

# Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Alliance Districts Year 2 Application Amendment | Spring 2013

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C.G.S. § 10-262u

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER



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### SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATIONS

1. School Improvement Plan Template *(for districts with Review/Turnaround schools)*
2. TIME Collaborative Application *(for districts with Review/Turnaround schools)*
3. Priority School District Grant *(for Priority School Districts)*

\*\*\*Please find supplemental application materials on the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Web site at:  
<http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts>\*\*\*



## PART I: ALLIANCE DISTRICT APPLICATION OVERVIEW

### 1. Alliance District Program Overview

Public Act 12-116 established a new process for identifying 30 Alliance Districts — the districts with the lowest district performance index (DPI) scores statewide — and targeted increased Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding for these districts. The Alliance District program is designed to help districts raise student performance and close achievement gaps by pursuing bold and innovative reform strategies. Each district's receipt of its designated ECS allocation is conditional upon district submission and the Commissioner of Education's approval of an Alliance District plan in the context of the district's overall strategy to improve academic achievement.

Alliance District plans are locally conceived, evidence-based reform plans that propose detailed initiatives for improving student achievement. The CSDE will review district plans on an annual basis and approve plans that align with the goals of the program. Approval of plans in years two through five will be predicated upon progress towards the described Year 1 performance targets, among other factors. Proposals for the use of Alliance District funding will be considered in the context of the quality of the overall strategy for reform proposed in the plan, as well as the degree of alignment between the proposed use of funds and the overall district strategy.

### 2. Application Components

The Year 2 Alliance District application amendment is mandatory for all Alliance Districts. Those districts with "Review" and "Turnaround" schools must also submit school improvement plans for the identified schools. Priority School Districts must also submit grant renewal applications. Please read the following requirements carefully:

- **Year 2 Alliance District Plan Amendment:** All Alliance Districts must submit a Year 2 Alliance District plan amendment, completing the application amendment template contained in this document. The Year 2 amendment requires districts to reflect upon Year 1 progress and identify an aligned and coherent set of district-level priorities for the second year of implementation.
- **Review and Turnaround School Plans:** The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver identified a subset of Connecticut's schools as needing significant intervention and improvement. Specifically, those schools classified as "Turnaround" or "Review" schools must develop and submit school improvement plans as a part of the Year 2 Alliance District package. Districts must submit plans for all of their Turnaround schools and at least half of their Review schools that will begin implementation in fall 2013. Appendix B provides a list of all of the district's Review and Turnaround schools. Districts must indicate the strategy each school will pursue to dramatically improve student achievement. Districts may: (1) develop a new plan for the school; (2) submit a preexisting school plan that has shown evidence of results; or (3) apply to participate in the TIME Collaborative. Schools may also have the opportunity to apply for the K-3 Literacy Initiative; more information about this initiative is forthcoming. Please find forms for these school-level plans on the CSDE's Web site at: <http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts>.
- **Priority School District Grant:** Priority Districts must complete a grant renewal application. This should align to and reinforce all other district plans, including the Alliance District plan. Please access the grant application on the CSDE's Web site: <http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts>.

### 3. Application Instructions

Review and follow all directions carefully when completing the application. Complete all of the required sections. A draft of the Alliance District Year 2 application amendment **must be postmarked by June 28, 2013, at 5 p.m. (EST)**. The submission of the final draft must include one original and three (3) additional hard copies. Districts must also provide



an electronic submission either via e-mail or flash drive. In the event that a district determines that it will not or cannot meet this deadline, the district should notify the Chief Turnaround Officer immediately (see contact information at the bottom of this page).

PLEASE NOTE: All applications become the property of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and are subject to the rules of the Freedom of Information Act.

<p><b>Mailing Address:</b></p> <p>Connecticut State Department of Education Turnaround Office P.O. Box 2219, Room 249 Hartford, CT 06145-2219 Attention: Debra Kurshan</p>	<p><b>Overnight Mailing and Hand Delivery:</b></p> <p>Connecticut State Department of Education Turnaround Office 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 249 Hartford, CT 06106 Attention: Debra Kurshan</p>
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#### 4. Timeline Summary

1. Districts participate in the Year 2 planning site visits facilitated by the CSDE	May 2013
2. CSDE releases the Year 2 Alliance District application	May 23, 2013
3. CSDE hosts a webinar explaining the Year 2 application	May 23, 2013
4. Districts complete a survey indicating proposed Year 2 priority areas	June 7, 2013
5. Districts submit TIME Collaborative applications (optional)	June 14, 2013
6. Districts submit Year 2 Alliance District application amendments	June 28, 2013
7. Districts submit school plans for their Review and Turnaround schools	July 26, 2013
8. Districts submit Priority School District applications	August 16, 2013

#### 5. Questions

Any and all questions regarding the Alliance District program should be directed to:

Debra Kurshan  
Chief Turnaround Officer  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
Telephone: 860-713-6777 | E-mail: [Debra.Kurshan@ct.gov](mailto:Debra.Kurshan@ct.gov)



## 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:	Norwalk Public Schools		
Name of Grant Contact Person:	Italia A. Negroni, Ph.D.		
Phone # of Contact Person:	Cell: 203-246-9748, Office: 203-854-4000 x45088		
E-mail of Contact Person:	negronii@norwalkps.org		
Address of Contact Person:	Street Address:	125 East Avenue	
	City:	Norwalk	Zip Code: 06852-6001
Name of Superintendent:	Manuel J. Rivera, Ed.D.		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	
Name of Board Chair:	Michael Lyons		
Signature of Board Chair:		Date:	
Local Board Approval of Plan: <sup>1</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Date of Plan Presentation to the Local Board:	Tuesday, August 20, 2013		
Priority School District?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

<sup>1</sup> 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 vision for Norwalk Public Schools is to ensure the success of all Norwalk children and youth from “cradle to career.”

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

The mission of the Norwalk Public Schools is to create a supportive learning community rooted in the belief that all children can learn. Our educators will challenge students to demonstrate high levels of achievement on a wide variety of clearly defined standards and assessments. Our students will graduate with the skills, knowledge, attitudes and experiences necessary to ensure their highest potential for success and life-long learning.

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

### **INSTRUCTION**

We will build the Norwalk Public Schools into an exemplary district characterized by a cohesive and coordinated academic system with a set of clearly defined performance based outcomes for all students.

#### **Our work as a learning community values:**

- Mastery of Knowledge, Strategies, and Skills
- Habits of Thinking, Cooperation and Self-discipline
- Focus on Results
- Excellence and Equity of Opportunity
- Diversity
- Respectfulness and Responsibility
- Community Communications and Participation
- Long Range Financial Planning focused on student needs



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?

Norwalk's overall approach to improve student performance dramatically and close the achievement gap focuses on building a coherent and cohesive PK-12 system of curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development that ensures all students meet the common core state standards and assessments and are successfully prepared for college and careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Thus the district's Theory of Action is that...if we provide the professional development support for all staff and the differentiated instructional resources that students need to successfully meet the Common Core State Standards and Assessments for college and career success, then student performance will improve and the achievement gap will close.

As students move through the continuum, they are supported with extended learning time and resources, both programmatic and financial, to meet the district's key benchmarks of:

- 1) Reading at goal level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- 2) Algebra-ready by 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- 3) College and Career-Ready by 12<sup>th</sup> grade

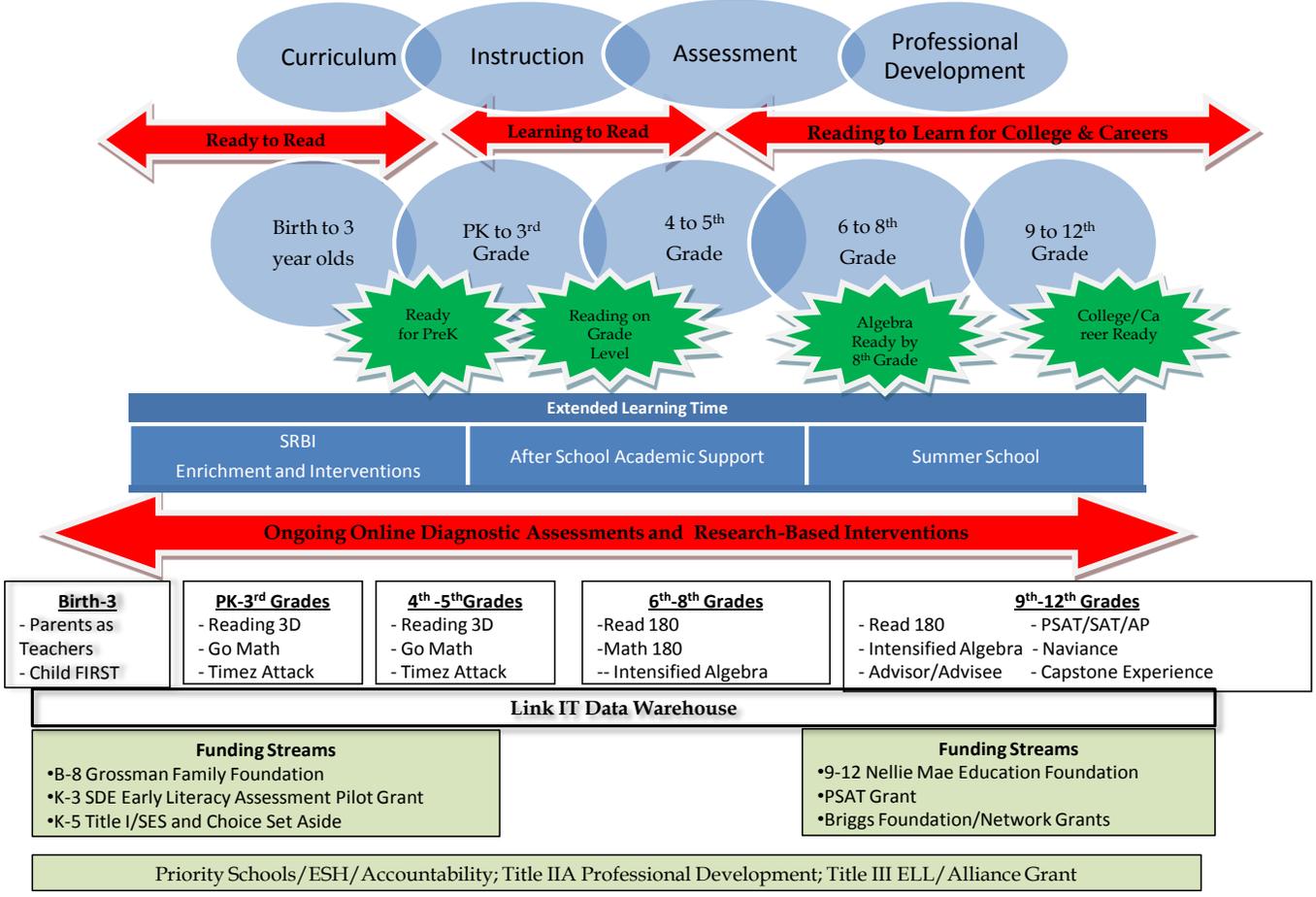
The district is coordinating all of its entitlement resources, including Priority Schools, Extended School Hours, Accountability, Title I, Title IIA, Title III and its Alliance funding with a number of local foundation grants from GE Capital, the Dalio Family Foundation, The Grossman Family Foundation, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the K-3 Early Literacy Assessment Pilot Grant to ensure that all reform initiatives are based in the same conceptual framework for improving student performance and closing the achievement gap.

Moreover, all regular and intervention programs such as mClass Reading 3D, Read 180, Go Math, Intensified Algebra, Timez Attack, etc., will be used to support the district's effort to realign its curriculum areas with the Common Core State Standards and provide the support that students need to reach these more rigorous standards and assessments.

What follows is a graphical representation of the district's focused efforts to improve student performance and close the achievement gap.



# NPS Pathways to the Common Core



### 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).

<b>District Overview (2012-13):</b>					
Total Enrollment:	11,043 (5/8/2013)	Per Pupil Allocation: <sup>2</sup>	\$14,400		
Total # Schools:	19	Operating Budget:	\$159,500		
# Review Schools: <sup>3</sup>	1	# Turnaround Schools:			
<b>Student Demographics (2012-13): as of 5/8/2013</b>					
% White:	35.5%	% F/R Lunch:	46.6%		
% Black:	20.0%	% IEP:	10.7%		
% Hispanic:	38.1%	% ELL:	11.9%		
% Other:	6.4%	Attendance Rate:			
<b>District Personnel (2012-13):</b>					
# Certified School-based Staff:	875	Median Teacher Salary: <sup>4</sup>			
Student/Teacher Ratio: <sup>5</sup>		# Central Office Administrators:	15		
# School Administrators:	37	# Central Office Support Staff:	60		
<b>Student Achievement:</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	
District Performance Index:	n/a	n/a	77.7/65.9	n/a	
Math	Gr. 3 CMT at/above Goal:	64	62.5	70.1	n/a
	Gr. 5 CMT at/above Goal:	68.1	70.9	68.4	n/a
	Gr. 8 CMT at/above Goal:	58.9	62.7	59.6	n/a
	Gr. 10 CAPT at/above Goal:	31.2	35.2	32.5	n/a
Reading	Gr. 3 CMT at/above Goal:	51.4	51.9	57.9	n/a
	Gr. 5 CMT at/above Goal:	54.8	57.4	65.6	n/a
	Gr. 8 CMT at/above Goal:	60.9	66.5	70.1	n/a
	Gr. 10 CAPT at/above Goal:	36.7	39.6	36.8	n/a
Chronic Absenteeism Rate: <sup>6</sup>					
4-Yr Graduation Rate:	83.6	84.2			
% Pursuing Higher Education:					

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

<sup>3</sup> Review category includes "Review" and "Focus" schools.

<sup>4</sup> Median salary should reflect the median for all certified staff.

<sup>5</sup> Ratio should include all certified staff.

<sup>6</sup> 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**.

Malcolm Gladwell describes the “Tipping Point” as those ‘ideas, behaviors and products that start epidemics.’ Tipping Points have three distinguishable characteristics: “They are clear examples of contagious behavior, little causes have big effects, and change happens not gradually but at one dramatic moment similar to an epidemic” (Gladwell, Malcolm, *The Tipping Point*, p. 8-9). Norwalk Public Schools is at the “tipping point” of creating “dramatic change” that will impact student performance and close the achievement gap as it moves toward becoming a “world class K-12 school system.”

In 2011-12, Norwalk’s District Data-Driven Decision Making Team created a sub-committee to oversee the transition to the CCSS and Assessments in all 19 schools. This committee, consisting of administrators and teachers from each school, serves as the planning and implementation team that oversees the transition in buildings. In addition, all regular and intervention programs are being used to support the district’s efforts to realign its curriculum, instruction and assessment areas with the CCSS.

In terms of academics, there have been **steady gains** in student achievement on the **elementary level** in Numeracy. The percent of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders scoring at or above goal on the CMTs has increased from 64% in 2009 to 70.1% in 2012. There have been some smaller gains between 2009 and 2012 at grades 5 and 8 in mathematics, with 10<sup>th</sup> grade CAPT scores relatively flat. (See page 10 District Data Profile).

In Reading, there has been a steady increase in CMT scores district-wide from 2009-10 to 2011-12 from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades. However, as happens in mathematics, there is large gap from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade CMT to the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade CAPT in Reading. In the last two years, Norwalk has been implementing the new CCSS aligned mClass Reading 3D Early Literacy Assessment in grades K through 3. Not only is this DIBELS/TRC assessment giving the teachers immediate feedback with respect to students’ reading skills and needs, there also has been an immediate improvement in the percent of students scoring “far below proficient” and the % of students “above proficient.”

What follows is an outline of Norwalk’s key strengths along with supporting information and data.

**Key Strengths:** Over the last three years, Norwalk started down the path to transition to the CCSS and Assessments. While a number of key strengths now exist, there are a number of core areas that will require continued support with talent development and instructional resources to become institutionalized.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Three Year Implementation Plan** for all schools with full implementation by 2015

- ✓ Developed a multi-media communications package (includes video, print, web access (<http://portal.norwalkps.org/curriculum/ccss/Pages/default.aspx>) to be used to raise awareness of CCSS in the Norwalk community and to reach out to local funders for support.
- ✓ Implemented a K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 CCSS committee structure with representation from all schools to ensure participation of all schools in CCSS curriculum development and selection of materials.
- ✓ Trained the CCSS Transition Team in the Foundations of the CCSS.
- ✓ Provided all staff with an introduction to the CCSS during the opening convocation in August 2012.
- ✓ Created introductory modules in Mathematics and English Language Arts to be presented in each school by the school-based transition teams.

**CCSS Initiatives in Early Literacy**

- ✓ Piloted and expanded implementation of the CCSS-aligned K-3 Early Literacy Assessment, *mClass Reading 3D* (DIBLS and TRC) with handheld devices (iTouches and iPads), to more finitely assess early literacy skills and competencies and to progress monitor student growth at weekly and bi-weekly intervals.

Schools*	From ... To...*	Far Below Proficient	Below Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
Fox Run**	BOY to EOY	25 to 14%	13 to 14%	30 to 26%	32 to 46%
Marvin**	BOY to EOY	48 to 25%	13 to 23%	18 to 28%	21 to 24%
Jefferson***	BOY to EOY	34 to 26%	19 to 17%	32 to 25%	15 to 32%
Brookside	MOY to EOY	24 to 28%	21 to 18%	24 to 24%	31 to 30%
Naramake	MOY to EOY	15 to 16%	28 to 14%	24 to 31%	33 to 39%
Rowayton	MOY to EOY	10 to 10%	14 to 7%	16 to 23%	60 to 60%
Silvermine	MOY to EOY	23 to 28%	25 to 19%	37 to 29%	15 to 24%

\*Three schools assessed at the beginning (BOY), middle (MOY) and end of the year (EOY)

\*\*Second full year of using mClass Reading 3D

\*\*\* First full year of using mClass Reading 3D

\*\*\*\*Implemented mClass Reading 3D in January at MOY and in May at EOY

- ✓ The Birth to 8 Year-old early care and education collaborative effort funded by the Grossman Family Foundation to ensure disadvantaged families with children from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade successfully transition into preschool ready to learn and develop a firm foundation in literacy. This is a city-wide effort to align the Birth to 3 initiatives (Parents as Teachers and Child FIRST) with PreK Programs throughout the city and the NPS K-3 Early Literacy Program all through the lens of the CCSS and Assessments that will soon be used to measure student progress.

**CCSS Secondary Reading Initiatives**

- ✓ Pilot implementation of CCSS aligned *Read 180* on the secondary level as a Tier 2 reading intervention at Ponus Ridge Middle School and Briggs Alternative High School from January to June 2013. In just six months, the lexile levels of all students using the Read 180 program increased. At Briggs the range of lexile level growth was between 41 and 448 with more than half of the 19 students in the program increasing over 100 lexile levels. At Ponus the range of lexile level growth was between 40 and 196.
- ✓ Developed rubrics for selection of ELA materials.
- ✓ Drafted a complete set of CCSS aligned teaching units for grades 6-12.

Academics



**CCSS Initiatives in ELL Support**

✓ Continued school-based training in the CCSS-aligned **SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) Model** to give teachers strategies to meet the individual learning needs of English Language Learners. Over the last 10 years, the population for Norwalk Public Schools has become increasingly diverse. Currently there are 1,350 English Language Learners (ELL) representing 12% of the total student population. In addition, there are another 21% of students who are not currently in the ELL program, but who speak another language at home. Thus there are a total of 33% of Norwalk students who are learning their academics through their second language.

To address this dynamic, NPS chose to implement the CCSS-aligned Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) that has been proven to motivate and engage linguistically diverse populations to succeed academically. The district began using these widely accepted set of research-based strategies two years ago and is just beginning to see some very promising results. For example, one of the district’s highest need/lowest scoring elementary schools increased the percent of students scoring at proficiency from 58.2% in 2009 to 71.1% in 2011. On the high school level, as a result of implementing the SIOP model, grade point averages of ELL students went up 11% from June 2010 to June 2011, and attendance improved by 21% from 2010 to 2011.

**CCSS Initiatives in Mathematics**

✓ K-5 Elementary Math growth due to the implementation of CCSS-aligned **Go Math Program**. What follows are the Mid-Year and End-of-Year GO Math Benchmark reports representing the percent of students "proficient" with the new Common Core curriculum:

Grade	Mid-Year	End of Year	% of Student Proficiency Change
K	69.14	85.8	+16.66
1	70.88	61.8	-9.08
2	66.58	83.6	+17.02
3	56.30	71.4	+15.10
4	48.45	70.36	+21.91
5	45.88	70.33	+24.45
District Average	59.53	77.25	+17.72

Although the overall proficiency declined from K-5, the higher grades showed the most growth no doubt due to teachers "plugging gaps" and using SRBI/GO Math interventions, Soar to Success, Timez Attack and online access for all students and families from home.



✓ Use of **Intensified Algebra** in middle schools to prepare more students to be algebra-ready by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. **Intensified Algebra** will be used for all Algebra “B” students next year at both high schools. For the 2012-2013 school year, Extended School Hours funding was used to offer Intensified Algebra to a cadre of middle school students who needed extra Algebra support. Of the 26 students participating 14 or 54% ended the year “Algebra Ready.”

Developed through deep collaboration with the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas, the Agile Mind course programs provide the tools and support that teachers need to effectively ensure high achievement among a significantly larger – and more diverse – number of students. In using the tools and support – which encompass resources for instruction, homework, formative assessment, embedded test preparation, professional development, and reports on student progress – teachers enact and sustain rigorous, well-scaffolded instruction and practice by students that ensure academic success.

The ongoing use of interactive animations of key concepts and interactive problem solving further instills in students the engagement, persistence, and consistency of learning practices to succeed. In each course, students master and apply the key concepts and skills to represent problem situations, typically employing multiple representations.

- ✓ Selected the CCSS-aligned math program, **Big Ideas**, to be implemented in all four middle schools in the 2013-2014 school year.
- ✓ Developed **common district benchmark assessments** for Algebra I aligned with the CCSS and used across the middle and high schools. The district now has for Algebra I the same curriculum, pacing guides and quarterly assessments for all students in all schools. And all benchmark assessments are scored and analyzed using the district’s data warehouse, **LinkIt**. Middle schools continue to outperform the high schools with questions regarding fractions & multistep word problems continuing to be areas in need of improvement.
- ✓ The use of **CCSS mathematics expert consultant** to work with teachers to redesign middle and high school math courses to align with the CCSS. Peg Neal and Tamara Gloster from CREC collaborated with NPS math teachers to rewrite Algebra II and Geometry aligned with the CCSS. This work will be continued in August with pacing guides and support materials and be ready for the opening of school. The only mathematics subject that needs to be rewritten to align with the CCSS is Algebra II. This will be done in the fall of 2013 for implementation in spring 2014, a full year ahead of the implementation of the new CCSS/SBAC testing.

#### **Enhanced Use of Technology to track and monitor student progress across the content areas at all grade levels**

During the 2012-13 school year, the district launched a single data warehouse (**LinkIt**) to house all district benchmark and school assessments along with high stakes state test results giving teachers easy, quick, one-stop tool for analyzing data for the purpose of modifying instruction based on individual student needs. This included:

- ✓ Deliberate alignment of the district’s Student Information System with the **LinkIt** data warehouse for nightly dynamic updates.
- ✓ Training of all high schools teachers in the use of the **LinkIt** data warehouse for the purpose of using multiple sources of data, interpreting data accurately and engaging in collaborative inquiry
- ✓ Development of high school Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) aligned to CCSS with results monitored in **LinkIt**.
- ✓ Implementation of the **Naviance** Guidance System in grades 6 through 12 so that all 6 through 12 students have on-going Student Success Plans that guide them through the college and career process.



SAT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use of various <b>College Board assessments</b> and tools to measure college and career readiness, for all sophomores and juniors, <b>Accuplacer</b> to measure ability to take college-level coursework, and self-paced <b>Online SAT</b> Prep Resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Data-Driven Decision Making</b> embraced in all schools by staff and administrators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Three to five year implementation of District Data Team process along with School Instruction Data Teams meeting regularly to analyze assessment results for the purpose of differentiating instruction to address individual student needs</li> <li>✓ In-depth analysis by the Testing Office to validate and interpret assessment results for all district and school data teams</li> <li>✓ Common planning time provided at all levels so that data analysis can be done in conjunction with instructional grade level team planning</li> <li>✓ Use of walkthroughs to monitor implementation of the school data team process</li> <li>✓ Vertical articulation from schools to district through Central Office instructional specialists observing school and instructional data team meetings and participating in classroom walkthroughs with school staff.</li> </ul>
Human Capital	<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Participation in the CSDE SEED Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Pilot</li> <li>✓ District-wide professional development focused on CCSS implementation</li> <li>✓ High staff retention</li> </ul>
Operations	<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Intentional outreach to private funders to support curriculum, instruction and assessment initiatives</li> <li>✓ Coordination of local, state and private funding sources to support the district’s and schools’ agenda to improve student achievement</li> </ul>
Culture and Climate	<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Two-year implementation of the Welcoming Walkthrough protocol in all schools</li> <li>✓ Implementation of PBIS in all secondary schools</li> </ul>



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

Norwalk, the sixth largest city in Connecticut, is a relatively small city that is not only struggling with academic, socioeconomic, and financial urban challenges but is also experiencing unusually rapid demographic changes. The free and reduced lunch poverty measure of families with children in the public school system has doubled from 19.31% in 2002 to 46.6% in 2013. The total minority population of the school system is now 64%, 37.7% coming from homes where English is not the primary language. Moreover, there are 57 non-English languages spoken in the homes of Norwalk children. Moreover, poverty and other problems present challenges in Norwalk with adverse consequences for children, such as:

- 10.4% of children ages 5-17 were living in poverty in 2010
- 25% of families with children under age 5 were living in poverty in 2010

What’s more, while the needs of Norwalk families are increasing, the Board of Education funding requests have been cut over the last eight years. This has made it virtually impossible to support and sustain the research-based professional development and school improvement initiatives that have a high impact on student achievement.

In terms of academics, student achievement in some content areas as measured by state assessments has declined over the last four years. While students make steady progress in grades K through 5 (see CMT in mathematics and reading on page 10, District Data Profile), the rate of growth begins to decline in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. For example, in middle schools, the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) is used as the SRBI universal screening and progress-monitoring assessment in the fall and winter of each year. On the average, approximately half the students score in the target area, and half score in either the deficient or adequate category.

DRP District Results – Fall 2012 and Winter 2013

	Grade 6 p = .75			Grade 7 p = .80			Grade 8 p = .80		
	Deficient	Adequate	Target	Deficient	Adequate	Target	Deficient	Adequate	Target
Fall 2012	201/28%	180/26%	322/46%	183/25%	160/21%	405/54%	203/28%	161/22%	370/50%
Winter 2013	191/27%	150/22%	358/51%	167/23%	140/19%	428/58%	175/24%	142/19%	414/57%

With respect to high school students, nearly 80 percent of Norwalk’s graduating seniors who enroll in Norwalk Community College need to take at least one remedial course in English and Mathematics. The national number of high school students needing remediation in college is on average 43 percent.

In 2009, less than half of the junior class elected to take the **PSAT, and** in that year **SAT** scores fell below both the Connecticut and the All-Public Schools average. In 2011 and 2012, a local private foundation funded the PSAT to be taken by **ALL** sophomores and juniors during the school day. As a result, the number of students tested has increased. With a larger pool of students being tested, the scores overall decreased. However, the average composite score of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students with matching 10<sup>th</sup> grade PSAT scores increased from 127.2 in 2011 compared to the 11<sup>th</sup> grade average of 130.6 in 2012.

Grade 10 Students						Grade 11 Students					
Oct.	# tested	Reading	Math	Writing	Total	# tested	Reading	Math	Writing	Total	
2008	142	46.1	46.1	46.3	138.5	368	46.5	45.2	45.1	136.8	
2009	167	45.1	45.0	44.8	134.9	350	47.1	45.7	45.8	138.6	
2010	158	47.1	45.8	47.2	140.1	359	45.9	46.0	45.9	137.8	
2011	644	40.8	39.0	39.6	119.4	620	43.8	43.2	42.3	129.3	
2012	801	41.2	39.9	40.4	121.5	656	43.0	41.6	42.6	127.2	



While improvement on the PSAT percent of College Ready students is relative to the larger n size of students now being tested, the PSAT score range increased for 10<sup>th</sup> graders from 133-204 in 2011 to 133-221 in 2012, and for 11<sup>th</sup> graders from 142-208 to 142 to 233.

2011 PSAT				2012 PSAT		
	# tested	# College Ready	Score Range	# tested	# College Ready	Score Range
10th graders	1264	198	133-204	1457	241	133-221
11 <sup>th</sup> graders		210	142-208		186	142-233
Total # College Ready 408 (32.3%)				Total # College Ready 427 (29.3%)		

In summary, Norwalk’s areas in need of significant growth are in the middle and high schools. While the district needs to continue to focus on “reading at goal level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade,” a concentrated effort must be made in the middle and high schools to realign their curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development structures around the more rigorous Common Core State Standard and Assessments. Most importantly for all K-12 students, the district needs to support the “bold and innovative” research-based initiatives that are showing improvements with the expert training and support that will dramatically increase student achievement across all grade levels.

What follows is an outline of Norwalk's **areas of need for significant growth** along with supporting information and data.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Three Year Implementation Plan** needs support in terms of professional development in the form of expert coaching in and modeling of the instructional strategies that are needed to prepare students to meet the rigorous outcomes of the CCSS and assessments.

Root Cause: Due to local budget cuts last year, the district curriculum coach positions were eliminated, as were half of the elementary assistant principals. In addition, middle and high school housemasters' hours were reduced. These were the schools' front line instructional leaders who would have the expertise to guide teachers in implementing the CCSS Transition Plan. This has made it extremely difficult to gain any traction in terms of implementation of the CCSS Transition Plan. The district was able to train two staff members from each school to deliver the first set of CCSS training modules. However, there were only 2 *professional developments day in November and June* with no opportunity for sustained training and coaching throughout the year.

### **K-3 Early Literacy**

Three schools participated in the CSDE Early Literacy Assessment pilot. This past year, the district was fortunate enough to receive a grant from the Grossman Family Foundation to expand the use of **mClass Reading 3D** across all the schools over the next four years. With this foundation funding and Alliance funding, four more schools began to use **mClass Reading 3D** in January. However, the district may need to use Alliance funds to support the continued funding of the pilot schools should the CSDE funding be no longer available.

Root Cause: Teachers are just becoming comfortable with giving the **mClass Reading 3D** assessments using an iPad. It will take 3 to 5 years for this assessment tool to become institutionalized and make the gains needed to achieve the goal of all students reading at goal level by the end of third grade. While the schools have had unusually positive results thus far, the schools have not been using the **mClass 3D** assessment for an extended period of time to show trend data, nor to determine how the results correlate with gains in CMT scores. (See data chart on page 12)

Over the years, it has become apparent that the DRA is not a good predictor of CMT outcomes in reading. In spring 2014, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in 2 Norwalk schools will have used the mClass assessment for 3 years in a row, 4 schools for 1 ½ years, and 3 schools for one year. At that time, the district will be able to align the reading progress of students being assessed with mClass with SBAC outcomes.

Not only is it crucial that the district supplement the foundation support for this initiative, but it is also important to plan for sustaining the use of this assessment beyond the lifetime of the Grossman Grant. Each school needs to develop the expertise of at least 2-3 teachers who will be able to sustain the support for this tool after grant funding expires. Eventually these teachers will need to be given a stipend to take on this early literacy teacher leadership role in their schools.

### **Early Childhood**

As we work through the first year of the Grossman Family Foundation Grant, we are learning how difficult it is to align all the PK programs in the city with our district K-3 program so that all Norwalk children are "ready to learn" by the time they enter kindergarten. One of the goals of GFF Grant is to ensure that all PK staff members throughout the city participate in the same early literacy training in which our K-3 staff is involved.



Academics

Root Cause: However, a significant area of growth for PK would be to have some kind of universal screen for PK students. The district is planning to pilot the Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI) which has been developed by DIBELS and aligned with the K-3 mClass Reading 3D Early Literacy Assessment. The PELI measures alphabet knowledge, vocabulary and oral language, phonological awareness, and listening comprehension. The assessment is designed to identify children who may be experiencing difficulties acquiring early literacy skills and to inform instructional support for those children in order to improve future reading outcomes.

**Read 180**

In just a few short months, students working with Read 180 have made unusually good progress. However, the program was only implemented with a small number of students in two schools. While the data are promising, this initiative needs to expand to include more students and be monitored carefully to reap the full benefits of the resources in terms of providing interventions to address middle and high school students’ reading needs.

**Read 180 Lexile Results at Briggs High School – Jan. to June 2013**

Student	Lexile 1/2013	Lexile 6/2013	Growth in Lexile
1	460	908	448
2	651	917	266
3	844	1092	248
4	861	1101	240
5	1022	1257	235
6	686	905	219
7	700	879	179
8	861	993	132
9	960	1086	126
10	826	941	115
11	1128	1239	111
12	846	954	108
13	765	872	107
14	837	927	90
15	913	984	71
16	972	1034	62
17	644	695	51
18	1033	1076	43
19	791	833	42
20	785	826	41

Root Cause: Since Alliance funding did not become available until November and since the classrooms needed additional technology infrastructure, this initiative did not get started until January 2013. It was also difficult to schedule students into Read 180 in the middle of the year after all schedules had already been developed. In spite of these issues, students’ lexile levels did improve.

**English Language Learners**

For the past three years, we have been fortunate to have Dr. Deborah Short conduct SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) training in the Norwalk Public Schools for three cohorts of 30 secondary teachers each. This training has given our teachers the tools to help our English Language Learners (ELLs) achieve success in their academic subjects. We now place as many ELLs as possible in classes with SIOP trained teachers who have reported the following after completing the training:

- *“I have used so many new, creative strategies that have made teaching fun and bridged the gap in helping my ELL students.”*
- *“I have learned wonderful, engaging techniques that my students now ask for me to incorporate in my lessons.”*
- *I, personally, have incorporated many of the techniques I learned this year into my lessons and have found my students receiving and retaining the information better than...previously.”*

Moreover, the strategies presented not only help ELLs, but promote engagement and better academic achievement for all students.

Root Cause: While we would like all secondary teachers to experience this six-day training, it is very difficult to find the professional development time during the school year to train teachers with fidelity to the model. Our fourth cohort of 30 secondary teachers will begin SIOP training in August 2013. During the 2013-2014 school year, we will need to explore ways to compensate teachers for participating in SIOP training and getting together with other SIOP teachers to share ideas and successes and discuss options for deeper implementation.

**Mathematics:** A significant growth area for **elementary mathematics** is the need for support in the form of on-site coaching to implement the new Go Math program. The one Instructional Specialist for Mathematics cannot give the concentrated coaching and modeling time that teachers need to fully implement this extensive curriculum with all the interventions and enrichment activities in English and Spanish.

Root Cause: Elementary Math Coaches were eliminated in the budget for the 2012-2013, and all schools are using Go Math. During the pilot year, the two elementary Math coaches visited each of the seven schools every week to guide teachers through the use of the materials, model lessons, assist in analyzing assessments and work with teachers to modify instruction with enrichment and intervention strategies. In year two (2012-2013), there were no coaches when all twelve elementary schools were implementing Go Math. Professional development was delivered to grade level groups by trainers from the company. However, teachers did not get the in-classroom collegial coaching that is needed to fully implement the program.

For **middle and school mathematics**, the implementation of the CCSS program, **Big Ideas**, will require introductory training from the publisher and then school-site support to ensure fidelity of implementation. It will also be important to extend the use of **Intensified Algebra** to more of those middle school students who have not yet had the benefit of a foundation in CCSS-aligned mathematics. In addition in the **high schools**, while the teachers will have the CCSS curriculum, instructional activities, pacing guides and assessments they will also need in-school support to ensure fidelity of implementation. Finally, some students are in need of intense Tier 2 intervention in math. For the 2013-14 school year, the district will pilot the new Math 180 program in its secondary schools with the lowest math SPI, which are Briggs and Ponus.



Academics

Root Cause: Another significant area of growth is the need for a secondary math coach who can model lessons, analyze and interpret assessment results and determine strategies to meet individual student needs. We now have all mathematics from Kindergarten through Geometry completely aligned to the CCSS for Fall 2013.

A secondary math coach will ensure fidelity of implementation across ALL schools (4 middle + 2 comprehensive high schools), ensure delivery of these curricula, coach teachers on “best practice”, train on the CCSS, expand our Benchmark program via “LinkIt”, etc. The secondary math coach would also meet regularly with grade-level (6-8) and subject (9-12) data teams to promote differentiation, remediation and enrichment.

***Briggs Turnaround Plan***

Section 7 describes the Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan for Briggs High School.

Root Cause: While the district is hopeful to be granted Commissioner’s Network funding, it will need to supplement the network funds with district local and Priority Schools and Alliance funding. Once the partnership with Our Piece of the Pie (OPP) is established with students attending regularly, and enrollment begins to increase, the district and OPP will see out private foundation support for this project.

***Enhanced Use of Technology*** has taken a major leap this past year with the initial implementation of the district data warehouse, and the addition of a Tech Systems Training and Assessment Coach as well as a Technician. However, it did take most of the year to align ***LinkIt*** with the student information system and district testing information. Only high schools teachers were trained in the use of this very powerful new tool. They have been able to create CFAs aligned with CCSS and monitor student progress toward meeting those standards. (302 CFAs in math/science at BMHS and 83 in math/science at NHS completed during the 2012-2013.)

The district needs to grow this initiative into the elementary and middle schools, as well as continue to take to scale its use in the high schools. If we are going to be successful at preparing students to meet the high expectations of the new common core assessments, we need to know what they don’t know and why they don’t know it. In other words we need to have just-in-time assessment tools that diagnose and prescribe remedies.

Root Cause: With no local or grant funding for this data warehouse project, the district will be unable to sustain the growth that has been made in the last year. Teachers across the district have been exposed to various technology-based assessment resources. But only a data warehouse like ***LinkIt*** can pull these data together into one cohesive system that tracks and monitors student progress towards meeting the high stakes goals of the CCSS.

***Data-Driven Decision Making***

While the DDDM process has taken hold throughout the district, new staff members are always in need of training and teachers often need additional meeting time to analyze data and plan for instruction. There is also a need for more central office staff presence in the schools to help facilitate this process and participate in the data analysis.

Root Cause: Budget constraints have made it difficult to give the schools the coaching support they need to effectively analyze data and plan for instruction. Moreover, there are only three content area instructional specialists (RLA, Math and ELL) at Central Office for all 19 schools PK-12.



Human Capital	<p><b>SEED Pilot:</b> A major growth for Human Capital is implementing the CSDE SEED Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan will need continued support from the State Department and CES, our regional service center. While we have all learned how to create SLOs and use data to support our instructional successes, we all need more time and careful coaching to ensure that the original intent of connecting teacher and administrator evaluation to student outcomes is accomplished in a thoughtful and deliberate manner.</p> <p><u>Root Cause:</u> Much of the work in year one was implementing the plan “on the fly” as information, materials and forms became available. While educators are good at improvising in the classroom, implementing a teacher and administrator evaluation plan that is such a major change and has such a long range impact requires a more thoughtfully planned and carefully articulated delivery system.</p> <p><b>Staffing:</b> A key growth area for Norwalk is the recruitment of teachers from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p><u>Root Cause:</u> Lack of funding to attend recruitment fairs at minority colleges</p>
Operations	<p>In this current fiscal climate, it is important for the district to continue to seek out private funding and to coordinate all resources to support its instructional initiatives.</p> <p><u>Root Cause:</u> More support for the Grants Office would be helpful.</p>
Culture and Climate	<p>As a result of the experience with the PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports) program in the secondary schools, a number of elementary schools are interested in having their staff members trained in this protocol.</p> <p><u>Root Cause:</u> Funding is needed to extend this training to the elementary schools.</p>

## 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.

The district’s key initiatives from Year 1 centered on three major areas, Leadership, Data, and Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment in Reading/Mathematics. What follows is the chart that lists the schools included in Norwalk’s Year 1 Alliance District program:

Schools/Overall Goal	High Leverage Initiatives	Strategy	Funding Sources
<b>Briggs</b> (Focus/High Need) <b>Goal:</b> College/Career Ready	Leadership	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Principal Coaching on evaluating instruction	Priority Schools Briggs Redesign Grant
	Data	Data warehouse Admin. for development and training Data Team Coaching	Priority Schools Briggs Redesign Grant
	Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment- Reading	Read 180 National Academy Foundation Planning Year	Alliance
	Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment-Math	Intensified Algebra	Alliance
<b>Rowayton</b> (Focus/High Need) <b>Goal:</b> Reading by 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Data	mClass 3D Early Reading Assessment	Alliance
<b>Ponus Ridge Middle School</b> (Lower Tier/High Need) <b>Goal:</b> Reading (Intervention) Algebra Ready by 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Leadership	Principal Coaching	Alliance
	Data	Data Team Coaching	Alliance
	Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment-Reading	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Coach Read 180	
	Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment-Math	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Math Coach	Alliance
<b>BMHS</b> (Lower Tier/High Need) <b>Goal:</b> College & Career Ready	Data	Data warehouse Admin. for development and training	Alliance
	Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment-Reading	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Reading Coach	Alliance
	Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment-Math	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Math Coach	Alliance
<b>NHS</b> (Lower Tier/High Need) <b>Goal:</b> College & Career Ready	Leadership	Principal Leadership Team to work on building a collaborative culture	Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant
	Data	Admin of data warehouse for development and training	Alliance
	Curriculum/Instruction-Reading	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Reading Coach	Alliance
	Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment-Math	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Math Coach	Alliance
<b>Marvin</b> (Lower Tier/High Need)	Leadership and data team coaching	New Interim Principal Coaching	Alliance

<b>Goal:</b> Reading by 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade			
<b>Silvermine</b> (Middle Tier/Moderate Support)	Curriculum/Instruction/ Assessment-Reading	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Literacy Coach	Alliance
<b>Goal:</b> Reading by 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade			
<b>Brookside</b> (Middle Tier/Moderate Support)	Curriculum/Instruction/ Assessment-Reading	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Literacy Coach	Alliance
<b>Goal:</b> Reading by 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade			
<b>Tracey</b> (Middle Tier/Moderate Support)	Curriculum/Instruction/ Assessment-Reading	CCSS Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Literacy Coach	Alliance
<b>Goal:</b> Reading by 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade			

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

The district's Year 1 Alliance accomplishments are as follows:

1. The continued implementation of the CCSS Transition Plan with the multi-media communications program, the introductory training of all teachers during district staff development days, and the in-school training and support by school-based Transition Team members.
2. Implementation and Expansion of the CSDE **Early Literacy Assessment, mClass Reading 3D** – see page 13 for supporting data.
3. The Pilot Implementation of **Read 180** at Briggs HS and Ponus Ridge MS – see page 19 for data.
4. The continued expansion of the **SIOP** model in the secondary schools.
5. The expansion of the CCSS-aligned **Go Math** program to all elementary schools.
6. The selection of the CCSS-aligned **Big Ideas** middle school math program.
7. The completion of the CCSS-aligned math curriculum for grades Kindergarten through Geometry.
8. The development of the district data warehouse, **LinkIt**, along with the training of all high schools teachers in the design and upload of Common Formative Assessments aligned to the CCSS.
9. The continued **data-team coaching** provided by CES trainers.

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.

**Extra Time for Teachers:** While it is important for teachers to have more time to collaborate on designing common formative assessments aligned with the CCSS, analyzing data and developing interventions that meet students' individual needs, that time needs to be built into the school day and be just added on after the regular work day. Common Planning time scheduled into the regular school day is the most effective means of providing teachers with time.

**Leadership Coaching** from CAS over the last two years has effectively supported the school's data team and instructional data team process. Now there is a system in place and the school administration will continue to implement with the assistance and oversight from the district Instructional Specialists.

With the help of **Leadership Coaching** from CES, the new principal at Marvin has also established the school's data team and instructional data team process. She has recreated the school schedule to allow more time for teachers to meet to analyze data and discuss instructional strategies for grouping and regrouping. She has also developed a strong teacher leadership team in the school that will be able to sustain the process going forward.



In Year 1, we have learned to implement a number of assessment tools that can truly drive instruction. We have also learned that it is essential for teachers to have in-school, job-embedded support in order to maximize the results. For example, through the Grossman Family Foundation, we have been able to provide the mClass Reading 3D schools with support from the Literacy How reading specialists. These coaches have been able to guide the teachers in implementing the assessment, analyzing the results and using the various tools in the program for progress monitoring, support materials and parent outreach.

In addition, with the implementation of Read 180, a reading coach who has a track record of success with Read 180, supported the teachers as they integrated the use of the program into their schedule. She helped them with scheduling, redesigning their learning spaces for maximum utilization of the program, helped them analyze the data and served as the “collegial cheerleader” who encouraged them to move forward.

The district now has to develop its own cadre of instructional coaches who can work side-by-side with classroom teachers as they learn to use these new tools that will support them in their quest to meet each student’s individual learning needs.

## 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.

The overall area of focus for Norwalk Public Schools is to successfully transition all curriculum areas to align with the CCS Standards and Assessments. While a number of key strengths now exist, there are core areas of growth that will require continued support with talent development and differentiated instructional resources to become institutionalized if the district is going to meet its key benchmarks to improve student performance and close the achievement gap.

Thus transitioning to the CCSS and Assessments is Norwalk's overall priority focus area for this second year of the Alliance district program with three key benchmarks that will be used to measure progress:

1. Reading at goal level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
2. Algebra-ready by 8<sup>th</sup> grade
3. College and career-ready by 12<sup>th</sup> grade.



Priority # 1

**Capacity Building to implement the CCSS and Assessments:** The cornerstone of Norwalk’s Alliance proposal resides in its goal to build and sustain the district’s internal capacity to implement the CCSS and Assessments. Dick Elmore describes professional development as “the set of knowledge-and skill-building activities that raise the capacity of teachers and administrators to respond to external demands and to engage in the improvement of practice and performance.” Thompson and Zeuli (1999) describe two kinds of professional development learning: Additive learning in which the goal is to acquire new skills and incorporate them into an existing practice, and transformative learning that changes deeply held beliefs, knowledge, and habits of practice.

For Norwalk’s Alliance proposal both additive and transformative professional development are necessary. Additive learning is appropriate for learning new skills, such as using new technologies or implementing the new CCSS. However, teachers may learn the skill well but not understand why they are using it. Transformative learning focuses more on making shifts in assumptions and beliefs and understanding why a new approach is necessary. A high-quality plan that combines both additive and transformative capacity building is needed to improve teaching and leading for the purpose of ensuring all students are college and career-ready by 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Norwalk’s professional development model is based on the research-based characteristics of coherent and effective professional development as described by Lauren Resnick from the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh (2005-2006). These include professional development that:

- Is rooted in the **content as well as instruction** that are to be taught and, where possible, uses actual curricular materials. This is critical to the training that needs to take place if the transition to the CCSS is going to be successful. Content area expertise needs to be developed, nurtured and shared to take the transition to scale.
- Occurs **close to the classroom**. Job-embedded professional development with lesson modeling, coaching and regular feedback will support teachers and administrators in their work to effectively provide **students** with opportunities to **engage in common and individual tasks** in response to their academic needs, and academic interests. Teacher Leaders support classroom teachers with developing classroom discussions, collaborative work groups, project-based learning, and technology-based products and projects.
- **Engages teachers** in, and give them opportunities to analyze, the actual processes in which they working. Norwalk’s Teacher Leaders will work side-by-side with teachers to analyze data, develop differentiated instructional strategies, apply them and determine what kind of progress was achieved.
- **Has a consistency of focus:** Each session builds on the previous one, thereby taking the learning deeper. This multi-year funding will ensure that the district Teacher Leader teams will not only provide additive and transformative training for all teachers, but will also have the time to build the capacity of each of school-based instructional coaches so that

✓ Continued from Year 1

New priority



they can sustain the results beyond the lifetime of the Alliance funding.

- Is **distributed over time** so deepening learning and reflection can occur. Over the four years of this grant, Teacher Leader teams will establish feedback loops of goal-setting, planning, standards, and evaluation, driven by the needs of both teachers and students.
- Includes **both transformative and additive** professional development. Staff will not only learn the WHAT but the WHY and the impact changes in changes in adult behaviors will have on improving students' ability to meet college and career standards.
- Provides the opportunity for **teachers to acquire the skills and knowledge** needed to meet the needs of individual students. Much of the job-embedded training will focus on how to effectively use the new resources to **drill down to the individualized needs** of each student and to relentlessly modify and adjust strategies and activities until each achieves mastery.
- **Is resourced and supported** by district leadership. This plan provides teachers with the resources to achieve the goal for personalizing the learning environment and is support by Norwalk's district leadership as evidenced in the District Improvement Plan, the District Technology Plan and the CCSS Transition Plan.
- **Is related to district goals and standards.** This Alliance proposal is completely aligned to the goals and objectives of the District Improvement Plan which is the driving force for the School Growth Plans.
- Is based on the **analysis of data** that is used to determine next steps in learning. One of the key strengths of this proposal is the **real-time actionable data** collected as frequently as every day with digitally delivered assessments that are housed in the district's data warehouse and instantly ready for analysis. What used to be a very time consuming test administration, scoring, inputting into excel spreadsheets, and laboriously looking for trends will now give teachers and administrators the time to focus more of their time developing the strategies and activities to meet the differentiated personalized needs of their students.
- Is planned and implemented across and for all educators in the system, based on the principle that in a nested learning community **all professionals must be learners** as part of their everyday practice.

Inasmuch as the research has found that classroom instruction and leadership are the first and second most important factors affecting student outcomes (Leitwood, et. Al., 2004), all professional development in this proposal will be targeted for teachers and administrators in all the schools. Having the principal and other administrators participate in the same professional learning as the teachers is essential to long-term success, since the principal is responsible for scheduling teachers' time, allocating money for substitutes and budgeting for additional professional learning.

The CCSS Instructional Coaches will all participate in a two-week Immersion Retreat that will: 1) provide the group with an understanding of adult learners' needs, 2) teach them to analyze real time data and build their facilitation and coaching skills. The #1 priority for this Coaching Team is

✓ Continued from Year 1

New priority

to build the district’s capacity through developing highly skilled teachers in the schools who will eventually carry on their work in the classrooms. They will need to build the capacity in the school to such an extent that when this Alliance District project is over, each school will be a “school of coaches” that can seamlessly sustain the processes and procedures, the assessments, the strategies, and the learning outcomes that had been created.

After the Immersion Retreat, the Instructional Coaches Team will meet at first weekly with Central Office Instructional Specialists, Testing and Grants Coordinators and then at least biweekly for monitoring data and learning from each other’s in the schools. They will provide monthly reports reflecting on their work in the schools and supported student outcome data.

Priority #2

**Reading at goal level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade:** This priority will continue to be supported through the Alliance Grant, as needed, and the Grossman Family Foundation Grant. Three more schools are scheduled to be added this coming school year. In addition, each school will receive coaching support from Literacy How and from the district’s new Early Literacy Training and Assessment Coach. Professional Development will also be provided through the foundation for PK staff members throughout the city.

The plan is to use the mClass Reading 3D assessments to drive K-3 reading instruction, using the tools embedded in the program to group and regroup students, to progress monitor and to implement strategies and activities that are specifically targeted to ensure that all 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are reading at goal level. There is also a proposal for a K-5 reading program that is aligned with the CCSS and the m Class Reading 3D assessments.

In addition, the recently hired Alliance-funded elementary CCSS Reading Language Arts coach will be supporting the elementary schools in implementing the CCSS in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade Reading Language Arts.

At the August 6, 2013 Board of Education meeting, the Prentice Hall Literature Program aligned with the CCSS for grades CCSS was adopted for grades 6-12.

Another strategy related to this goal is to provide intervention support for those students who are not meeting the Grade 3 outcome and continue to lag behind when they get to middle school. This will be in the form of the **Read 180** Tier 2 intervention program. Once the district can monitor **Read 180** results over this next year for a larger sample of students, it will consider implementing the program starting in 4<sup>th</sup> grade as needed.

In summary, once the K-5 reading program is approved, the district will have a complete continuum of curriculum aligned to the CCSS and SBAC Assessments from K through 12, along with professional development and support resources to meet students’ differentiated ELA learning needs.

What follows is a brief outline of the ELA transition to the CCSS Plan:

<u>2010-2011</u>	<u>2011-2012</u>	<u>2012-2013</u>	<u>2013-2014</u>
K-12 PD for Steering Com.	6-12 curriculum writing-unit plans, pacing benchmarks	6-12 ELA pilot 6-12 Adv. CLOSE training	6-12 full CCSS implementation K-5 CCSS Pilot Curriculum Implementation
6-12 CCSS Resource Review	6-12 CLOSE reading	K-5 Curriculum writing	
K-12 CCSS Reading Intervention Alignment	K-5 Curriculum Review, CCSS resources K-5 PD CCSS, intro	K-5 CCSS Adv. PD	



Priority #3

**Algebra-ready by 8<sup>th</sup> grade:** The implementation of the CCSS-aligned *Big Ideas* middle school math program and the continued use of *Intensified Algebra* as an intervention to prep middle schoolers for regular 9<sup>th</sup> grade algebra are being supported financially by the local budget for CCSS and ESH grant funds. In addition, the secondary CCSS mathematics coach will work with teachers in the middle schools to ensure fidelity of implementation to the CCSS and assessments.

What follows is a chart defining the rollout of CCSS Mathematics K-12:

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
K-5 Elementary	6 schools pilot Go Math	6 pilots adopt Go Math  6 other elementary schools start Go Math	Elem. CCSS Math Coach to work with teachers to implement with fidelity
6-8 Middle	Use Est. School Hrs. grant to pilot Intensified Algebra	Develop common mid and end term exams for middle and high Algebra I  Continue ESH Intensified Algebra	Implement new CCSS Big Ideas Math program in all middle schools  Secondary CCSS Math Coach to work with teachers to implement with fidelity
9-12 High School		Employ CREC consultant to write with teachers Algebra I and Geometry aligned with CCSS	Implement Intensified Algebra in high schools  Employ CREC consultant to work with teachers to write CCSS Algebra II  Secondary CCSS Math Coach to work with teachers to implement with fidelity

- Continued from Year 1
- New priority



Priority #4	<p><b>College and Career-Ready by 12<sup>th</sup> grade:</b> This priority will continue to be supported through the Alliance Grant and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant to “build a collaborative culture for student-centered learning” in the high schools.</p> <p>In addition, the secondary CCSS reading language arts and mathematic coaches will work with teachers in the high schools to ensure fidelity of implementation to the CCSS and assessments. Moreover, the Technology Training and Assessment Coach will continue to work with middle and high school teachers to create CFAs aligned with the CCSS through the implementation of the district’s data warehouse, <i>LinkIT</i>.</p> <p>Two years ago, the district was awarded a Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant for \$250,000 per year for three years to “build a collaborative culture in a student-centered environment” at the high schools. Add Link It from NMEF as better understanding – student centered learning Collaborative culture. As a result the focus at all three high schools (Brien McMahon, Norwalk High and Briggs) have been implementing a number of student-centered initiatives focused on ensuring that all students are college and career ready by 12<sup>th</sup> grade. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Development of Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) aligned with the CCSS as a means of creating for teachers and students a common understanding of what students need to know and be able to do to meet the CCSS.</li><li>2. Implementation of the Advisor-Advisee program at BMHS and NHS with small groups of students meeting with a staff member each week for intervention and support.</li><li>3. PSAT for all sophomore and juniors taken during the school and funding for a local foundation.</li><li>4. Implementation of the Naviance System Guidance System that guides high school students through the college and career process under the supervision of guidance counselors.</li><li>5. Summer 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition Programs particularly for incoming high school students in need of extra support to give them a jumpstart on high expectations.</li><li>6. Student-led conferences where high school students meet with teachers and parents to talk about their progress with reflections on their successes thus far and their next steps toward meeting their college and career goals.</li><li>7. Local mentoring and internships to give students a sense of what workforce expectations are.</li></ol>	✓ Continued from Year 1 <input 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. Use this for intro to Year 2

The first three priority areas are the inputs that work together in support of the district's theory of change. Priority #4 is actually a means to the end. While we can adopt a CCSS Early Literacy Assessment, or implement a middle school reading intervention, or decide on a middle school math program, or use a Algebra intervention program, or rewrite the curriculum from K to geometry aligned with the CCSS, teachers will need instructional coaches in the school who are expert at ensuring these initiatives are implemented with fidelity and the student achievement results are being met.

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.

Norwalk will be participating in Year 2 of the CSDE pilot of the SEED Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan.



**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.

<b>Priority #1:</b> Insert the Year 2 priority below. (Priority #4 moved to Priority #1)						
Build and sustain the district’s internal capacity to implement the CCSS and Assessments						
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.						
The district’s comprehensive approach to this priority is to create a team of expert instructional coaches who will, in turn, build the district’s capacity by developing highly skilled teachers in the schools who will eventually carry on their work in the classrooms. This capacity building in the schools will need to be implemented to such an extent that when this Alliance District project is over, each school will be a “school of coaches” that can seamlessly sustain the processes and procedures, the assessments, the strategies, and the learning outcomes that have been created through this initiative.						
<b>Outcome Metric:</b> What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #1?						
Cadre of district trained instructional coaches working throughout 2013-14 in the schools to build and sustain the district’s internal capacity to implement the CCSS and Assessments.						
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	<b>Progress Metrics:</b> Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b>				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
Interview and hire coaches for English Language Arts and Mathematics	Elementary and Secondary ELA coaches and Elementary and Secondary Mathematics coaches hired by 8/31/13	X				
Design and implement in-depth Immersion Retreat for all coaches	Codified coaching program completed by 8/31/13 Coaching Retreat completed by 9/30/13 Professional Development Evaluation data from Coaching Retreat participants		X			
Monitor coaching activities and student outcomes throughout the school year	Coaches logs; student data outcomes on district benchmark and school-based		X	X	X	



	common formative assessments of elementary and secondary RLA and Mathematics; Spring 2014 CMT/SBAC assessment results.					
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<b>Priority #2:</b> Insert the Year 2 priority below.						
<b>Reading at goal level by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade</b>						
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority.						
<p>This priority will continue to be supported through the Alliance Grant, as needed, and the Grossman Family Foundation Grant. Three more schools are scheduled to be added this coming school year. In addition, each school will receive coaching support from Literacy How and from the district's new Early Literacy Training and Assessment Coach, also funded through the Grossman Grant. Additionally Professional Development will be provided through the foundation funding for PK staff members throughout the city.</p> <p>In addition, the recently hired Alliance-funded elementary CCSS Reading Language Arts coach will be supporting the elementary schools in implementing the CCSS in Reading Language Arts.</p>						
<b>Outcome Metric:</b> What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #2?						
All 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade students scoring at goal level as measured by mClass Reading 3D Early Literacy Assessment and the CMT/SBAC assessments						
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	<b>Progress Metrics:</b> Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b>				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
Implement mClass Reading 3D in designated schools; provide coaching for teachers on how to analyze results and do progress monitoring	mClass Reading 3D BOY assessment results Oct. 2013 for K, 1, 2 and 3		X			
Implement mClass Reading 3D in designated schools; provide coaching for teachers on how to analyze results and do progress monitoring	mClass Reading 3D MOY assessment results Feb. 2014 for K, 1, 2 and 3			X		



Implement mClass Reading 3D in designated schools; provide coaching for teachers on how to analyze results and do progress monitoring	mClass Reading 3D EOY assessment results Feb. 2014 for K, 1, 2 and 3				X	
Align mClass Reading 3D outcomes with 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade CMT/SBAC assessments outcomes	Establish baseline in Fall 2013 for 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade CMT/SBAC assessments Spring 2014 results	X				X
Implement the new 6-12 RLA program	Use 2013-14 SPI for 6-12 ELA as a baseline for measuring student progress with the new 6-12 RLA program		X		X	

<b>Priority #3:</b> Insert the Year 2 priority below.						
<b>Algebra-ready by 8<sup>th</sup> grade</b>						
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority.						
<p>The implementation of the CCSS-aligned <b>Big Ideas</b> middle school math program and the continued use of <b>Intensified Algebra</b> as an intervention to prep middle schoolers for regular 9<sup>th</sup> grade algebra are being supported financially by local budget for CCSS and ESH grant funds.</p> <p>In addition, the secondary CCSS mathematic coach will work with teachers in the middle schools to ensure fidelity of implementation to the CCSS and assessments.</p>						
<b>Outcome Metric:</b> What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #3?						
All students algebra-ready by the end of 8 <sup>th</sup> grade						
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	<b>Progress Metrics:</b> Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b>				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
Implement <b>Big Ideas</b> across the middle schools	Unit tests			X	X	X
Implement <b>Intensified Algebra</b> for middle school students in need of intervention	Unit tests			X	X	
Provide funding for CMT/SBAC Assessment Prep support	Outcome measures from ESH			X	X	



Align <b>Big Ideas</b> and <b>Intensified Algebra</b> outcomes with 8 <sup>th</sup> grade CMT/SBAC Assessments	Establish baseline in Fall 2013 for 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade CMT Spring 2014 results			X		X
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**Priority #4:** Insert the Year 2 priority below.

**College and Career-Ready by 12<sup>th</sup> grade**

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

This priority will continue to be supported through the Alliance Grant and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation Grant to “build a collaborative culture for student-centered learning” in the high schools.

In addition, the secondary CCSS reading language arts and mathematic coaches will work with teachers in the high schools to ensure fidelity of implementation to the CCSS and assessments. Moreover, the Technology Training and Assessment Coach will continue to work with elementary, middle and high school teachers to create CFAs aligned with the CCSS.

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

All 12<sup>th</sup> graders college and career-ready as measured by the Accuplacer, PSAT and SAT college and career readiness indices.

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 to design CFAs aligned with the CCSS and SBAC assessments	Monitor <i>LinkIt</i> data for student performance on CFAs and their alignment with the CCSS and ESBAC assessments		x		x	
Continue to evaluate and report Advisor/Advisee programs through staff and student surveys as stipulated in the NMEF outcomes framework	Staff and student satisfaction inventories at BMHS and NHS		x		x	
Continue to monitor PSAT college and career-ready data and implement appropriate supports such as after-school program, summer academies, Naviance college and career readiness activities, etc.	PSAT college and career ready index		x		x	
Use Naviance Succeed student interest and learning styles inventories to support students’ college and career goal	Naviance Succeed Inventories		x		x	



setting process as stipulated in the NMEF outcomes framework						
Continue to monitor 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Academy students' high school satisfaction survey, academic progress and attendance as stipulated in the NMEF outcomes framework	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Academy survey data, 9 <sup>th</sup> grade academic outcomes, 9 <sup>th</sup> grade attendance data		x		x	
Record/observe student-led conferences and monitor benchmark goals students set for themselves	Student-led conference data		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 four Year 2 Priority initiatives will be focused primarily on the district’s chronically underperforming schools as was done in Year 1. Last year, Alliance funds were used to support:

- mClass Reading 3D assessment at Rowayton, a high need elementary school
- Leadership and data coaching at Marvin, a high need elementary school with a new principal
- Read 180 at Briggs (Review Schools) and Ponus (High Need Middle School).
- The work of the Tech Training and Assessment Coach focused at BMHS and NHS (both high need schools).

The district will use this same strategy to focus resources and support from the Cadre of Instructional Coaches. During the Immersion Retreat in September, coaches will work with the Testing Office to analyze outcomes school by school and design plans for intervention in collaboration with school administrators and district instructional specialists.

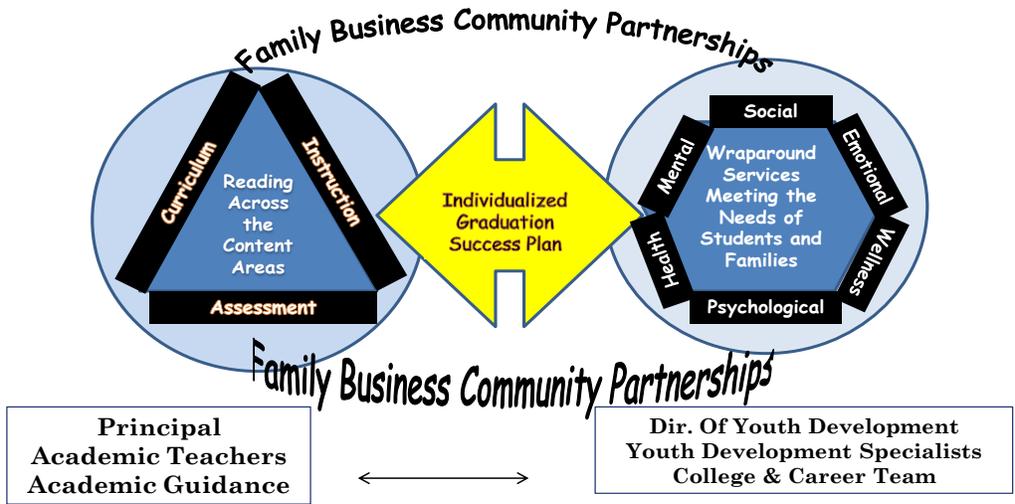
At the current time, neither district nor the schools are structured with adequate staff to drive significant gains. However, with this Year 2 Alliance funding, the addition of the Cadre of Instructional Coaches and carefully planned system of support for the schools in the most need will get the process started.

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?

Briggs High School is the district’s one Review/Turnaround School at this time. The district’s proposal to the Commissioner’s Network for the “turnaround of Briggs” will redesign the school in partnership with *Our Piece of the Pie* and its adaptation of the *Good Shepherd Transfer School Model*. The *Transfer School Model* includes the interconnected principles of rigorous instruction, comprehensive student and family supports, and opportunities that support individualized graduation success planning. This model is being implemented in New York City through *New Visions for Public Schools*, and in Connecticut through *Our Piece of the Pie (OPP)* at the Opportunity High School in Hartford, the Learning Academy at Bloomfield, and beginning in August 2014, the Path Academy Charter School in Windham.

The philosophy and practices of the OPP Path Academy Model encourage youth to identify and build upon their strengths and abilities, while addressing their individual circumstances and needs. It is designed so that young people establish strong relationships with nurturing adults, as well as connect and reconnect with their peers, families, and communities. The model takes an integrated approach to rigorous instruction, strong youth development, wraparound services for students and families, and post-secondary preparation and workforce development. The full integration of the model will not only keep students engaged, but will also arm them with the appropriate tools to achieve success in and beyond high school.

# BRIGGS TURNAROUND MODEL\*



\* Based on the Good Shepherd Transfer School Model

This model relates to the district’s “Theory of Change” inasmuch as the primary implementation goal of the Briggs High School Turnaround Project is to ensure that all Briggs High School students graduate college and career ready, which is the third overall outcome measure for Norwalk students district wide.

Norwalk is committed to supporting its low-performing school with all the resources including local budget funds, entitlement grants, and private foundation funding. The Briggs Turnaround Plan is being supported by local, Priority Schools and Alliance funding.

Beyond Briggs, the district will differentiate support and accountability through tiering the schools by their respective SPI for mathematics and reading, and applying intervention supports as the data indicate. Of particular emphasis will be the sub groups in the transition grades from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> that struggle to reach the grade level benchmark. It is critical for the district to focus on providing the support these students need to meet the benchmark goals at the end of 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, if they are to have a chance to be college and career ready by 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

CCSS elementary and secondary math and reading coaches will work with the schools and their data teams to understand where the gaps are and how to apply the appropriate interventions. After school and summer school funding opportunities will be used to provide the extended school day/year time that could make the difference. The other key initiative is to ensure that the instructional supports during this extended time are research-based, CCSS aligned and differentiated to meet the individual needs of these students.

## 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 will promote accountability and ongoing progress monitoring through the established District and School Improvement Planning process that has been embraced by administrators and teachers over the last five to 7 years. The District Data-Driven Decision Making Team (consisting of teacher/administrator representation from all the schools, the bargaining units, central office directors and instructional specialists, and parents) meets monthly to monitor the implementation of the District Improvement Plan and the data reports from the various school improvement initiatives (i.e. mClass Reading 3D, Read 180, Go Math, Intensified Algebra).

In addition, the CCSS Transition Team, a sub-committee of the District Data Team, will continue to meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the Transition to the CCSS and Assessments.

With this Alliance funding, the district will be able to promote optimal oversight of the implementation of the school improvement initiatives in the schools. The Instructional Coaching Team will schedule 80% of its time in the schools to provide the in-classroom support that will ensure school improvement initiatives are being implemented with fidelity.

The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, along with the Instructional Specialists and Testing and Grants Coordinators, will be responsible for ensuring that these systems and processes are executed throughout the year.

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

The district's strategy for monitoring the schools is grounded in the administrator and teacher evaluation process which for the last year has been piloting the CSDE SEED program with its student learning objectives, school site visits, conferences, etc.

Administrators and Supervisors meet monthly as group with the Superintendent to carry out the instructional and operational plans for the year. The District Data Team and the CCSS Transition Team also meet monthly to monitor the school and district improvement planning process and the CCSS rollout plan.

The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent share the monitoring and evaluation of the school principals. The principals evaluate the assistant principals and the housemasters.

The teachers are evaluated by the school-based administrators.

The Assistant Superintendent also monitors the work of the curriculum directors for Special Education and Technology, instructional specialists for Early Childhood, RLA, Mathematics, ELL and Science, as well as the Testing and Grants Coordinators.



The new Instructional Specialists, Testing and Grants Coordinators will oversee the work of the new Instructional Coaches with monthly meetings and update reflection reports supported by student outcomes data.

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 the Alliance District plan by:

1. Approving the district's funding requests for Alliance and Turnaround support
2. Continuing to support the implementation of the SEED Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan with professional development and training
3. Developing specific rubrics for evaluating certified staff that are not regular classroom teachers or building administrators, i.e., instructional coaches or content area coordinators.
4. Support the Briggs Turnaround Plan by providing oversight and monitoring to ensure goals are being met and funding continues to be made available.

## 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.

With the release of the Alliance application at the end of May and the due date at the end of June, there has not been much time for stakeholder engagement. The last District Data Team meeting, where we have had monthly Alliance updates, was on May 30<sup>th</sup>, where a brief overview was given. The last Principals' meetings of the year were held on June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> where a brief overview was given.

The Instructional Specialists for Math, ELA, EL along with the Special Ed and Technology Directors worked with the Grants Administrator and the Testing Coordinator to analyze the results from AD Year 1 initiatives, gather data for year 2 initiatives and develop the draft plan to align with the existing District and School Improvement Plans, the CCSS Transition Plan and the District Technology Plan.

The DRAFT plan will be presented to the BOE on either July 23<sup>rd</sup> or August 5<sup>th</sup>. It will also be presented to the Administrators and Supervisors at their summer meeting (date TBD once 2013 testing outcomes are available). The plan will be posted on the website and made available to all staff, parents and community members as meetings are scheduled for the opening of the new school year.





## 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:** Norwalk 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:

Manuel J. Rivera, Ed.D.

Name: *(typed)*

Superintendent of Schools

Title: *(typed)*

August 19, 2013

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.<sup>7</sup> 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.***

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<sup>7</sup> 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.