. Collaborated with Connecticut Center for School Change to develop a specialized training program for Instructional Associates
 - g. Rewrote Educator and Administrator Evaluation Plans based upon state guidelines and SEED model
4. Provisions for cooperation/coordination with early childhood education providers
 - a. Pre-K/Kindergarten Transition Committee, consisting of a Language Arts Supervisor, Director of Pupil Personnel, Supervisor of Special Education, School Readiness Facilitator and the Director of Family Resource Centers, was established and developed a three year action plan for providing consulting services
 - b. Pre-K/Kindergarten Transition Committee's three year plan includes roundtable discussions, visitations of preschool teachers to kindergarten classes and kindergarten teachers to preschool classes, and reading and math workshops
 - c. Received a Perkins Innovation Grant to expand our early learning partnerships



Briefly describe the district's year one Alliance District **accomplishments** citing specific data, where appropriate.

- Increased Full-Day kindergarten student performance on the DRA2 by 39%
- Attendance increased 89% to 96% at our expanded time school, Casimir Pulaski School
- A rigorous curriculum based upon CCSS was implemented in kindergarten and grade 1
- John Barry School will implement an expanded school day program in 2013-2014, a year ahead of the anticipated schedule
- Last year 22 teachers participated in the Leadership Academy and created leadership projects that had a positive impact on students
- Learning Walks were implemented across all twelve schools resulting in increased collaboration and sharing of best practices
- While not included in our Year One application, the district applied for and was awarded a Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant to further develop and implement student-centered learning environments at the two high schools
- As part of our Meriden assessment system, the Key Concepts (common embedded assessments based upon curriculum) increased from 14 passages to 123 passages (ten fold)

Explain any key initiatives that the district will **stop or discontinue** and why. Note that districts must consider discontinuing less effective strategies before adding new initiatives.

The Meriden Public Schools is not stopping or discontinuing any key initiatives.

6. Year 2 Priorities

Instructions: District improvement requires a targeted investment aligned to the district’s most pressing needs. Please reflect upon district data, the CSDE planning site visit, year one progress, and the needs analysis to identify three to four priority areas for the year two Alliance District plan.

The CSDE has identified three focus areas the second year of the Alliance District program: (1) the transition to Common Core State Standards and new assessments, (2) educator evaluation and support (for both teachers and administrators), and (3) interventions in low-performing schools. Your application must explain how these three areas will be addressed, either through the Alliance District spending plan or via separate district initiatives. Below, identify three to four district-specific priority areas for year two and indicate whether they are new or continued initiatives from year one. Then, explain how these priorities align to and reinforce the district’s broader strategic plan and/or vision.

Priority #1	<p>Strengthening Fundamental Program in K-3. We will continue our transition to and implementation of the Common Core State Standards across all grade levels in preparation for SBAC assessments. Our Full-Day kindergarten is implemented for all kindergarten children which includes our Focus and Review schools: John Barry, Roger Sherman and Hanover Elementary Schools.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #2	<p>Additional Learning Time. The long-term vision for expanded learning day schools started in the 2011-12 school year with planning for implementation for Casimir Pulaski Elementary School in the 2012-13 school year and to have 4 expanded learning day elementary schools by the 2014-15 school year. Our other 4 elementary schools will be added over time pending results from the first 4 schools. The district is acting to mitigate costs through the use of flexible scheduling and utilization of community partners. For the 2013-2014 school year, the district will implement expanded learning time in Casimir Pulaski and John Barry Elementary Schools, using staggered teacher schedules and community partnerships. This work was facilitated by an AFT Innovation Grant as well as a TIME Collaborative Grant. This district is planning to use the second year funding of the AFT Innovation Grant to establish planning teams at Roger Sherman and Israel Putnam Elementary Schools. We also will submit an application for the Cohort 2 TIME Collaborative Grant to further support this initiative with technical assistance from the National Center on Time and Learning. John Barry is a Focus School and Roger Sherman is a Review School.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #3	<p>Talent Strategy. This district will continue with talent development strategies currently in place. These will be augmented by our pilot implementation of our new Educator and Administrator Evaluation Plans based upon the CSDE guidelines and the SEED evaluation models.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority



Priority #4 (optional)	<p>Student-Centered Learning Environment. As an outgrowth of the reorganization of our secondary system of academic levels, we will transition to a more student centered learning environment. This initiative was facilitated by the awarding of a highly competitive Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant. The grant focuses on revising high school curricula to include 21st Century skills and Common Core State Standards. We will use the grant to develop blended learning opportunities. Platt and Maloney High Schools have also joined Cohort 2 of the League of Innovative Schools. This affiliation will lead to the development of standards-based mastery criteria for promotion and graduation. Both initiatives will lead to increased personalized learning and student choice. Both Maloney and Platt High Schools are Review Schools.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New priority
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Briefly describe how the priorities listed above **support the district's theory of change** and strategic direction.

All four priorities support the district's theory of change.

- Priority #1 Strengthening Fundamental Program in K-3 is supported by Full-Day Kindergarten and CCSS implementation
- Priority #2 Additional Learning Time is supported by expanding time in two elementary schools and entering the planning phase in two additional elementary schools
- Priority #3 Talent Strategy is supported by our Leadership Academy, Instructional Associate Leadership Development Program, and Peer Coaching models, as well as our new Educator and Administrator Evaluation Plans.
- Priority #4 Student-Centered Learning Environment is supported by our focus on revising high school curricula to include 21st Century Skills, CCSS, and blended learning.

If not explicitly identified as priority areas, explain how the district will address the CSDE's three focus areas for year two of the Alliance District program. Briefly describe the district's strategy and level of preparedness to (1) transition to **Common Core State Standards** and new assessments, and (2) fully implement **educator evaluation and support** systems. You will be asked to describe your district's strategy to intervene in its lowest-performing schools in Section #7.

The CSDE's three focus areas for Year Two of the Alliance District program have been addressed in our priority areas.



Instructions: For each of the priority areas identified in Section #6, identify a core set of strategies that will lead to results and successful implementation. Identify an expected outcome(s) and metrics to track the progress and fidelity with which that strategy is executed. Also indicate when the district will implement that strategy during year two of the Alliance District program (summer 2013, fall 2013, winter 2014, spring 2014, and/or summer 2014). The information provided will serve as the foundation for the year two CSDE support and monitoring.

Priority #1: Insert the year two priority below.
Strengthening Fundamental Program in K-3. We will continue our transition to and implementation of the Common Core State Standards across all grade levels. Our Full-Day kindergarten is implemented for all kindergarten children including our Focus and Review schools: John Barry, Roger Sherman and Hanover Elementary Schools.
Summary: Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority. The Meriden Public Schools is committed to strengthening fundamental K-3 programs in reading and mathematics. Our purpose is to have students performing within the goal range on the CMT in reading and math by the end of third grade and to close the gaps between subgroup populations. Meriden is a high needs urban district with two-thirds of students entering school unprepared for kindergarten. Key strategies to be implemented in this initiative will be the continuation of Full-Day Kindergarten, increasing K-3 curriculum rigor, providing professional development to improve reading and math achievement of K-3 students and engaging parents in the education of their children. These strategies have proven effective in improving reading and math achievement scores on DRA2 and CMT and in preparation for implementation of SBAC. Data results show that Full-Day kindergarten students substantially outperformed the previous half-day kindergarten students as measured by the DRA2.
Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #1? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased student achievement on DRA2 and CMT• Increased student preparation for SBAC• Increased SPI for all elementary schools



Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	Timeline:				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
Continue with Full-Day kindergarten program across seven elementary schools	DRA2			X	X	
Continue curriculum transition to CCSS to increase rigor and relevance	DRA2, MDA		X	X	X	
Provide professional development in reading and math to improve instruction	Learning Walk Protocol		X	X	X	
Engage parents in home-school activities facilitated by the Family School Liaison Department	Parent Climate Survey				X	
Refine SRBI to ensure appropriate tiered interventions	Data Team Smart Goal		X	X	X	
Monitor the fidelity of implementation of instructional strategies within the classroom	Learning Walk Protocol		X	X	X	
Continue participation/collaboration with CSDE Memorandum of Collaboration (MOC)	Professional Development Workshops		X	X	X	

Priority #2: Insert the year two priority below.								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional Learning Time 								
Summary: Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.								
<p>The Meriden Public Schools is committed to expanding the learning opportunities for its students. Key initiatives in this area include the extension of expanded learning day to 2 additional elementary schools and increased learning opportunities during enrichments held on Saturdays for elementary and middle school students. The elementary Saturday program is literacy and STEM based and culminates with a project for which students work collaboratively to solve a problem. Similarly, the middle school Saturday program is project based learning and is conducted through a partnership with MxCC.</p> <p>Expanded learning day at Casimir Pulaski and John Barry Elementary Schools brings 300 hours of increased instructional time using staggered teacher schedules, community partners and the increased use of instructional technology. This time will include universal free breakfast, tiered enrichment and interventions strategies in literacy and STEM, as well as, more time for technology and physical fitness. An Expanded Learning Team Planning Committee will be researching and planning for the implementation of staggered teacher scheduling, the following year, at Roger Sherman and Israel Putnam Schools. Expanded learning time for instruction will result in increased attendance and student achievement as measured by DRA2, MDA and CMT scores.</p>								
Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #2?								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased attendance measured by attendance reports Increased student achievement on DRA2 and CMT Increased SPI for expanded learning day schools Increased student preparation for SBAC 								
Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.		Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.		Timeline:				
				Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
Casimir Pulaski and John Barry elementary Schools are expanded learning day schools using staggered teacher schedules and community partnerships		Casimir Pulaski and John Barry operating as full extended learning schools		X	X	X	X	X
A Desktop Technology Specialist will be hired to support the expanded use of instructional technology		Maintain programs software and hardware help desk requests; teacher feedback		X	X	X	X	X
Establish school-based Planning Committees at Roger Sherman and Israel Putnam to plan for extended learning time		Planning Committee attend NCTL workshops; draft plans developed using staggered schedule final implementation		X	X	X	X	X



	plan					
Expand Saturday STEM Academy for 3 rd , 4 th and 5 th graders from five to six sessions	Courses and enrollments	X	X	X	X	X
Expand Enrichment program for 7 th and 8 th graders located at Middlesex Community College to include 6 th graders	Courses and enrollments	X	X	X	X	X



Priority #3: Insert the year two priority below.

Talent Strategy

Summary: Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.

The Meriden Public Schools is committed to professional development of teachers and administrators to build leadership quality within the district to advance programming in a significant way. To this end, the Meriden Public Schools has implemented a Leadership Academy, a Peer Coaching Program, new Teacher Induction Program, new principal Executive Coaching Program and will implement new teacher and administrator evaluation plans. Positive feedback from the Meriden Federation of Teachers and the Meriden Administrators Association has led to expansion and revision of these and other programs. Increased focus on developing instructional leaders and sharing best practices will lead to improve student achievement.

Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #3?

- Increased leadership capacity of both administrators and teachers to bring about effective change
- Increased job approval rating
- Increased number of internal applicants for leadership positions

Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	Timeline:				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
Mandate all new teachers to attend Teacher Induction Program to provide more support during first year of teaching	Attendance list of participants at 100%	X	X	X	X	
Continue to refine Peer Coaching model for teachers and administrators to provide time for more feedback and	Schedule of peer coaches meetings		X	X	X	



collaboration						
Redesign Leadership Academy to place greater emphasis on individual leadership projects	Completion of Leadership Projects		X	X	X	
Continue Executive Coaching Program with new principals with CT Center for School Change	Principal and CCSC feedback on progress toward achieving principals goals		X	X	X	
Continue to provide Instructional Associates with training tailored to their position/needs	Attendance at workshops		X	X	X	X
Train all administrators on the new teacher evaluation systems and BloomBoard technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% Participation at trained each quarter • Administrator proficiency and comfort with evaluation system and technology (survey) 		X	X	X	
Created a Performance and Evaluation Specialist position to oversee and coordinate implementation of Educator and Administrator Evaluation Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule of professional development • meetings with school administrators • progress of evaluations on BloomBoard 	X	X	X	X	X
Implement Educator and Administrator Evaluation Plans (PEAC) in one-third of schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish teacher rating baseline • Identification of master teachers • Identify future professional development needs 	X	X	X	X	
Roger Sherman principal participates in Lead CT Principal Support Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop/Implement 90 day entry plan for 2013-2014 school year and • Indentify future PD needs 	X	X	X	X	



Priority #4 (optional): Insert the year two priority below.

Student-Centered Learning

Summary: Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.

With assistance from Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant funding, both Francis T. Maloney and Orville H. Platt High Schools will increase their student-centered and blended learning. The Desktop Technology Specialist will support blended learning environments. Personalized Learning Coordinators will develop experiential learning internships, opportunities for job shadowing and independent study initiatives. Students will become more responsible for their own learning and have more choice. The two high schools are members of the League of Innovative Schools-Cohort 2 to study ways to implement mastery of standards based learning. In addition, a Graduation Coach has been hired to work with special education students from the high schools who attend Venture Academy, an in-district special program.

Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #4?

- Increase graduate rate
- Increase % of students enrolling in post secondary education programs

Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	Timeline:				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
1. Grade 10 English and U.S. History teachers will participate in blended learning professional development (Education Connection), 3 full days of PD in July, 4 full days of PD in August, monthly coaching sessions at each high school throughout the year (July 2013-June 2014). The digital instructional content and technology will be supported by the Desktop Technology Specialist.	Increased number of students graduating Increased number of blended learning opportunities	X	X	X	X	X
2. Roll out to next grade level/group based on first year experience. (Options – Grade 11 English, Civics, European History, Grade 9 teams) (June 2014 – ongoing)	Increased number of teachers providing blended learning opportunities		X	X	X	
3. Instructional strategies will be shared during bi-monthly interdisciplinary data teams (August 2013 – ongoing)	Targeted interventions Increased achievement on state tests		X	X	X	

<p>4. Learning Walks (CT Center for School Change, 2 per team) provide opportunities to gather data, improve instructional practices, collaborate and identify and provide professional development needs (August 2013 – ongoing)</p>	<p>Increased student achievement on state mandated tests</p>				<p>X</p>	
<p>5. Students who achieve success on their PSAT are targeted for AP/ECE course enrollment. Students with their families are invited to AP Potential Dinner (February/March 2014)</p>	<p>Increase number of students enrolled in AP/ECE courses</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>6. Strategies for 9th grade repeaters (August 2013 – ongoing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Quarter recovery through Odysseyware to obtain credit in Q1 and Q2, achieve a 60 to pass classes b. Potential freshman in Freshman Seminar and math enhancement, guidance, social worker, school psychologist services c. Tuesday Tutors – afterschool tutors d. 9th grade teams have common planning periods e. Life skills class for identified at risk incoming 9th graders – earn ½ credit, earlier and smoother transition f. Saturday Academy for 9th grade students g. Pairing a 10th grade teacher in blended learning with a 9th grade teacher to support 9th grade teams h. Read 180 and LIPS with System 44 interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in 9th grade retentions • Increase in student achievement as measured by state mandated tests • Increase of 9th Grade student satisfaction in school (survey) 		<p>X</p>		<p>X</p>	
<p>7. Personalized learning experiences provided by Personalized Learning Coordinators and others will tie in student learning interests to coursework and career interests. (both with-in school and in the community) (August 2013 – ongoing)</p>	<p>Number of students participating in internships, job shadowing and independent studies</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	



8. Tiered interventions will be increased to maximize opportunity for student success <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Credit recovery b. Saturday Academy c. Credit Rescue d. Summer School Opportunities e. No Zero Policy f. Grading is tied to concept mastery, not the rule following of homework compliance g. After school tutorial help 	Number of student targeted for interventions resulting in improvement in grades		X	X	X	
9. Implementation of a school wide faculty read and discussion of <i>Mindset: The New Psychology of Success</i> by Carol Dweck	Record of faculty discussion of philosophy of mindset as relates to their own classroom students		X			
10. Utilization of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a systemic approach to teaching and reinforcing behavioral expectations across school settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of tiered intervention • Decreased in disciplinary and suspension data 		X	X	X	
11. 100% faculty, staff and student participation in advisory and mentoring programs	Log of student participation teacher-student participation in advisory/mentor programs		X	X	X	
12. Mastery-based learning will be enhanced by school participation in the League of Innovative Schools Cohort 2 (Summer 2013 – ongoing)	Develop a plan for mastery based learning implementation	X	X	X	X	X
13. A School/Family Liaison Coordinator will work with parents and community to raise awareness of student-centered learning and its implications	Maintain records of community workshops/activities/events		X	X	X	



7. School Turnaround Strategy

Instructions: Describe the district’s strategy or approach to school improvement. Using the spaces provided below, explain how the district will support and enable dramatic school improvement, focusing resources and attention on the district’s chronically underperforming schools. In Appendix B, districts with Review and Turnaround schools will be asked to identify a strategy to develop school-specific plans for identified school.

Explain the **district’s capacity** to support school turnaround. Specifically, how is the central office structured to drive significant gains in the district’s lowest-performing schools?

The Superintendent of the Meriden Public Schools who is change-oriented and focused on improving student achievement and staff ability to provide effective instruction. The Associate Superintendent and two Assistant Superintendents share responsibilities for supervision and evaluation of building level principals. These three central office positions also have an area of focus instrumental to moving the district forward to meeting its goal. In addition, the Director of Pupil Personnel Programs and the Supervisor of Bilingual and ESOL Programs have responsibility for overseeing instructional programs for key student subgroups.

The Associate Superintendent's area is curriculum and instruction, one of the Assistant Superintendent's area is talent development while the other is finance and administration. Additionally, Central Office staff consists of curriculum specialists and program directors who lead key curricula and instructional initiatives and provide essential professional development for teachers and administrators. The district also has a Director of Research and Evaluation who provides and analyzes various data geared to improve student achievement. A recent addition to the team is an administrator charged with facilitation of the Evaluator and Administrator Evaluation plans.

Central office administration facilitates the transition to the CCSS by providing release time for curriculum revision and professional development. The district budget is developed in a way to ensure that Review and Focus schools are provided the staff and other resources that are needed to fully implement turnaround strategies. Additionally, schools not designated as Review or Focus Schools, but which have students of need or which are undertaking a district driven improvement strategy are provided resources to both plan for implementation as well as to fully implement strategies required to bring about positive change.

Describe the **district’s school turnaround strategy**. How will the district differentiate support and accountability for its schools? How does this relate the district’s overall theory of change? What new flexibility and resources will low-performing schools receive?

Our overall strategy is to provide extra support in each of our four key initiatives based on the individual needs of each school. These supports and resources include additional professional development for teachers and administrators, expanded learning and technical assistance from the National Center on Time and Learning (TIME Collaborative) as well as an AFT grant, a K-3 Literacy Initiative (CSDE Grant) at one of our review schools, and an increased emphasis on student-centered learning facilitated by Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant and participation in League of Innovative Schools. All turnaround strategies clearly align with our overall theory of change.

The district has provided additional support to Barry, as its Focus School, with implementation of K-3 grant at the school as well as supporting the school's transition to an extended day school for 2013-2014. The district



has provided AFT funding to Roger Sherman, as a Review School, to plan for extended day program through training provided by National Center on Time and Learning. Both Maloney and Platt High Schools, as Review Schools, will be working with the Nellie Mae Education Foundation to provide blended learning environments and personalized learning opportunities. Hanover School, as a Review School, has been provided with 2.0 FTE support teachers for the Bilingual and ELL program. Central Office has reallocated staff, resources, and applies for grants to provide extra support for turnaround schools.

8. Accountability and Support

Instructions: Explain how the district will promote accountability and ongoing progress monitoring to ensure the successful implementation of the Alliance District plan and school-specific improvement plans. What systems and processes are in place or will be developed to promote optimal accountability? At the district level, who will be responsible for ensuring that these systems and processes are executed throughout the year?

Explain the **district-level** monitoring strategy.

In addition to Central Office monitoring, the district maintains a sophisticated system of data collection, analysis and feedback. The district utilizes a 3-Tiered data team system with Instructional Level Data Teams comprised of teachers who set SMART goals and utilize CAs to monitor individual student progress. The School wide Data Team monitors student achievement data from each of the Instructional Level Data Teams. The district Data Team then monitors the various data points for each of the schools. Our District Data Team meets monthly to review and discuss results of standardized testing, discipline data, attendance data and graduation rates. These results are disaggregated by subgroups and analyzed accordingly. The district reviews the feedback provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education's monitoring visits. Connecticut Center for School Change has been contracted under our Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant to provide an organizational audit.

Specific data tracked includes; Academic- Meriden District Assessment, Key Concept, DRA2, PAI, CMT, CAPT, ReadStep, PSAT, SAT and AP/UConn ECE; Student Discipline- office referral, suspension, expulsion and arrest; Attendance- absences/truancy; and Social/emotional- surveys for students, parents and staff.

Data is used to make decisions to improve adult capacity to educate the students of the Meriden Public Schools. Examples include collapsing of academic levels in the secondary schools, implementing Full-day K, pursuing expanded learning time schools, an increased focus on early elementary education and all other initiatives as outlined in the Alliance District Application, Year 2 Amendment, and Review and Focus School Plans.

Describe the district's strategy for **monitoring schools**.

Central Office staff has administrative responsibility for monitoring School Improvement Plans for individual schools. The district has adopted the SEED plan for administrator evaluation and created a position – Performance and Evaluation Specialist-who will be responsible for monitoring progress on evaluations. District Data Team members serve as liaisons to a school-based Data Team meeting and report back to District Data

Team on their effectiveness and progress toward meeting school goals and objectives. The District Data Team meets monthly to review and analyze school data indices including student achievement, student attendance, student discipline and teacher impact on achievement growth of students. The district has developed Teacher and Administrator Dashboards which include the same gauges used to measure student growth data, achievement growth on standardized measures, attendance and number of classroom discipline referrals.

How can the **CSDE support the implementation** of the Alliance District plan and school-specific turnaround plans? Specifically, what trainings and technical assistance would you suggest the CSDE provide to school- and/or district-level staff?

The CSDE can support the implementation of our Alliance District plan and school-specific plans as follows:

1. Training in BloomBoard
2. Delivery of assistance as outlined in Memorandum of Collaboration
3. Training on instructional strategies that are student-centered
4. Training on strategies to engage the community
5. Training on Data Team processes

9. Budget

Instructions: Please complete and submit the Excel budget workbook as a part of the year two Alliance District application package. Follow the instructions outlined below.

- 1. Budget Summary:** Please use the Excel budget workbook to provide a high-level budget summary that identifies the costs associated with each of the strategies outlined in Section 6.
- 2. Budget for Alliance District Funding (for new priorities and the expansion of existing priorities):** For each strategy that will be launched or expanded with Alliance District funding, please provide a line-by-line budget that details the use of the Alliance District funding for 2013-2014, as well as the use of other funds and leveraging of efficiencies. For each initiative, provide a cost basis, identify any/all funding streams that will support the strategy, and indicate which priority area(s) the expenditure support. Note that the total of the budgets should equal a substantial majority of the Alliance District Funding allocated to the district.
- 3. Budget for Alliance District Funding for Other Purposes:** In the event that your budget proposes using any Alliance District funds for purposes other than new reforms, or the expansion of existing reforms, please attach an operating budget for these uses for 2013-2014. Also provide a one-page summary explaining the need for such expenditures. Please note that any expenditure of Alliance District funds not allocated for the initiation or expansion of reform initiatives must be justified in this summary. *(Districts may submit operating budget for 2013-14 in electronic format only).*

Note: *The total of the budgets provided in Parts 2 and 3 should equal the total Alliance District funding allocated to the district.*

- 4. Total Alliance District Funding Budget:** Provide an ED114 budget that includes all Alliance District funding expenditures. The total of this ED114 budget should equal the sum of the budgets provided in Parts 2 and 3 and should equal the total Alliance District funding allocated to the district.



10. Stakeholder Engagement

Instructions: Please describe stakeholder engagement throughout the planning process. Provide evidence that collective bargaining units, school and district personnel, School Governance Councils, Parent Advisory Councils, parents, students, and community members were engaged in the planning process and/or are aware the contents of this plan.

As the district planned for expanded day, the Meriden Federation of Teachers, Central Office and administrators met several times with school faculties and parent groups for their input and support. We also worked with the CSDE TIME Collaborative to facilitate this plan.

The Meriden Public Schools collaborated with the CSDE and UCONN to implement the K-3 Literacy Initiative at John Barry School.

With our emphasis on student centered-learning at the high schools, the district convened Administrative, Teacher and Community focus groups to plan for our high school reform initiative. Our community group included members of School Governance Councils, Chamber of Commerce, Meriden-Wallingford United Way, and other non-profit agencies.



PART III: APPENDIX SECTION

A. Statement of Assurances

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES | GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE: CSDE Alliance District Year 2 Application Amendment

THE APPLICANT: Mark D. Benigni, Ed.D **HEREBY ASSURES THAT:**
Meriden Public Schools
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;
- C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;
- H. The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;

K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)

1) References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and references to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

For the purposes of this section, “Commission” means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

For the purposes of this section “minority business enterprise” means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) Who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of section 32-9n; and "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations. “Good faith efforts” shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements.

2) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the state of Connecticut. The contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (b) the contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (c) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (d) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and sections 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to sections 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; (e) the contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor as relate to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56.

3) Determination of the contractor’s good faith efforts shall include but shall not be limited to the following factors: the contractor’s employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or



efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

4) The contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.

5) The contractor shall include the provisions of section (2) above in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section 46a-56; provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the contractor may request the state of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

6) The contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this section as the term of this contract and any amendments thereto as they exist on the date of the contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this contract and any amendments thereto.

7) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the state of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (b) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (c) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to section 46a-56; (d) the contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor which relate to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56.

8) The contractor shall include the provisions of section (7) above in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section 46a-56; provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the contractor may request the state of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

M. The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education and availability of state or federal funds.



N. The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official; hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature: _____

Name: *(typed)*

Mark D. Benigni, Ed.D.

Title: *(typed)*

Superintendent

Date:

June 28, 2013



B. Schools Review and Turnaround Schools

Instructions: The list below identifies all of the district’s Review and Turnaround schools. The district must submit plans for all of its Turnaround schools and at least half of its Review schools. Indicate which of the district’s Review schools will begin implementation in fall 2013. Also indicate how the district will satisfy planning requirements for each school. This can include: (1) developing a new plan for the school; (2) submitting an existing plan that has shown progress; or (3) applying to participate in the TIME Collaborative.

In the final column, indicate whether the district is considering participation in the Commissioner’s Network.⁷ Please note that if a school is not selected for the TIME Collaborative, then that school must complete the School Improvement Plan template. If the school is submitting an existing plan, then the district must only complete the cover page or Section #1 of the School Improvement Plan template for that school. Schools may also have the opportunity to apply for the K-3 Literacy Initiative; more information about this initiative is forthcoming.

School:	Classification:		Proposed Plan:	Expression of interest in the Commissioner’s Network:
Francis T. Maloney High School	Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2013 <input type="checkbox"/> 2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Plan <input type="checkbox"/> TIME Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Hanover School	Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2013 <input type="checkbox"/> 2014	<input type="checkbox"/> New Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing Plan <input type="checkbox"/> TIME Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Orville H. Platt High School	Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2013 <input type="checkbox"/> 2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Plan <input type="checkbox"/> TIME Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Roger Sherman School	Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2013 <input type="checkbox"/> 2014	<input type="checkbox"/> New Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TIME Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Washington Middle School	Review	<input type="checkbox"/> 2013 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2014	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Plan <input type="checkbox"/> TIME Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

⁷ Expression of interest does not signify a requirement or intent to apply. Expansion of the Commissioner’s Network will be contingent upon the availability of funds.