



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 2 Alliance District plan amendment and provide that individual's contact information.

Name of School District:	Middletown Public Schools		
Name of Grant Contact Person:	Elizabeth K. Nocera, Director of Grant Services		
Phone # of Contact Person:	(860) 638-1414		
E-mail of Contact Person:	noceraek@mpsct.org		
Address of Contact Person:	Street Address:	311 Hunting Hill Avenue	
	City:	Middletown	Zip Code: 06457
Name of Superintendent:	Patricia Charles, Ed.D.		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	
Name of Board Chair:	Eugene P. Nocera, Ph.D.		
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:	Anticipated August 20, 2013		
Priority School District?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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**? Updated July 2013

VISION

Vitality influences and transforms our instruction to meet the needs of every child through collaboration, focus, and determination in a high quality school system passionate about student achievement.

WE BELIEVE

Every child deserves rigorous curriculum, dynamic teaching, and the tools and materials to facilitate learning.

High expectations for all children and differentiated learning opportunities will enable students to reach their potential.

High quality professional development that is embedded in everyday practice will improve student achievement.

Strong parent and community support is essential to our schools and city.

GOALS

1. Increase student achievement and reduce gaps between subgroups by creating a culture of Vitality and high performance.
2. Provide the resources necessary to ensure educational excellence in a safe and healthy learning environment.
3. Hire and nurture high quality personnel in all positions.
4. Promote our schools and build public support and pride in our educational system.

Cultivating Student Potential

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

Middletown Public Schools - Cultivating Student Potential



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

Middletown Public Schools – Core beliefs and values:

- Every child deserves rigorous curriculum, dynamic teaching, and the tools and materials to facilitate learning.
- High expectations for all children and differentiated learning opportunities will enable students to reach their potential.
- High quality professional development that is embedded in everyday practice will improve student achievement; and
- Strong parent and community support is essential to our schools and city.

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?

Middletown Public Schools has had a systemic shift in focus as the result of being identified by the state as a district "In Need of Improvement" in 2002. The foundation for change is data-driven decision making at the district, school, subject area, grade level, and classroom levels. Improvement plans and data teams are working at all levels to design instruction that will meet the needs of every student.

Research-based instructional strategies and interventions are being implemented district-wide. During the 2009-2010 school year, Middletown implemented the "Scientifically Research-Based Intervention" Framework (SRBI) for at-risk students in grades K-8 and has continued to use this framework as the guiding principle for effective instruction in grades K-12 in the 2012-2013 school year. This targeted, additional instruction has been effective in narrowing the achievement gap, and will serve as a basis for our continued approach.

Lower-tiered schools will be provided with interventionists to provide tiered instruction in small and manageable groups. An extended school day program will also be provided at Bielefield Elementary School which is our only Focus school in the district.

Additionally, it is universally accepted that good teaching is the most important element in a sound educational program. With that Middletown is working to revise their current teacher evaluation system to serve three purposes:

1. To raise the quality of instruction and educational services to the children of our community.
2. To raise the standards of the teaching profession as a whole.
3. To aid the individual teacher to grow professionally.

Middletown has adopted the SEED Educator Evaluation System with minor revisions and has been training all administrators and teacher leaders in the process throughout the entire 2012-2013 school year, and in the Danielson Framework since April 2013. Administrators have received over 25 hours of training in SEED, Danielson Framework, and TeachScape. All administrators are required to pass the first part of the Proficiency Test in TeachScape by September 1, 2013, and the second part by June 2014. Intensive support will be provided if needed.

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:	4,881	Per Pupil Allocation: ²	\$15,160		
Total # Schools:	11	Operating Budget:	\$72,550,000 (+ \$14,475,878 grants/rev)		
# Review Schools: ³	0	# Turnaround Schools:	0		
Student Demographics (2012-13):					
% White:	54%	% F/R Lunch:	44%		
% Black:	21%	% IEP:	11%		
% Hispanic:	15%	% ELL:	2%		
% Other:	10%	Attendance Rate:	95.1		
District Personnel (2012-13):					
# Certified School-based Staff:	429	Median Teacher Salary: ⁴	\$75,959		
Student/Teacher Ratio: ⁵	11.4	# Central Office Administrators:	4		
# School Administrators:	20	# Central Office Support Staff:	28		
Student Achievement:	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	
District Performance Index:	n/a	n/a	75.9	n/a	
Math	Gr. 3 CMT at/above Goal:	60.4	61.9	61.3	58.8
	Gr. 5 CMT at/above Goal:	70.1	70.7	67.3	72.0
	Gr. 8 CMT at/above Goal:	58.5	53.3	44.1	45.1
	Gr. 10 CAPT at/above Goal:	35.0	37.5	43.4	41.9
Reading	Gr. 3 CMT at/above Goal:	49.2	54.4	60.3	53.6
	Gr. 5 CMT at/above Goal:	59.0	56.2	64.7	63.7
	Gr. 8 CMT at/above Goal:	63.5	70.7	69.5	68.1
	Gr. 10 CAPT at/above Goal:	32.5	28.0	39.8	41.4
Chronic Absenteeism Rate: ⁶	9.8	10.1	8.5	11	
4-Yr Graduation Rate:	78.0	76.9	76.1	n/a	
% Pursuing Higher Education:	78.2	76.4	88.5	n/a	

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"> • Middletown has incorporated a standardized academic program across the district, and work is done through the district data teams to talk about implementation and results. • Middletown is currently using common formative assessments, and these inform targeted interventions. • The district’s Associate Superintendent has pioneered a teacher-led CCSS aligned curriculum development team this year; this has allowed for investment in the new materials.
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human capital is one of the four goals the district has identified for the upcoming school year, including the ability to hire and nurture high-quality personnel in all positions. • The CCSS curriculum development teams have allowed for significant teacher leadership opportunities within the district. • The district has been preparing diligently to implement the new teacher evaluation system in the 2013-14 school year.
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite experiencing significant budget difficulties, district leadership provided examples of many creative ways in which current allocations have been leveraged to implement CCSS, teacher and administrative evaluations programs, and provide for small, yet necessary improvements to schools.
Culture and Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts have been made at the middle school level to identify areas for improvements to school climate and increased enrichment opportunities for students. • The district has addressed anti-bullying legislation by attending trainings and implementing bullying logs and investigations into bullying allegations.



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

Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued strategy for and development of formative assessments as the secondary level.• More consistent data practices and data that is readily accessible to staff.• Professional development time has largely focused on CCSS, the new teacher evaluation system, and anti-bullying efforts. Moving into the new school year, professional development must focus on classroom instructional practices.
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulties hiring for specialized areas (e.g., foreign languages) and attracting minority candidates for administrative and teaching positions.• Majority of personnel decisions are made primarily based on seniority; however, the district has begun to slowly shift away from this.
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historically strained relationship between the district and local government. While the current district leadership is working to mend this relationship, negotiations and decisions are often stalled due to this relationship.• Current structure within the district has school support services (e.g., custodians, cafeteria workers) as city employees, not district employees. This creates a challenging staffing dynamic for Middletown.
Culture and Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behavior and attendance issues are prevalent in the district; however, the district is seeking outside consultation to address this.• Not sufficient parent involvement throughout the district.

5. District Strategy and Year 1 Reflection

Instructions: Summarize the district’s overarching strategy and key initiatives from Year 1 of the Alliance District program. Describe successes and progress made in Year 1. Provide specific data points to support the analysis.

Articulate the **district’s key initiatives from Year 1** of the Alliance District program.

Middletown identified the following key actions to implement the district’s overarching strategy for Year 1 to improve student achievement and narrow the achievement gap:

- Focused efforts on the implementation of the SRBI framework to systemically improve all three Tiers of instruction.
- Evaluate and assess the Pupil Services Department (PSD) to ensure that all services offered are aligned with district goals and provided appropriate services to students who have an IEP. Based on the results and recommendations from the audit, the district will be better able to provide a continuum of support services to students as they transition from receiving tiered instruction through SRBI to qualifying for special education services.
- Implementation of the Wilson Language Basics Foundations reading program in Grades K-1 to improve phonological awareness and phonics skills.
- Continue curriculum writing, and literacy and mathematics priority initiatives to support the development and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for all students.
- Provide leadership development and induction for new administrators.
- Provide opportunities for students from Middletown High School to participate in the Higher Education college/career pathways program provided to increase career and college readiness for Middletown students.
- Provide leadership development and intensive family outreach through home visitation efforts designed to increase family engagement.
- Conduct on-going program evaluation services designed to provide continuous feedback for program improvement.

Briefly describe the district’s Year 1 Alliance District **accomplishments** citing specific data, where appropriate.

Year 1 Implementation Index			
Goal	Implementation Steps	Implemented? (Y/N)	Explanation
1. Raising the Quality of Instruction & Educational Services	Increase the contracts of DCCs to 130 days per year.	Y	District Coaches worked with teachers on creating and implementing CCSS units.
	Hire six certified teachers to serve as interventionists.	Y	All lower tiered schools were provided with 3 – 4 more interventionists than higher performing schools.

	Prioritize needs: Low and middle performing schools will receive additional 1-2 interventionists depending on number of students in need of support.	Y	Same as above.
	Provide intensive PD during first 8 weeks of the school year.	Y	Interventionists received training for DCCs in SRBI and reading strategies.
	Provide time for reflection and collaboration during monthly meetings with SRBI district facilitator.	Y	SRBI district facilitator attended data teams and providing training and coaching to teachers as needed.
	Provide opportunities for collaboration among all stakeholders.	N	Interventionists do not have set times to meet with teachers.
	Provide PD to staff in LSCI.	Y	30 staff members participated in intensive 5 day training.
	Develop and issue an RFP for an audit of pupil services.	Y	Audit was performed and recommendations were made to district on how to improve the efficiency and performance of the special education program.
	Identify the appropriate contractor.	Y	Futures, Inc. contracted
	Contractor to conduct the audit and provide commendations and recommendations.	Y	District analyzing audit results
	Purchase K-2 comprehensive Foundations kits (one kit per school)	Y	All kits were purchased and 30 teachers were identified to receive the training. Each school has also identified a teacher to become the facilitator in the building.
	Train Elementary Instructional Support Teachers, classroom teachers and interventionists to support students in Tier II.	Y	Phase 1 of Wilson Foundations training has occurred at all schools and will continue during 2013-2014 school year.
	Implement Foundations program with students receiving Tier III interventions.	Y	Phase 1 of Wilson Foundations training has occurred at all schools and will continue during

			2013-2014 school year.
	Wilson trainers will provide job embedded coaching opportunities to support instruction.	N	Phase 2 of Wilson Foundations training will occur at all schools in 2013-2014 school year.
	Administer a needs assessment; determine the nonfiction text needs of each school and grade level. Determine basic level of materials; ensure equity among all schools.	Y	Completed and purchased approximately \$125,000 of nonfiction materials in grades K-12.
	Purchase high quality nonfiction texts that align with thematic units, will support explicit small group instruction and increase independent reading.	Y	Completed and purchased approximately \$125,000 of nonfiction materials in grades K-12.
	Purchase high quality math manipulatives.	Y	Purchased approximately \$35,000 of materials for grades K-5.
	Provide teachers with ongoing professional development that will support the implementation of instructional techniques that align with the Reading for Information and math standards.	Y	DCCs provided PD at data teams and curriculum meetings.
	Provide students with increased opportunities to independently read high quality nonfiction texts at their level.	Y	Strategy was implemented through the work of the DDT which funneled down to SDT and IDTs. This was a focus for the district this school year for all grades.
	Hire a library media specialist for Lower Tier elementary schools to integrate informational literacies into the curriculum.	Y	Bielefield and Macdonough share a library media specialist.
	Continue to create units of instruction which include lesson plans, resources and district assessments that align to CCSS (ELA and Math) and state assessments with grade level teams.	Y	Three units in all core areas have been created and implemented.
	Create grade level, K-12, will consist of a team of 8 educators (1 teacher per elementary school and the DCC). Each	Y	Teams met at a minimum of 2 hours a month with DCCs.

	team will meet monthly for 2 hours a month.		
2. Wrap-Around Services Support	Secure additional spots for students into the program.	Y	Approximately 100 students attended an extended day program at Bielefield School (Focus School).
	Hire an additional home visitor to support expanded wrap-around services integration and partnership to improve student learning, stronger families, and a healthier community.	Y	Relationships with reluctant families have been established and many families are more involved in supporting students with learning at home.
	Provide expanded literacy events, parent engagement outreach and support, and support for School-Family-Community Partnership Action Plans.	Y	Literacy events took place 3 times at Bielefield School.
3. Talent Development	Identify new administrators and appropriate mentors/coaches at Middletown HS, Keigwin MS, Farm Hill ES, and Wesley ES.	Y	All new administrators were provided with mentors/coaches. Coaches provided support with School Improvement Plans and Climate Goals.
	Contract with Center X for evaluation services.	Y	Not very helpful and plan to discontinue services for the 2013-2014 school year.
	Develop evaluation plan and timeline with appropriate district personnel.	Y	All plans and timelines were followed.
	Identify appropriate performance targets and measures.	Y	Performance targets were identified with administrators and teachers by September 15, 2012.

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.

Only three program elements will be discontinued in Year 2:

- Special Education Audit – Audit completed and the district is in the process of analyzing the results and recommendations for improvement; and
- Leadership development for new principals – Each of the district’s new administrators received significant coaching and mentoring for Year 1 and successfully completed their educational goals for their first year.
- UCLA Center X Evaluation services were not helpful to move our district forward. We plan to discontinue this service.

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 1 progress, and the needs analysis to identify three to four priority areas for the Year 2 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 2 and indicate whether they are new or continued initiatives from Year 1. Then, explain how these priorities align to and reinforce the district’s broader strategic plan and/or vision.

Priority #1	<p>Raising the Quality of Instruction and Educational Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of SRBI Framework and Teacher Evaluation • Common Core State Standards 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #2	<p>Wrap-Around Services Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career/College Pathways: Higher Education Partnership for Graduation Support • Parent Engagement and Wrap-around Services Enhancement 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #3	<p>Talent Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Development and Support 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #4 (optional)	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority

Briefly describe how the priorities listed above **support the district’s theory of change** and strategic direction.

Priority #1:

Middletown’s overarching strategy for improving student achievement has been to begin the process of transitioning to the CCSS. The district is committed to designing and implementing a consistent curriculum that promotes higher level thinking across all disciplines. The district has formed curriculum committees in every grade with representation from every school at every grade level to develop units of instruction. In 2012-13, three of the six units were developed and implemented in each of the core and encore subject areas. Summer curriculum work continued and teachers designed at least one more unit and performance assessments in core areas. In 2013-14 the balance of the units will be developed and implemented for full CCSS implementation. The process of designing the district’s CCSS units has enhanced the capacity of teachers to think deeply about

their content and instructional practice. All units are organized with common structure and process and are posted on the district's SharePoint portal.

The district has also focused on creating a tiered intervention structure at each school, with emphasis on the lowest performing schools. Each of the lower tiered schools have implemented a 90-minute literacy and mathematics block, and an additional intervention block to support tiered intervention. The district has purchased significant fiction and non-fiction resources and mathematics manipulatives to support CCSS and tiered intervention. Higher performing schools had one interventionist; lower performing schools had up to six interventionists. All elementary schools have instructional support specialists and all secondary schools have department heads. All of the instructional leaders have attended NCTM professional development, CCSS professional development, and ESL professional development throughout the school year and have trained and coached teachers in the new practices. The district is focused on the importance of early literacy and began the process of training 30 teachers in Grades K-1 in the Wilson Foundations Reading program. There will be a certified Wilson reading coach at every school by the end of the 2013-14 school year.

Priority #2:

Middletown's one Focus School (Bielefield) staff was provided professional development to deliver high-quality, culturally responsive, relative instruction to improve student achievement for all students, but in particular to the school's underperforming Hispanic subgroup. This professional development was provided by a SERC team that delivered on-site group and individual coaching and modeling of culturally responsive practices. The resources provided to Bielefield by the SDE provided an extended day program to approximately 100 students.

Interventionists at the high school focused on improving the 4-year cohort graduation rate with proven success in at least seven individual cases where the students would not have attained graduation without the focused and individualized intervention they received.

Priority #3: Talent Development

During the 2012-13 school year, the district hired Executive Coaches for each new administrator in the district. The Executive Coaches provided mentoring support to new principals to help them align their School Improvement Plans to district goals and objectives. All administrators participated in intensive teacher evaluation training throughout the school year to prepare them for full implementation of SEED in August 2013. Administrators spent 20 hours over the summer watching teacher videos and practicing calibration with the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Administrators will take the proficiency assessment in August 2013. The district has purchased TeachScape to provide administrators with professional development opportunities and a data management system. The district continues to provide professional development in the new teacher evaluation system to teachers throughout the school year, as part of their 18 early release days. The administration will participate in professional development provided by ACES for 6 hours per month, throughout the school year. This professional development will provide administrators with assistance in writing SLO's and IEG's, calibrating the Danielson Framework rubric, and providing an opportunity for inter-reliability of how teachers are rated district wide.

If not explicitly identified as priority areas, explain how the district will address the CSDE's three focus areas for Year 2 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 district is addressing the CSDE's three focus areas for Year 2 of the Alliance District program.

The district's key strategies to transition to CCSS include:

1. Continue to create units of instruction which include lesson plans, resources, and district assessments that align to CCSS (ELA and Math) and state assessments with grade level teams. Each grade level, K-12, will consist of a team of 8 educators (1 teacher per elementary school and the District Curriculum Coaches); high school and middle school will adhere to a different schedule;
2. Create a pacing guide with timelines, skills and concepts which evolve sequentially from grade to grade; and;
3. Ensure that reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, presenting and content specific technology and applications are embedded across all content areas.

Middletown's one Focus School (Bielefield) will continue to be provided with job-embedded professional development in order to help teachers deliver high-quality, culturally responsive instruction to improve student achievement for all students, but in particular to the school's underperforming Hispanic subgroup. This professional development/coaching will be provided by District Curriculum Coaches, and teacher leaders will also attend workshops that will provide them with research based effective teaching practices. The teacher leaders who attend these workshops will be expected to share what they have learned with all educators to ensure implementation of culturally responsive practices throughout the entire school. The resources provided through the Alliance Grant will help provide an extended day program to approximately 100 students in Bielefield School. This program will provide intensive support for students who are at risk in ELA and Math and will also provide them with opportunities to participate in hands on learning experiences.

An interventionist at the high school will continue to work with the guidance counselors and teachers to provide support to students who are at risk of not graduating and on improving the 4-year cohort graduation.

The district has a comprehensive assessment system, which ensures regular monitoring of student performance at all levels. At the K-8 level, all students are assessed using Fountas and Pinnell and Aimsweb, and students in grades 9-12 are assessed with NWEA. All elementary and middle schools will continue to receive training in AIMSweb data management and analysis, and the high school will implement NWEA benchmark assessments with training and technical support provided. In addition to regular monitoring of student performance at the classroom and school levels, School Data Team subcommittees convene three times per year to thoroughly review this data and report it to the District Data Team.

The district's key strategies to fully implement Educator Evaluation and Support systems include (SEED):

All administrators participated in intensive teacher evaluation training throughout the 2012-2013 school year to prepare them for full implementation of SEED in August 2013. Administrators spent 20 hours over the summer watching teacher videos and practicing calibration with the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Administrators will take the proficiency assessment in August 2013. The district has purchased TeachScape to provide administrators with professional development opportunities and a data management system. The district continues to provide professional development in the new teacher evaluation system to teachers throughout the school year, as part of their 18 early release days. The administration will participate in professional development provided by ACES for 3- 6 hours per month, throughout the school year. This professional



development will provide administrators with assistance in writing SLO's and IAGD's, calibrating the Danielson Framework rubric, and providing an opportunity for inter-reliability of how teachers are rated district wide.



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 any 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 2 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 2 CSDE support and monitoring.

Priority #1: Insert the Year 2 priority below.						
Raising the Quality of Instruction and Educational Services						
Summary: Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority.						
<p>The district is committed to continuing the implementation of the SRBI Framework, and beginning full implementation of SEED. To support this plan we will hire certified interventionists, curriculum coaches, curriculum supervisors (language arts, mathematics), implement a new middle school alternative education program, and support additional ELL teachers/.</p> <p>The administrators will participate in SEED and TeachScape Training in the Summer/Fall of 2013 and the training will be ongoing with the support from ACES.</p>						
Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #1?						
<p>Performance target – minimum of 80% mastery on grade-level benchmarks and formative assessments</p> <p>All administrators will be proficient evaluators as evidenced by passing the TeachScape Evaluator Proficiency test.</p>						
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
Provide Tier II and Tier III instruction with certified interventionists.	<p>Tiered instruction provided to Tier II students 3 times per week (min. 30 minutes)</p> <p>Tier III students 4-5 times per week (min. 30 minutes)</p> <p>Increase student achievement on district benchmark assessment administered 3 times per year.</p>		X	X	X	



<p>Curriculum coaches and supervisors will support improvement of Tier I instruction.</p>	<p>Number of coaching interactions between teacher and coach. Number of times that curriculum coaches and supervisors meet to develop CCSS units. Increase student achievement on district benchmark assessment administered 2 times per year (Tier I).</p>		X	X	X	
<p>Provide culturally responsive instruction to ELL's by certified ELL teachers and interventionists.</p>	<p>Number of times ELL students are services weekly. Number of times professional development is provided to classroom teachers by ELL teachers and satisfaction with professional development. Growth on LAS Links. Growth on district benchmarks.</p>		X	X	X	
<p>New middle school alternative education program will address high suspension rates for identified subgroups.</p>	<p>Number of students suspended and incidents of suspension. Growth on district benchmarks.</p>		X	X	X	

<p>Priority #2: Insert the Year 2 priority below.</p>
<p>Wrap-Around Services Support</p>
<p>Summary: Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority.</p>
<p>Support a certified graduation interventionist and increase family engagement through an intensive home visitation program and mentoring services for identified students.</p>
<p>Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #2?</p>
<p>The high school will meet its performance targets for 4-year cohort graduation rate.</p>



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
Graduation interventionist to support at-risk students	4-year cohort graduation rate. Number of students receiving intervention to successfully graduate.		X	X	X	
Mentor interventionist for identified students and their families	Number of mentees assigned to a trained mentor. Number of at-risk families that are assigned a mentor participating in school events.		X	X	X	
Focus School family engagement, wrap around services, and extended learning opportunities	Number of families receiving home visitor services. Number of families participating in school activities and events. Number of students enrolled in extended day learning program. Growth on district benchmarks.		X	X	X	

Priority #3: Insert the Year 2 priority below.
Talent Development: The district is committed to supporting administrators by providing training in the Teacher Evaluation Process. For the 2013-14 SY, the district will be fully evaluating two-thirds of the teachers; therefore, it is critical that we hire effective administrators to evaluate and provide support to teachers.
Summary: Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.



The district will elevate two Dean of Student positions to Assistant Principals, elevate department heads/hire curriculum supervisors, and reestablish teacher leader positions to allow for full implementation of the teacher evaluation and development process.

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

Talent and leadership development will substantially expand the support, building-level capacity, and infrastructure necessary for full implementation of adopted teacher evaluation system.

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
Fully implement teacher evaluation process.	Administrator attendance at 18 hours of SEED training. Ongoing administrator training provided by ACES to support administrators in developing robust SLO's and IAGD's. Administrator completion of online SEED assessment. Ongoing professional development to support administrators in calibrating evaluation to the Danielson rubric for ensuring inter-reliability. Professional development for teachers by building administrators in the SEED process – 2 hours x 10 month – during early release days.	X	X	X	X	
Train teachers and administrators in TeachScape evaluation system.	Teacher attendance at TeachScape training – 1 hour/month. Demonstrated capacity to implement		X	X	X	



	TeachScape data management system.					
Curriculum supervisors and newly elevated assistant principals will support the teacher evaluation model and implementation	Completion of district evaluation plan for 2/3 certified staff district wide by June 2014.		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 district will focus its resources on implementing the CCSS, providing intensive assistance to low performing schools and developing talent development in order to implement the Educator Evaluation and Support System. Central Office has created a new position, Director of Operations, to allow the Superintendent and Associate Superintendent to intentionally focus on working closely with building administrators to improve student achievement. Additionally, Central Office has created two new curriculum positions (ELA and Math Grades 6-12 Curriculum Supervisors) to fully implement the CCSS and provide teachers with job- embedded coaching and professional development. Two new Assistant Principal positions and two Curriculum Supervisors will assist in the evaluation process and support teachers to become effective in their Tier I instruction.

Data from the fall/winter district-wide Safe School Climate Survey will inform schools and the district in developing their Improvement Plans for 2013-14. Two hours of professional development will be conducted with SDE consultants in September to develop school-based climate goals for School Improvement Plans, in collaboration with the requirements of the new teacher evaluation system.

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?

The district’s theory of change is:

If the district:

- Provides intensive support and additional instructional tools and resources to the lower performing schools;
- Supports teachers as they transition to the CCSS; and
- Ensures effective talent development through the new Teacher Evaluation and Development System;

Then:

Teachers will become proficient/exemplary educators as indicated in the SEED Proficiency System and they will be better able to implement research based effective strategies to support students as they learn the new skills needed to master the CCSS. This in turn will increase student achievement.

The low performing schools will receive additional resources including new library/media specialists that will effectively connect CCSS skills across the disciplines to support implementation of the standards in the areas of creating arguments with text based evidence; providing and reinforcing reading strategies, effectively using primary and secondary sources, reading and analyzing complex texts, and reading and comprehending informational texts across content areas. Additional days (+30) are supported in the Alliance Grant for the ELA and Mathematics Curriculum Coaches to target low performing schools. Students will continue to receive Tier II



and Tier III instruction to extend supplemental learning and provide behavioral support strategies. Curriculum coaches and supervisors will work with low performing schools more frequently throughout the year, and provide intensive assistance to classroom teachers and school and instructional data teams.

All teachers will deliver Tier I instruction using curricula fully aligned with the new CCSS. Curriculum Coaches will work with teachers to continue to create and implement lesson plans and assessments that are aligned with the Common Core. Three CCSS units in each of the core areas have been developed and curriculum coaches and supervisors will continue to meet with teachers throughout the school year to create the remainder of the units. All units are published on the district's SharePoint webpage so that all teachers have access to the completed curriculum units, informing schools as needed. The new curriculum supervisors will also provide job embedded coaching to teachers in Grades 6-12.

Elementary instruction has also been extended an additional 15 minutes per day with the opening of the 2013-14 school year. Additional special area staff will be in place to provide all elementary teaching staff daily common planning time to ensure successful implementation of CCSS and PLC time.

All elementary and middle schools will continue to receive training in AIMSweb data management and analysis, and the high school will implement NWEA benchmark assessments with training and technical support provided.

The district is committed to implementing fully aligned District, School and Instructional Data Teams for the 2013-2014 school year. The work of the data teams is a consistent and fluid process. The District sets its goals and objectives and the schools fine-tune their school improvement plans to align with the district's goals and action plan. The district has a clear and focused purpose to improve student achievement by increasing the knowledge and skills of the educators.



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.

The district created a well-developed and outline plan for the first year of the Alliance Grant and was able to meet the majority of the implementation steps that were outlined. Information and evidence will continue to be gathered through a mixed-methods approach, utilizing survey results, classroom observations, and review of school performance data.

Of the times outlined in the Year 1 plan, teachers and administrators across the schools pointed to the new materials purchased in Year 1 and the training in data usage and CCSS as the biggest successes of the first year. The district will continue to monitor implement in the classroom of CCSS units and aligned materials as the majority of units will be completed in the summer of 2013.

The District Data Team and District Leadership Team each meet six times per year. The subcommittees of these two district teams ensure that schools and grade level/subject areas are incorporating the district goals and strategies into their school improvement plans and data team work.

The district is committed to implementing fully aligned District, School and Instructional Data Teams for the 2013-2014 school year. The work of the data teams is a consistent and fluid process. The District sets its goals and objectives and the schools fine-tune their school improvement plans to align with the district's goals and action plan. The district has a clear and focused purpose to improve student achievement by increasing the knowledge and skills of the educators.

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

The Superintendent and Associate Superintendent meet with administrators once per month to review progress toward their school improvement plans. All SDT, IDT, and DDT agendas and minutes are posted on the district website under Date Teams. Associate Superintendent reviews minutes monthly and meets with principals and school leadership teams to discuss progress and areas in need of further growth.

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?

Continue technical assistance for the data team process, consultation, and support for Alliance Districts at the State level.
Continue to provide ongoing professional development for implementation of SEED and CCSS.

9. Budget

Instructions: Please complete and submit the Excel budget workbook as a part of the Year 2 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 2013-14, 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 supports. 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 2013-14. 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.

Middletown has established a comprehensive data team structure, reaching out to a variety of stakeholders in the community. It is through this data team structure that consultation and review of the Alliance District Plan was facilitated. Membership on the district data team is comprised of: all district principals, teachers from each school, central office administrators, union leadership, board of education representatives, community members, and parents.

Intentional discussions and needs assessments regarding the strategic interventions within the Alliance District initiative were held as follows:

- **September-June – administrators, teachers, board of education, parents, community** – 1. Identification of priority need for additional library/media specialists and other special area staff to support common planning time at the elementary level for full implementation of CCSS; 2. Priority need for additional certified interventionists and need to maintain current level of staffing; and 3. Priority identified to elevate Dean(s) of Student to Assistant Principals for implementation of teacher evaluation process.
- **May 30 District Data Team - administrators, teachers, union representatives, curriculum coaches, board of education representatives** – developed a list of priorities with District Data Team that are included in the Alliance District Plan for Improvement.
- **June 25 – Board of Education** – public discussion of budget process for both the local board of education budget and Alliance Grant budget to ensure seamless support for the district’s educational priorities as a whole.
- **2013-14 School Year** – monthly reports to Board of Education on Alliance District strategy implementation, student achievement, and teacher evaluation process application.



PART III: APPENDIX SECTION

A. Statement of Assurances

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

PROJECT TITLE: Alliance District Grant

THE APPLICANT: Middletown Public Schools HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

(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 51 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:

Patricia Charles, Ed.D.

Name: *(typed)*

Superintendent of Schools

Title: *(typed)*

Date:



B. 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.

Please complete and submit the Appendix B form provided and customized for your district.

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.