

CSDE Alliance Districts

Year 2 Application Amendment | Spring 2013

Form Number: **TO BE ADDED**

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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 CSDE website at:
<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=334226>***

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 Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) 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 one 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 two 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 two Alliance District plan amendment, completing the application amendment template contained in this document. The year two amendment requires districts to reflect upon year one progress and identify an aligned and coherent set of district-level priorities for the second year of implementation.
- **Review and Turnaround School Plans:** The ESEA waiver identified a subset of Connecticut’s schools as needing significant intervention and improvement. Specifically, those schools classified as “Turnaround” or “Review” must develop and submit school improvement plans as a part of the year two 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 website at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=334226>.



- **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 website: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=334226>.

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 two application amendment **must be postmarked by June 28th, 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>Mailing Address:</p> <p>Connecticut State Department of Education Turnaround Office P.O. Box 2219, Room 247 Hartford, CT 06145-2219 Attention: Debra Kurshan</p>	<p>Overnight Mailing and Hand Delivery:</p> <p>Connecticut State Department of Education Turnaround Office 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 247 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



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
Email: 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 two Alliance District plan amendment and provide that individual's contact information.

Name of School District:	Norwich Public Schools		
Name of Grant Contact Person:	Joseph Stefon		
Phone # of Contact Person:	(860) 823-6284 x 111		
Email of Contact Person:	jstefon@norwichpublicschools.org		
Address of Contact Person:	Street Address:	90 Town St	
	City:	Norwich	Zip Code: 06360
Name of Superintendent:	Abby I. Dolliver		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	7/5/13
Name of Board Chair:	Dr. Yvette Jacaruso		
Signature of Board Chair:		Date:	7/5/13
Local Board Approval of Plan: ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Date of Plan Presentation to the Local Board:	August 27, 2013		
Priority School District?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

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

2. District Vision, Mission & Values

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

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

Norwich Education Excellence for Today and Tomorrow: The NEXTT generation Norwich Education System is a fully integrated community educational environment for all our citizens throughout their lives in any facet they desire.

The Norwich district will:

- 1.) Be known for how learners, families, educators, and the Norwich community work together to deliver personalized and effective learning programs for every learner.
- 2.) Give learners the personalized support they need for success.
- 3.) Be flexible in the use of time, space, and learning experiences.
- 4.) Use Norwich community resources creatively and responsibly for the mutual benefit of the community, the schools, and learners.
- 5.) Help citizens learn continuously throughout their lives.
- 6.) Have a sustainable financial model that reflects not only the cost side of the public ledger, but also the benefits
- 7.) Have processed that periodically renew the system as times and priorities change.

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

Mission Statement: The Norwich Public Schools will provide each student a rigorous, effective teaching and learning environment where equity is the norm, excellence is the goal, student health and safety is assured and achievement cannot be predicted by race or other demographics.

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

The Norwich School District works from the principle that good instruction is what matters most to improve achievement. Ensuring good instruction requires a system of accountability. Effective teachers must be supported with high quality professional development to guarantee that the implementation of a viable curriculum that meets the needs of all students. Norwich Public Schools believes the rich diversity of our student population is an asset that can further prepare our students for successful futures in the world. Norwich Public Schools values family and community engagement to enhance the learning environment for students as we deepen the importance of education in the fabric of the community. The Norwich district believes that every contribution by the community, our families, and every staff member that further enriches the teaching and learning experience lays the foundation for these improvement strategies to take hold. It is the responsibility of the district leadership to effectively communicate high expectations and then provide the resources for all staff to meet those expectations successfully.



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?

The overarching strategy for the Norwich Public Schools Alliance Reform Plan centers on a strong working knowledge of the Common Core State Standards in order to achieve more effective and successful teaching and learning. From this central objective comes strengthened instruction based on a viable curriculum developed with authentic, relevant, and rigorous resources alongside complimentary and continuous professional development to build capacity and expertise within the district. To support this strategy, it is critical to ensure that the authentic literacy workshop model be delivered with fidelity within optimal learning and teaching conditions in the diverse classrooms of Norwich. To reach success in delivering strong CCSS instruction, it is vital that School Principals and Instructional Specialists receive intensive, long-term training to develop a deep understanding of the CCSS in practice and learn effective ways to support teacher growth individually to make this shift.

To ensure that all students succeed and that improvements are monitored continuously, the district will measure progress through a rigorous, research-based data team process. This process is implemented at the grade, school, and district level to guarantee cohesion and continuity. This process provides a measure of quality assurance for both school leadership and classroom instruction delivery, snapshots of success by grade level and school, as well as individual student progress. The Norwich School District depends on this data team process to share best practices, communicate to parents and the public, and to define the critical areas in need of further development and training. By bridging between schools and establishing common expectations and reinforcing common goals, the district data team fosters cohesion and consistency.

Culturally competent strategies and interventions based on the unique needs of individual schools will both develop teaching strategies that work for our students as well as build stronger relationships with student families. Alongside these efforts, a district-wide strategy to engage families in their students' learning will begin to ensure improved knowledge of parent perception and need, consistency of best practices, targeted interventions, and embedded literacy strategies in the home. While the overarching strategy begins with strong instruction in every classroom, it ends with the continuous development of partnerships between teachers and parents.



3. District Data Profile

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

District Overview (2012-13):					
Total Enrollment:	3,873 (K-8); 1,587 (9-12)	Per Pupil Allocation: ²	\$12,891		
Total # Schools:	12	Operating Budget:	\$70,385,012		
# Review Schools: ³	2	# Turnaround Schools:	1		
Student Demographics (2012-13) as of October 1, 2012:					
% White:	37%	% F/R Lunch:	70%		
% Black:	19%	% IEP:	14.3%		
% Hispanic:	26%	% ELL:	11.9%		
% Other:	18%	Attendance Rate (October 1):	98.7%		
District Personnel (2012-13):					
# Certified School-Based Staff:	265	Median Teacher Salary: ⁴	\$68,000		
Student/Teacher Ratio: ⁵	14:1	# Central Office Administrators:	4		
# School Administrators:	14	# Central Office Support Staff:	12		
Student Achievement:	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	
District Performance Index:	62.8	62.8	63.2	64.9 (target)	
Math	Gr. 3 at/above Goal:	48.6%	46.7%	42.7%	-
	Gr. 5 at/above Goal:	53.8%	50.2%	51.8%	-
	Gr. 8 at/above Goal:	47.7%	48%	38.7%	-
	Gr. 10 at/above Goal:	-	-	-	-
Reading	Gr. 3 at/above Goal:	42.7%	37.2%	36.9%	-
	Gr. 5 at/above Goal:	44.1%	41.4%	51.1%	-
	Gr. 8 at/above Goal:	55.4%	56.8%	57.8%	-
	Gr. 10 at/above Goal:	-	-	-	-
Chronic Absenteeism Rate: ⁶	11.7	10.7	11.3	11.3	
Graduation Rate:	-	-	-	-	
% Pursuing Higher Education:	-	-	-	-	

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

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

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

⁵ Ratio should include all certified staff.

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

4. District Needs Analysis

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

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

Academics	Instructional Specialists for embedded professional development SRBI protocol and screenings District Math Coordinator and Math Coach at middle school level to support instruction Administrative Literacy Specialist to support Focus Schools A focus on culturally rich curriculum and literacy material Strong and systematic Data Team process Implementation of a literacy program with planned units of study
Human Capital	Rigorous interview and selection process for open positions Maximizing individuals’ strengths with the best interests of the district as a whole in mind Retention of talent and development of leadership Focus on shared leadership capabilities through McREL research-based strategies Hiring of 50% new high level administrative team members Development and Implementation of the Hybrid SEED Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Plan
Operations	Extended Learning time at Stanton Network School Grant-funded and fee-based extended academic and enrichment learning opportunities at all schools Summer Learning opportunities Successful, competitive grant applications to support strategic initiatives Adoption of PowerSchool as the district’s new SIS
Culture and Climate	PBIS with consistent and proactive implementation Use of SWIS data to monitor and analyze student behavior Partnership with Jason Irizarry at UCONN to support equity screenings and culturally responsive strategies for student and parent engagement Launch of new website that encourages and welcomes family and community engagement Effective interventions and re-engagement strategies for chronically truant middle schools students Multiple student performances and exhibitions to engage parents in each school community



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

Academics	<p>Financial capacity to support effective teaching strategies with professional learning and relevant, rigorous curricular materials</p> <p>Adequate capacity for interventions to address individual student needs</p> <p>Middle School curricula and academic programming</p> <p>Past alignment with CCSS</p> <p>PD to best use assessments diagnostically</p> <p>Investment in training for ELL programming</p> <p>Math Interventions</p> <p>Communication to parents of student academic progress and academic programming</p> <p>Capacity and training for enhancement of technology use in instruction</p> <p>Consistent lesson plan monitoring and development</p>
Human Capital	<p>A strong, consistent definition of good instructional practice</p> <p>A consistent walk-through protocol for building administrators</p> <p>Targeted recruitment efforts, specifically around diversity</p> <p>Accurate job descriptions for all staff with clearly defined roles and accountability</p> <p>Need a more coherent K-9 PD strategy to ensure that building based PD opportunities are aligned to overall theme and expectation of district</p> <p>Staff uncertainty in some buildings due to stress of change and stagnant progress</p>
Operations	<p>Financial relationship with NFA and lack of accountability for City Council to be part of negotiating process for tuition rate increases</p> <p>Limited budgetary authority at school level</p> <p>Large number of unsustainable, grant-funded staff positions</p> <p>Necessary capital improvements that have been delayed</p> <p>A technology infrastructure that is in the process of transitioning to on-line assessments</p> <p>Long term facilities plan</p>
Culture and Climate	<p>Lack of cohesive strategy and capacity and training of staff to engage families of students who face challenges with truancy, tardiness, and/or academic progress</p> <p>Lack of manpower to address root causes of student attendance and transience issues</p> <p>Lack of cohesive strategy to ensure that consistent teacher-to-parent communication focuses on positive reinforcement as well as areas of growth for student behavior</p> <p>School Governance Councils in every school are at different stages of development and growth</p>

5. District Strategy and Year 1 Reflection

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

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

The key initiatives for year one of the Alliance District program for Norwich Public Schools focused on:

- **Leadership and Change:** Research-based leadership development for Moriarty, Veterans, Wequonnoc, and Uncas Elementary schools as well as Kelly and Teacher’s Memorial Middle Schools to ensure a coordinated approach to the Alliance initiatives in each participating school.
- **Teacher Accountability:** Holding every teacher accountable for implementing lessons that adhere closely to the research-based instruction model of: 1) Clearly stated learning objectives and criteria for student success, 2) Modeling and demonstration by the Teacher, 3) Guided student practice (both independently and in small groups), 4) Formative assessment through consistent checks for understanding, and 5) Closure to help organize and reinforce what has just been learned for students (guided by Focus, Schmoker and The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Pinnell & Fountas);
- **Administrative Accountability:** Administrative Literacy Specialist shared between Moriarty and Veterans Elementary Schools to focus on instruction and supports for ELL students and to ensure consistent, thorough classroom observation and teacher evaluation throughout the year;
- **Curriculum:** A new K-8 Curriculum closely aligned to the CCSS that integrates the cultural diversity of Norwich;
- **Reading and Writing:** A research-based core reading and writing program implemented throughout the district with extensive training for teachers;
- **SRBI Intervention:** Additional supports to fully implement Scientifically Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) for Tier 2 and 3 students;
- **Assessments:** Improved Data Driven decision-making by teachers and administrators through a new student assessment data system;
- **Cultural Competency:** Modeling and training to improve the extent and integration of cultural competent pedagogy and literacy resources in Norwich schools;
- **Literacy At Home:** A deeper integration of parents into the academic progress and goal-setting of students, especially those who are below proficiency;
- **Alliance Plan Leadership:** A district-wide Director of Special Initiatives as well as The Director of Curriculum and Instruction will focus on both ensuring fidelity to this plan and formative and summative evaluation during the 5-year Alliance funding period and beyond

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

Accomplishments from year one include:

- Outlined the elements of strong lesson delivery in the classroom;
- Incorporated the Common Core State Standards into the K-8 Curriculum units for Language Arts;
- Researched the best reading program to best meet the needs of Norwich students and gained consensus of many stakeholders before making decision. Arrived at the final decision of adopting a literacy workshop model to implement in 2013-14 school year district-wide;
- Developed strong Leadership Teams at the Focus schools and Middle Schools using the Success In Sight model developed by McREL – included multiple site visits and walk-throughs using the “Fractal” improvement process;
- Developed a rigorous progress monitoring approach through the monthly district data team meetings. Aligned the District Improvement Plan to the Alliance Plan;

- Engaged in 4 full-day professional learning and observation sessions at the Focus schools with Dr. Jason Irizarry. With guidance from Dr. Irizarry, school and district leadership established school-based objectives for cultural competency, prepared for an equity screening, and outlined units of study for workshop model with culturally rich and relevant texts and learning objectives.
- Hired Administrative Literacy Specialist (ALS) to work with Focus schools in year one. With a great deal of experience in effective literacy strategies, the workshop model, and curriculum building, the ALS played a key role in strategizing an implementation plan for the workshop model, mapping the units, and organizing long-term professional learning with Doug Kauffman from UCONN in Year 2.
- Both Focus Schools, Moriarty and Veterans, showed strong literacy gains in some grade levels based on DRA scores. The percentage of students at proficiency increased from Fall to Spring at Moriarty Grade 2 from 45% to 59% and Veterans Grade 2 from 59% to 71%.
- Six Interventionists at each grade level at Moriarty were hired and trained in January and February 2013 to work with small groups using the SRBI protocol and the Leveled Literacy program.
- While some Teacher Evaluation training has been accomplished, the district's hybrid SEED model was approved and will be ready for implementation in year 2. All staff will be familiarized with the model through training in August.
- With support and direction from the Director of Strategic Initiatives, the majority of planned initiatives met their stated objectives for year 1. Through research on best practices and effective strategies and by compiling what works in Norwich schools currently, a plan was developed to implement Parent and Family engagement strategies that will build capacity in the district and identify the areas in greatest need through an extensive parent survey. This survey (see attachment) includes questions from several sections of the Parent Engagement survey developed by the Harvard Family Research Project at The Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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

The district has worked with McREL consultants to design a modified version of Success In Sight that will focus on training in the Power Walk-through protocol for Norwich Administrators, provide shared leadership training and research with leadership at each school, and focus most intensively on developing leadership at the Review Schools while continuing the intensive work at Stanton Network School as well. The original plan to complete the entire 6-module Success In Sight training at every school has been discontinued due to the impact on teacher time out of the classroom; interference with high priority literacy workshop professional development needs in year 2 and 3; and the high cost of full implementation. LEARN will provide ongoing training and calibration for administrators on teacher evaluation model.

6. Year 2 Priorities

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

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

Priority #1	High Quality Instruction & CCSS-aligned Curriculum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #2	CCSS-aligned Assessments and SRBI Interventions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #3	Effective Parent & Family Engagement in Student Learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #4 (optional)	Shared Leadership & Accountability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority

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

These stated priorities are essential to improving teaching and learning in every classroom for every child. Aligned to the CCSS, the new curriculum units build from a literacy workshop model to hold students more accountable for their own learning and to improve the rigor and relevance of classroom teaching. This model will provide an authentic reading and writing experience and deepen the comprehension skills and individual interests of our diverse student population. To identify a growth area for specific students, to monitor their progress, and to focus resources most effectively for the greatest impact will require thorough benchmark assessments. Using this assessment data in the grade, school, and district level data team process will deliver the knowledge needed to make the right decisions to continue what works. Called “the baking powder in the bread” by Dr. Karen Mapp and other family engagement experts, parental involvement in student learning, beyond the typical parent teacher conferences or disciplinary calls home, is critical to the success of every other reform initiative. Finally, the systems and processes to evaluate adult action at every level are critical for change to take hold.



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

The CSDE three focus areas are explicitly embedded in the district's four Priority areas.



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

Priority #1: Insert the year two priority below.
High Quality Instruction & CCSS-aligned Curriculum
Summary: Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- After planning and professional learning, the district is implementing the new teacher evaluation model. The district “Hybrid Seed” has been approved. The goal of planning and implementation is to ensure the growth and development of teachers in alignment with the new Norwich Public Schools CCSS curricular document expectations- Expert professional learning for the reading & writing workshop model from Teacher’s College and UCONN’s Doug Kauffman, as well as internal experts.- Extensive training for Instructional Specialists for every school to build capacity and deliver classroom embedded PD.- Full-day Kindergarten opportunities district-wide.- Proposed elimination of multi-age and/or high enrollment classes in focus and review schools to ensure optimal classroom environment for more focused grade level instructional practices.- Math and literacy curricula are being aligned to CCSS for K-8. Classroom libraries were purchased and include rigorous authentic titles relevant to the culturally diverse representation of our student and community population. Similarly, additional math resource materials were purchased to support instruction in grades K-8. These materials were vetted with support from a CSDE consultant.- The language arts curriculum, using thematic units of study, integrates social studies and science topics into the structure and content of the workshop model. The use of technology to support learning and instruction is also integrated into the curriculum document.- Job embedded professional learning and classroom support in math is provided by the district Math Coordinator and Math Intervention Specialist. Their focus continues to be on making the instructional shift in math, CCSS and the use of effective (research-based) practices.



Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #1?						
1.) Increase student proficiency results for literacy and math by 10% as measured by MAP assessment data, math unit assessments, DRA II, and CMT/SBAC in all grades K-8.						
2.) Increase teacher knowledge and understanding of CCSS as shown in data from “Power Walkthroughs” rubric and reporting documents.						
3.) Evidence of literacy workshop model components and resources are included in common lesson plan criteria.						
4.) Evidence of math curriculum standards, resources and instructional strategies are included in common lesson plan criteria.						
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
Power Walkthroughs will be conducted regularly by building administrators. Feedback will be shared with teachers which will assist in the process of identifying professional growth areas to increase knowledge of CCSS.	Teachers proficiency in the delivery of instruction tied to CCSS will improve, as identified by improved Power Walkthrough reporting feedback, and inclusion of literacy workshop model, resources, curriculum standards, and instructional strategies in common lesson plans.		X	X	X	
Literacy Workshop instruction model with all necessary literacy resources and Units of Study guidebooks	Power Walkthrough rubric and reporting document will provide evidence of implementation of CCSS by classroom teachers in both literacy and numeracy.	X	X	X	X	X
Essential components included in common lesson plan	Common lesson plan provides daily evidence that components of literacy workshop model and CCSS-aligned math instruction are in place.		X	X	X	
Ongoing professional learning from Doug Kauffman and Teacher’s College	Dr. Kauffman will provide professional learning opportunities to staff on 8/22/13 and 8/23/13; Remaining (20) days TBD. Teachers College provides professional development on 8/23/13. Implementation of learned skills will be monitored through power walkthroughs.	X	X	X	X	X
All district administrators will attend (Summer 2013) 5 full days of SEED Teacher Evaluation professional learning sessions provided at area RESCs	Evidence of participation in trainings. Evidence of administrator proficiency and	X				

	comfort with evaluation system and technology identified through regular feedback and discussion at monthly administrative council meetings.					
All district administrators will attend (Summer 2013) 2 full days of SEED Administrator Evaluation professional learning sessions provided by Betty Osga, hosted by NPS	Number of evaluations conducted, teacher evaluation ratings (fall-spring), and aligned professional development schedule.	X				
All district administrators will attend (Summer 2013) 1 day of professional learning provided by NPS Administrative Literacy Specialist to build a shared understanding of new curricular expectations, common core state standards shifts, and the explicit link to implementation of teacher evaluation	Participation at trainings. Administrator proficiency with identifying and understanding shifts, as identified through a survey for understanding following the professional development day.	X				
District administrators will participate (Summer 2013) in a 1 day work session to ensure common expectations, implementation calendars, and professional language across administrator staff	Participation in training. Administrator proficiency and comfort with evaluation system, Literacy Workshop and CCSS implementation.	X				
District administrators will attend (Summer/Fall 2013) 1 half day BloomBoard training focusing on data management strategies to support teacher evaluation	Participation in training. Administrator proficiency and comfort with evaluation system and technology.	X	X			
District administrators, in collaboration with school based Instructional Specialists, will provide job-embedded professional learning opportunities in areas identified for growth evidenced in administrator observations, student outcomes, and survey results	Teacher feedback (professional learning) survey.	X	X	X	X	X
Administrative Literacy Specialists, assigned to Focus Schools (Moriarty & Veterans) and in collaboration with building principals, will strategically implement the teacher evaluation plan to grow teachers' knowledge and skills in the areas of literacy instruction	Number of evaluations conducted. Teacher evaluation ratings. Distribution of ratings by school. Identified PD needs.	X	X	X	X	X



Priority #2: Insert the year two priority below.

CCSS-aligned Assessments and SRBI Interventions

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

- To gain immediate feedback on student progress in alignment with the CCSS, the district adopted the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) benchmark assessment system. Every 2nd - 8th grade student will take this assessment three times each year so that school and district leaders can identify areas of strengths and areas in need of growth at each school. Since MAP dynamically adapts to students responses, the assessment will challenge students progressively. With immediate results disaggregated and aligned with the CCSS, teachers will be able to make shifts in their classrooms and data teams will be able to make shifts school-wide to address deficiencies. The results of MAP and other assessments are used by grade level data teams to determine Tier II and III interventions, using the SRBI protocol as determined by NPS.
- In addition to the MAP assessment, NPS uses the following assessments as benchmarks and universal screeners.
 - DRA2 in grades K-3 and 4-8 as needed
 - Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA) in grade 1, three times per year
 - Oral Reading Fluency in grades 3-6, three times per year; grade 2, spring only
 - Maze in grades 7-8, three times per year
 - Concepts of Print in K-2, as needed
 - Sentence Dictation in K in spring; grade 1 as needed
- Fountas & Pinnell basic assessments are administered three times per year as necessary in grades 1-2.
- Alliance resources will outfit all district schools with an Academic Interventionist for K-2, 3-5, 6-8 grade bands to fulfill the objectives of the SRBI protocol. The four Focus and Review schools will each have four Interventionists. Huntington, Mahan E.S. and the middle schools will each have two Interventionists paid for from the Alliance funding.
- Alliance resources will provide tech support dedicated to ensuring that all schools implement the online MAP assessment effectively on schedule with a structured plan to make best use of resources and minimize the impact on teaching and learning.

Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #2?

- 1.) The Norwich District is fully prepared for the online Smarter Balanced assessment implementation.
- 2.) All students working with Interventionists successfully meet the criteria for exiting the specific intervention within expected timeline of up to 12 weeks.

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
The third Thursday of each month is reserved for building-based data analysis and instructional planning by staff and administration. (LED DAY) This is an early release day for	Documentation of weekly grade level data team meetings will reveal intentional instructional shifts made		X	X	X	



students.	under the guidance of the Instructional Specialists, Math/LA Coordinator, Math Instructional Specialists, and Building Principals, and utilizing feedback from monthly, building-based data analysis as a framework.					
SRBI protocol documentation at all schools assists in monitoring CCSS-aligned assessments and interventions with students, including communication with families.	Documentation of weekly grade level data team meetings will reveal SRBI protocol is utilized to assist in the identification of appropriate interventions for students. Communication with families on SRBI will be documented.		X	X	X	
All schools administer the (NWEA) Measure of Academic Progress for all students in grades 2-8, three times per year.	Documentation of weekly grade level data team meetings will reveal the use of MAP assessments in lesson planning.		X	X	X	
K-2 and 3-5 Interventionists for every school to work in small groups on specific skill development for students in need.	Monthly progress monitoring graphs show improvements for all students.		X	X	X	
MAP assessment calendar that meets the needs of all schools and is supported with adequate technology resources.	Completion of 3 tests at all schools. Data used to make instructional shifts at classroom, school, and district levels.	X	X	X	X	
Principals and Instructional Specialists oversee and support teachers and interventionists to follow specific SRBI protocol.	SRBI documentation reviewed regularly by Instructional Specialists.		X	X	X	



Priority #3: Insert the year two priority below.

Effective Parent & Family Engagement in Student Learning

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

- The Director of Strategic Initiatives, in collaboration with district administrators, will oversee family engagement strategies to ensure alignment with ongoing extended learning programs and community collaboration, fidelity to research based best practices, and ongoing progress monitoring and evaluation.
- Three school-based Parent Engagement Specialists, up to three bilingual Para Educators, and one Teacher Website Specialist will be hired to assist in family engagement initiatives. Parent Engagement Specialists will be supervised by the Director of Strategic Initiatives, Para Educators will be supervised by the Director of Languages and Translation, and the Teacher Website Specialist will be supervised by the District Webmaster. Monthly meetings will be held to coordinate family engagement efforts on a district level.
- Communication with families will include baseline and end of year surveys, regular communication through translated flyers and a family friendly website, teacher webpages with monthly updates on classroom activities, and weekly “good news notes” sent from every teacher.
- Families will be encouraged to take an active role in their child’s education and they will have a positive impact on the school climate by participating in quarterly family literacy events, attending strength-based parent teacher conferences, engaging in Welcoming Schools Walkthroughs, and reinforcing literacy concepts at home. The district will support this effort by creating a Parent Asset Database, and providing workshops and materials to support learning at home.
- Individual supports will be provided to families with specific needs related to truancy and academic progress. Students will be identified by an evaluation of attendance and academic records. Parent Engagement Specialists will provide mentoring, interventions, and home visits to families identified as needing additional support.

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

- 1.) Families will rate communication with schools more favorably when comparing baseline survey information with end of year surveys.
- 2.) Attendance at family literacy workshops and events will increase throughout the year as evidence in attendance data.
- 3.) Students with chronic truancy issues, identified on an ongoing basis throughout the fall, will improve their attendance throughout the year.
- 4.) By the end of year 1, all teachers will update their websites monthly, as identified by Teacher Website Specialist Feedback.

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
NPS Parent Survey implementation	All Schools will have at least 50 respondents to baseline and end of year evaluations.		X		X	
Electronic and print communication to families translated in multiple languages whenever possible	100% of communications sent home will be translated	X	X	X	X	X



“Good news notes” will be sent home weekly by every teacher	A review of teacher records will reveal the frequency of “good news” communications.		X	X	X	
With assistance from Website specialists, Teacher websites will be updated monthly	Principals will monitor teacher websites regularly		X	X	X	
A Parent Asset Database will be created and schools will utilize parents unique talents to enrich the learning experience for students	The development of a Parent Asset Database Parent involvement in school day and special events will be noted in the database.		X	X	X	X
Outreach efforts for attendance at strength-based parent teacher conferences will include personal invitations to every family	Participation in parent teacher conferences will be increased as compared to the 2012-13 school year		X		X	
Literacy activities at home will be supported through workshops and materials	Parent attendance of Raising Readers Parent Club workshops Home learning activities and games will be shared with all families through teacher websites and quarterly family literacy events		X	X	X	
Quarterly family literacy events will be hosted	At least 50 participants will attend each event Attendance will be recorded and available for review in AfterSchool21 database.		X	X	X	
A Welcoming Schools Walkthrough will be conducted at each school	An action plan will be created as a result of parent/faculty/community feedback At least 1 strategy will be implemented at each school as a result of the action plan			X	X	
Parent Engagement Specialists will provide direct intervention and mentoring for students with attendance problems	Regular attendance for all students will increase		X	X	X	
Home visits scheduled to address individual needs of students as identified through academic and attendance reports	Home visit schedules will be available in files of students receiving services through Parent Engagement Specialists		X	X	X	

Priority #4 (optional): Insert the year two priority below.								
Shared Leadership & Accountability								
Summary: Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All school leadership teams will receive shared leadership and walkthrough training from McREL to develop a strong Leadership Data Team process, implement shared leadership throughout the school, and attain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to student success. - McREL will provide 8-10 monthly Professional Learning sessions for School Principals, Instructional Specialists, and district leadership including the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structures and processes for CCSS Implementation - Orientation to CCSS and Understanding the Shifts in Instruction - Connecting the Dots: McREL work, Literacy Workshop, Instructional Shifts and Teacher Evaluation - Leadership Responsibilities for Implementation: Applying Power Walk-through - Understanding Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and Assessment - Objectives for District Data Team training sessions with McREL: NWEA MAPS Implications for CCSS Implementation. - The District Data Team will continue their shared leadership approach in facilitating, planning, and monitoring progress. - The superintendent will continue regular planned school visits to meet with Principals for ongoing monitoring of progress on district and school improvement goals as well as to implement the Administrator Evaluation Plan. 								
Outcome Metric: What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #4?								
1.) All staff will understand and implement strategies and improvement goals adopted district-wide.								
2.) With a cohesive walk-through observation and reporting protocol, administrators will work from a common data collection process to assess achievements and areas in need of growth.								
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
District Improvement Plan goals will be monitored regularly with shared accountability for the work of data analysis and outcome measures.		The DIP Report Card will be completed quarterly by the DDT with input from every school to determine strengths and areas in need of growth			X	X	X	
The district will implement shared leadership strategies through regular observations of colleagues’ practice, and development of consistent training on the CCSS shifts in instruction.		Summaries of Power Walkthroughs will document CCSS implementation and areas needing focus to be addressed by teams.			X	X	X	



	Documentation of school based LED trainings will identify consistent messaging across the district related to CCSS shifts in instruction.					
All District Principals will use the Power Walk-through process and template to make observation data cohesive across the district.	All leaders will be trained in Power Walk-through by January 2014 and will immediately begin the implementation and use of the rubric and reporting document.		X	X	X	
District Data Team will monitor progress of the Alliance priorities and the District Improvement Plan strategies on a quarterly basis.	The DIP Report Card will be completed quarterly by the DDT with input from every school to determine strengths and areas in need of growth		X	X	X	

7. School Turnaround Strategy

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

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

The Superintendent provides leadership for the District Data Team to align the district improvement strategies to the district Alliance reform plan and monitor progress. Through ongoing differentiated support, the Superintendent grows the leadership capacity of school administrators. The Superintendent monitors the LED days (monthly school-based Professional Learning) and School-wide Data Team agendas. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction plans and facilitates regular Professional Learning Committee meetings, which include Board of Education representation. The Superintendent meets quarterly with each Principal to review data and progress on district improvement initiatives. The Director of Student Services and Special Education meets with Student Service and Special Education staff to ensure that best practices link to district improvement initiatives.

A district wide Professional Learning Committee includes members of the Board of Education. The group designs and implements a long range professional learning program to build and maintain the capacity for continual learning and improvement. The program focuses on increasing teacher pedagogical knowledge regarding CCSS aligned curriculum and best practices. This program is fluid in nature and ever-changing based upon school and district data, as well as individual needs identified through the teacher evaluation process. Weekly grade level data team meetings on effective instructional practices tied to progress monitoring data and teacher knowledge of the CCSS and subject area content. The grade level data is monitored by the school-wide data team which meets on a monthly basis. Individual teacher support by Instructional Specialists is determined by student achievement and/or progress monitoring data, administrator walkthrough feedback, post conference discussion of classroom observations and teacher reflection. Support for teachers is provided through various modalities that include but is not limited to: job-embedded in-class support; a PLC focused on particular topics of study, need or interest; grade level meetings which focus on CCSS, curriculum and “best practices.”

Professional Learning Overview:

Norwich Public Schools is employing a professional learning plan that is driven both by district-wide needs as well as individual teacher needs as evidenced by student data and teacher evaluations.

Based on a needs analysis of our student data and teachers’ professional needs, we have determined that district-wide trends of teachers’ needs compel the following professional development:

- Extensive training for Instructional Specialists for every school to build capacity and deliver classroom embedded PD.
- Expert professional learning opportunities for the reading & writing workshop model from Teacher’s College and UCONN’s Doug Kauffman, as well as internal experts.
- Job embedded professional learning opportunities and classroom support in math is provided by the district Math Coordinator and Math Intervention Specialist. Their focus continues to be on making the instructional shift in math, CCSS and the use of effective (research-based) practices.

Through embedded coaching and professional learning opportunities, teachers are provided with on-the-spot

modeling and feedback on their instructional practice and alignment to the Common Core State Standards. Based on the innovative professional learning model and scheduling at the Stanton Network School last year which allowed for a frontloading of professional learning at the beginning of the year so that teachers were prepared early on, Norwich Public Schools has decided to expand a modified version of this practice district-wide by frontloading professional learning for all teachers and staff in the first two months of the school year. This ensures that teachers are building the critical content knowledge and skills early on so that not one day goes by where students aren't learning at the optimal levels we expect as a district. Additionally, Norwich Public Schools is exploring the expansion of another innovative practice – “microteaching” - launched at the Stanton Network School in the 2012-2013 school year; teachers were filmed as they taught, and then worked with instructional coaches and a small team of teachers to reflect on what they did well and what they could improve upon. Based on a survey, teachers that participated in the pilot found that this weekly practice improved their teaching, and the district is currently exploring the possibility of implementing “micro-teaching” as a coaching practice in all low-performing schools.

Historically, Norwich Public Schools dictated the professional learning for all teachers. In light of the new teacher evaluation system and recognizing that individual teachers have specific and unique needs, NPS and the teachers' collective bargaining unit negotiated that 2 of 6 professional learning sessions be chosen by the individual teacher. For those sessions that will be driven at the district level, a district wide professional learning committee, which includes members of the Board of Education, will design and implement a long range professional learning program to build and maintain the capacity for continual learning and improvement. The program focuses on increasing teacher pedagogical knowledge regarding CCSS aligned curriculum and best practices. This program is fluid in nature and ever-changing based upon school and district data, as well as individual needs identified through the teacher evaluation process. Professional learning opportunities driven at the individual level must be made in the form of a request that must be approved by both the sub-committee of the Professional Learning Committee and the Superintendent using criteria that include student data and alignment to the individual teacher's needs as informed by his/her evaluations. This combination of professional learning determined by the district, school, and individual teacher allows for the district and schools to address overall trends in student performance and teacher needs, while also acknowledging the differentiation that is required to ensure teachers are excelling in their practice.

The Professional Learning Committee members include:

- Mary Donnelly – Director of Special Education
- Karen Urgitis – District Instructional Technology & Learning Resources Coordinator
- Sheila Osko – District ESL/Bilingual Coordinator
- Darcy Strauss – Instructional Specialist, Veterans'
- Jill Bessette – District Math Coordinator
- Lynn Norris – Board of Education Member
- Cora Boulware – Board of Education Secretary
- Joseph Stefon – Director of Curriculum & Instruction
- Siobhan O'Connor – Administrator's Representative

The committee meets five times per academic year; these meetings create a frame for professional learning based on evidence of need as identified through student assessment data and feedback from Power Walkthroughs. Once Professional Learning needs are identified at the committee level, school administrators have autonomy in the delivery of professional development to best meet the needs at their school through the LED sessions. The implementation of the professional development plan is managed by Joseph Stefon, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, monitored through individual school PD schedules and agendas, and approval of PD hours submitted by individual teachers. The teachers are contracted for 6 professional development days, two



of which are chosen individually and must be approved by the Superintendent, Curriculum Director, and a sub-committee of the Professional Development Committee.

The district has established the following schedule for professional learning activities:

Professional Learning Committee Meetings (3:30-5:00) *

September 25, 2013, November 26, 2013, January 22, 2014, March 31, 2014, May 28, 2014.

*The agenda is planned in advance and remains on file in order to monitor follow-through. Subsequent meetings may be scheduled as needed.

Teacher Evaluation Training for Administrators (5 day sessions with Proficiency Assessment)

- Siobhan O'Connor 7/29 – 8/2/2013 CREC
- William Peckrul 7/22 – 7/29/2013 CREC
- Donna Funk 7/22 – 7/26/2013 EASTCONN
- Billie Shea 7/22 – 7/26/2013 EASTCONN
- Chris Baxter 7/29 – 8/2/2013 EASTCONN
- Jason Foster 7/29 – 8/2/2013 EASTCONN
- Christie Gilluly 7/22 – 7/26/2013 EASTCONN
- Scott Fain 7/15 – 7/19/2013 EASTCONN
- Susan Kessler 7/29 – 8/2/2013 EASTCONN
- Alexandria Lazzari 7/22 – 7/26/2013 EASTCONN
- Peter Camp 7/22 – 7/26/2013 EASTCONN
- Sheila Osko 7/22 – 7/26/2013 EASTCONN
- Rebecca Pellerin 7/22 – 7/26/2013 LEARN

Administrative Council and Professional Learning for Administrators (3:30-7:00pm)

September 18, 2013, October 16, 2013, November 20, 2013, December 18, 2013, January 15, 2014, February 19, 2014, March 19, 2014, April 23, 2014, May 21, 2014

The focus of the Administrative Professional Learning Sessions will be focused on the calibration of the Hybrid SEED Teacher Evaluation Plan as well as full implementation of CCSS and the necessary instructional shifts.

LED Days (Learning Energizes Dreams) (2 hour monthly Teacher Professional Learning Days)

September 19, 2013, October 24, 2013, November 21, 2013, December 12, 2013, January 16, 2014, February 13, 2014, March 20, 2014, April 10, 2014, May 15, 2014

This school based professional learning will focus on full implementation of the Hybrid SEED Teacher Evaluation Plan, CCSS and the necessary instructional shifts as well as to review data to plan and monitor SRBI interventions.

District Data Leadership Team (9:00-11:00am)

September 18, 2013, October 16, 2013, November 20, 2013, December 18, 2013, January 15, 2014, February 19, 2014, March 19, 2014, April 23, 2014, May 21, 2014

The District Data Leadership Team is charged with monitoring and adjusting the District Improvement Plan as well as whole school and grade level data, School Improvement Plans and effective classroom instruction.



Membership is made up of Administrators, Teachers, Instructional Specialists, a Parent, The Director of Strategic Initiatives, Subject Area Coordinators, Student Service Representatives, and CSDE Liaison.

All Staff Professional Learning Sessions (8:30-3:30)

August 22 – Literacy Workshop Model, Vocabulary Kits, Word Study + Prime Social Studies + Prime Science, new Math Materials/Resources, Paraeducators Training, Specials: Aligning with the Common Core, goal setting, Bridging curriculum from Elementary to Middle schools, Developing Content to support classroom and content teachers

August 23 – Literacy Workshop Model, Units of Study, Compu-Claim Portal Training, Department Meetings, Preparing and organizing classroom materials

August 26 – Teacher Evaluation Training, Developing SLOs, Handling Disruptive Children, Inclusion Strategies, Staff meetings

August 27 – Building and Department Staff Meetings, Reviewing IEPs, Preparing Schedules, Creating Data Walls, Using the CT Preschool Frameworks

Administrator/Instructional Specialists/Subject Area Coordinator Professional Learning Sessions (8:30-3:30)

August 14 – Developing Common Lesson Plan Format, Goal Setting, Teacher and Administrator Evaluation

August 15 – Administrative Retreat, Teacher Evaluation, Budget/Website Updates, Specials Schedules, Departmental Updates, School Safety.

August 16 – McREL Consultants facilitated training with administrators and instructional specialists; shifts to CCSS, “look- fors” during classroom observations.

August 19 – Director of Curriculum & Instruction and Administrative Literacy Specialist facilitated training focused on:

- Roll out of new Literacy Workshop Model which is now aligned to CCSS
- Update on revised math curriculum and associated instructional shifts
- Recently updated science standards

Teacher Evaluation:

After planning and professional learning, the district is implementing the new teacher Hybrid SEED Teacher Evaluation model. The district “Hybrid Seed” has been approved. The goal of planning and implementation is to ensure the growth and development of teachers in alignment with the new Norwich Public Schools CCSS curricular document expectations. Please see the Alliance District Year 2 Amendment for the teacher evaluation implementation plan.



Item	District Investment	Alliance Investment
Each teacher receives 6 full days of professional learning.	\$540,000.	
Training for Instructional Specialists	\$25,000.	
Math Intervention Specialist (to provide embedded PD)	\$80,516. (annual salary)	
Math Coordinator (to provide embedded PD)	\$87,044. (annual salary)	
Teacher Evaluation, Professional Development Mentoring & Calibration for District Principals with LEARN		\$16,500.00
Training with Doug Kauffman for Workshop Model		\$51,000
Training/Technical Assistance/Support for Cultural Competency Strategies with Jason Irizarry		\$50,000.00
Teacher's College Reader's and Writer's Training		\$5,000.00

District Investment:

With the understanding that our teachers are the most critical school-based factor in ensuring our students accelerate academically; Norwich Public Schools has made a significant investment in professional learning opportunities through our general budget and as negotiated with the teacher's collective bargaining unit.

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?

Using a scaffolding purposeful process to implement change throughout the district, the initiatives that were piloted at the Review schools and Stanton Network School in year 1, will be implemented fully at the Review Schools in Year 2 and then throughout the district at the remaining schools based on resources and need. The Review Schools will receive additional resources in the form of a full-day Kindergarten program for all students, four Academic Interventionists per school, intensive shared leadership professional development, and direct support from a Parent Engagement specialist. Additionally, the Administrative Literacy Specialist who worked with the Focus schools in year 1 will offer assistance in year 2 to the Review schools.

District-wide, the new reading and writing workshop model will be supported with all of the resources needed to be successful, including continuous, intensive professional development. The Norwich district theory of change centers on high quality instruction with a viable curriculum and intensive professional development support to build capacity evenly across the district. While all of the priorities will incorporate the district as a whole, the low-performing schools will be monitored more rigorously to guarantee that optimal support is offered and improvement strategies are implemented to complete fidelity.

Below are specifics concerning what was implemented at Stanton Network School during the 2012-13 school year and what will be expanded district wide for the 2013-14 school year.

In August of 2012, John B. Stanton Elementary School was adopted by the State of Connecticut as one of four Commissioners's Network Schools and received \$1.34 million in additional funding to support improvement efforts. The opportunity for additional funding opened the door to the acquisition of the additional human resources necessary for the implementation of multiple operational and instructional practices aimed at school improvement. The following practices implemented in Year 1 of the Network Plan will now be supported by Alliance funding within the district's Review and Focus schools in an effort to build capacity of best practices and maintain consistency across schools.

- 1. Shared Leadership:** During the 2012-2013 school year a team of teachers was assembled to establish a Leadership Data Team. These individuals became responsible for the implementation of the 3-Year Network Plan and are essential stakeholders in all key decisions regarding school improvement efforts at Stanton Network School. The Leadership Team at Stanton was trained in the use of *Success-in-Sight*, a school-wide improvement model developed by McREL. Core responsibilities of members of the Stanton Leadership Team include in-depth data analysis, decision-making, presentation of results to key stakeholders as well as the promotion, communication and modeling best practices to their colleagues. The Leadership Data Team presents and leads professional learning opportunities during staff meetings, early release days and as part of Professional Learning Communities. Each member leads their weekly grade level data teams and collaborative planning sessions to deliver common lesson plans and instructional practices. Each member of the Leadership Data Team also participate in a newly developed school-wide walk-through protocol and in turn leads their grade level team in the participation of walk-throughs across grade levels that work to drive consistency and increase teacher collaboration. The Leadership Data Team meets twice per month. This process of "Shared Leadership" will be implemented throughout the district. McREL will provide Professional Learning Opportunities on this model which includes walk-through protocol training. The district data team process will continue through this lens.
- 2. Instructional coaching:** During the 2012-2013 school year, growth and development of instructional practices were enhanced through 3 days of professional learning on Marzano's Effective Teaching Strategies in "*Classroom Instruction That Works*". In addition, instructional coaching was provided in real-time in the classroom by a veteran literacy specialist. Modeling effective teaching strategies for teachers in real-time and using a microteaching model to videotape lessons for the benefit of a teacher's own use in reflective practice significantly impacted training techniques for new teachers at Stanton. As a result of the instructional coaching practices at Stanton, a full time instructional specialist is being placed within each building (rather than split between two buildings) and a district expectation for 50% of an instructional specialist's time to be spent in the classroom modeling and developing best practices. The Alliance Plan provides additional Instructional Coaches in order to have one assigned to each school. This will provide much needed coaching support and professional development opportunities for teachers.
- 3. Full Day Kindergarten:** Beginning in August of 2012, Stanton Network School utilized a portion of its

additional funding to support full day kindergarten. Over the course of the year, curriculum was enhanced to add the depth required for student mastery of common cores state standards. A literacy workshop model was implemented to better facilitate the delivery of differentiated and targeted instruction to meet student needs and develop self-motivated, independent learners. All literacy materials available in the building were leveled in grades K - 2 over the course of the school year to systematically make available 'just right' books to all students. Adjustments to instructional practices coupled with the addition of time in school at the kindergarten level resulted in the majority, or a full eighty percent (80%), of K students leaving the grade either at or in some cases, an entire year above grade level in literacy as evidenced by student performance on the DRA2. Less than 1% of kindergarten students at Stanton scored at the substantially deficient level on the DRA2. These student achievement percentages fall in line with expected student academic performance as identified by Tier 1, Tier II and Tier III instruction as part of the state developed SRBI model. The impact of full day kindergarten on student achievement has led to the adoption of full day kindergarten in all of the district's elementary schools. Three elementary schools will offer full day kindergarten exclusively, while the other 4 elementary schools will each have one full day kindergarten program where enrollment will be based on a lottery system. The goal will be to expand and phase in full day kindergarten as standard practice in all seven elementary schools.

4. **Interventionists:** The position of Interventionist was created to support SRBI practices and provide additional small group and individual support to students in need. Interventionists hold a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree and have some experience working with children. Interventionist services at John B. Stanton Network School were used to complement Tier I classroom instruction for students working to achieve and maintain their academic performance at grade level. The interventionist will/did focus on raising student achievement, in the areas of reading, writing and math by working with students both individually and in small group settings to layer an additional level of instructional support to students. The addition of Interventionists at all schools will provide small group and individual support to students.
5. **Family Liaison:** To coordinate the multitude of wrap-around services available in the school district and the larger community, a position was created for a family liaison. Core responsibilities for this individual include developing meaningful relationships with the families served by the schools, alignment with community organizations working to assist families in the Norwich community, connecting families to the services they need (social, financial, healthcare, after school programs and care), and working to increase family involvement in the school. Outreach strategies have included personal phone calls, regular appointments at the school as well as a satellite office within the community, development and facilitation of support groups and parent forums and home visits. The additional district wide Family Liaison positions will work together to broaden practices that have occurred at Stanton Network School, throughout the district. Bi-lingual Para-educators will be partners in this work with both students and their families as well as with our community at large.

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.

By aligning the District Improvement Plan to the Alliance and Stanton Network School plans, the District Data Team will monitor the progress of each initiative on a monthly basis with concrete objectives, individuals responsible, and outcomes to be measured. In 2012-13, a District Improvement Plan (DIP) "Report Card" (see attachment) was created to assist the focus on each critical area and identify the criteria necessary for the strategy to be fully implemented, district-wide and school-by-school. To clarify responsibility and ensure accountability and purpose, the DIP Report Card will also clearly define what Team members and school Administrators need to track, analyze, and report on regularly. The Superintendent will oversee the continual alignment of the improvement plan to this Year 2 Amendment and the Review School applications.

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

The revised DIP will inform the refinement of each School Improvement Plan. Additionally, the new "Report Card" will help school leaders identify what needs to be monitored in order to report back quarterly on progress to the District Data Team. The new Measure of Progress (MAP) benchmark assessment system will also help track student proficiency in Math and Reading three times throughout the year offering comparisons from classroom-to-classroom, grade-to-grade, and school-to-school. Based on normative averages, this assessment data will also provide an understanding of student progress based on expected growth nationally.

Training from McREL will create a coherent Principal walk-through procedure and calibrate observations based on the expected observable criteria for CCSS, the adopted Literacy Workshop model, culturally responsive strategies, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, and other essential strategies. Data from this walk-through process will support accountability for adult action and full fidelity to the strategies and priorities receiving attention, resources, and training in the Alliance plan and DIP. The Hybrid SEED model will inform the process and reporting at every step of implementation.

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 Norwich School District implementation through continued technical assistance for District Data Team progress monitoring and leadership development. The CSDE can support further development of School Governance Council efficacy through Welcoming Walkthrough trainings. District leadership believes that continued statewide networking and professional development opportunities for Alliance district members are invaluable. Thorough and timely ongoing updates and communications about changes and expectations for Alliance districts as well as reporting on progress statewide will be helpful. Sharing



best practices on effective parent engagement strategies and parent compact implementation would be helpful. Conducted by Dr. Karen Mapp during the 2012-13 school year, the parent engagement training for Alliance district central office leadership was useful in developing a plan for the district.

9. Budget

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

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

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

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

10. Stakeholder Engagement

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

Since all priorities are a continuation from Year 1, communication to stakeholder in regards to Alliance Plan initiatives has been extensive and continuous throughout the first year of implementation. This communication included: several public reports and presentations to the Board of Education and the City Council, several detailed articles in the local newspapers, presentations to school staff and School Governance Councils, and a detailed presentation to the NEXTT Team which is composed of parents, community members, a City Council member, Board of Education members, and District teachers and leadership.

The Board of Education has completed “Lighthouse” training over 14 months through CAFE and CSDE using the DIP and district data. The City Council has been made well aware of the Alliance plan, the requirements of this funding for school reform initiatives, and the difference between these specific expectations and the expectations of other funding sources including other state and federal grants and general funds.

In preparation for the Year 2 Application Amendment and the Review School Improvement Plan, district leadership created and implemented a Needs Analysis Survey (see attachment) for teachers and school staff at the district’s Review schools, Uncas and Wequonnoc E.S. Additionally, district leadership sent out the online NPS Family Engagement Survey to Review School parents, receiving 23 responses at one school in the first attempt. Parents have been made aware of the proposed full-day Kindergarten program at both Review schools. All staff were made aware of the adoption of the Literacy Workshop model with a great deal of teacher input given throughout the research and consensus-building process. Through attendance at monthly Administrative Council meetings and representation at District Data Team meetings, the teacher Bargaining Unit worked closely with district leadership throughout the decision process for a new reading program as well as other important elements of the Alliance plan.



PART III: APPENDIX SECTION

A. Statement of Assurances

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

PROJECT TITLE: Norwich Alliance Plan

THE APPLICANT: Abby I. Dolliver HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

Norwich Public Schools

(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

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

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

L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Superintendent Signature:

Abby I. Dolliver

Name: *(typed)*

Superintendent of Schools

Title: *(typed)*

7/5/13

Date: