



## PART II: YEAR 3 ALLIANCE AND PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSOLIDATED APPLICATION

### 1. District Contact Information

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below, please identify a main point of contact for the Year 3 Alliance and PSD consolidated application, and provide that individual's contact information.

Local Education Agency (LEA):		
<b>HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>		
Contact Person:	Contact Title:	
<b>Christopher Melillo</b>	<b>Interim Superintendent</b>	
Telephone:	Email Address:	
<b>203-407-2000</b>	<b>cmelillo@hamden.org</b>	
Street Address:	City:	Zip Code:
<b>60 Putnam Avenue</b>	<b>Hamden</b>	<b>06517</b>
Local Board Approval of Plan:	PSD:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Name of Superintendent:		
<b>Christopher Melillo, Interim Superintendent</b>		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:
<b><i>Signed in PDF</i></b>		
Name of Board Chair:		
<b>John Keegan</b>		
Signature of Board Chair:		Date:
<b><i>Signed in PDF</i></b>		



<p><i>Good retention of top talent.</i></p>	<p>curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The role of the literacy specialists centers around three essential performance responsibilities: instruction, assessment and leadership. Instruction includes both working collaboratively with classroom teachers to best implement the district’s curriculum and direct instruction of small groups of students focused on a particular literacy need. No more than one-third of the specialist’s time is spend in direct instruction.</p> <p>Assessment responsibilities includes working collaboratively with classroom teachers to implement various assessments such as performance based tasks within Hamden Public Schools’ <i>Understanding by Design</i> literacy units, Fountas and Pinnell benchmarks and the Developmental Reading Assessment 2. Through data team meetings and grade level planning sessions, specialists also analyze ongoing formative assessment data to determine individual and school strengths and needs. This information is then used to plan for instruction.</p> <p>In their leadership role, specialists function as a resource person for other educators, parents and the community. Responsibilities include facilitating grade level meetings, supporting individual teachers, especially new teachers and administrators in literacy knowledge and instruction. This takes the form of leading district professional development and ongoing embedded support to classroom teachers within their assigned schools.</p> <p>Specialists provide leadership and instructional guidance with literacy interventions through the Scientific Research Based Instruction (SRBI) framework. They give instructional guidance to volunteers and paraprofessionals who work within the classrooms.</p> <p>Specialists also assist with building strong home/school connections.</p> <p>District-wide, we have focused on Marzano's effective teaching strategies in our professional development. Teachers' use of these strategies is reinforced through the embedded professional development provided by literacy and math specialists and through the informal instructional rounds that administrators conduct throughout the year. These informal rounds have fostered a culture of openness to observation, feedback and collaborative work among teachers that has facilitated our transition to the new teacher evaluation system.</p> <p>Our combined focus on Marzano's effective teaching strategies, the elements of the evaluation rubric, and frequent observation/feedback opportunities has enhanced the coaching that occurs, leading to rich</p>
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	<p>discussions of teaching and learning and feedback to improve our craft.</p> <p>50% of HPS teaching staff has worked in the district for more than 10 years.</p>
<p><b>2. Academics:</b>  <i>Robust curriculum development process.</i></p> <p><i>Strong curriculum alignment with CCSS.</i></p>	<p>We have a robust process in place for curriculum development, approval, piloting, implementation and monitoring. The district is developing K-12 curricula across all subject areas using the Understanding by Design (UBD) method.</p> <p>All curriculum units are developed collaboratively by Hamden staff and aligned to the CCSS. At this point, approximately 85% of all K-12 curricula have been aligned to the CCSS. Any units developed prior to the CCSS being adopted have been revised to integrate the standards. All units are cross-curricular so the CCSS are reflected not only in ELA and Math but also in Science, Social Studies, and other subject areas.</p> <p>In 2013-14, 26 hours of professional development for teachers was dedicated to understanding curricular shifts to address CCSS and to helping teachers align effective teaching strategies to these shifts and the domains in the CCT rubric used in the teacher evaluation system.</p>

<p><b>3. Culture and Climate:</b>  <i>Positive behavior management strategies are well-developed and in place.</i></p> <p><i>Improving and supporting parent and family engagement is one of the four priority areas in our district's strategic plan and our Alliance plan.</i></p>	<p>There is a strong district-wide commitment to promoting positive school climate and incorporating social emotional literacy into the curriculum and school culture. All elementary schools use school-wide PBIS including responsive classroom techniques, Marc Brackett's proactive RULER program to support social and emotional learning, and other incentive and reward strategies to encourage positive behaviors.</p> <p>Hamden Middle School and Hamden High School also have positive behavior supports in place to increase attendance and provide individualized support for students through student support centers. The school-wide data teams monitor student behavior data routinely to ensure relevant supports are provided.</p> <p>Schools conduct school climate surveys two times per year. The results are used to identify school-wide objectives for improvement that are implemented and monitored through the teacher evaluation process.</p> <p>In November 2013, the district was awarded a Parent Leadership Training grant through the State Education Resource Center/CT Parent Information and Resource Center. The Parent SEE training model is now being implemented with a group of 20 parents representing nearly every school in the district. These parents have made a substantial commitment to participate for 3.5 hours per week for 12 weeks to develop their leadership and advocacy skills on behalf of students and schools.</p> <p>The Hamden Public Library is moving forward with its plans to upgrade its children's section into a true Early Learning Center with resources and programs that support CSS and help families prepare their children for educational success.</p>
<p><b>4. Operations:</b>  <i>Collaborative staff planning time is integrated into daily/weekly schedules.</i></p>	<p>Collaborative staff planning time is a routine part of the schedule at all schools by grade level in the elementary schools and academic department at the middle and high schools. In 2013-14, the elementary schools increased their collaborative planning time to 3 hours and 45 minutes each week, an increase of approximately 90 minutes per month.</p>

Growth Areas:	Explanation and Data to Substantiate:
<p><b>1. Talent:</b>  <i>Deepen and fine-tune Educator Evaluation Training and Support.</i></p> <p><i>Continue professional development focused on helping teachers employ effective teaching strategies to deliver CCSS curricula.</i></p> <p><i>Hiring and Placement Processes</i></p>	<p>In 2013-14, the district focused on familiarizing the teaching staff with the new evaluation system, developing administrators' understanding of the rubrics, and calibrating evaluators. In 2014-15, our professional development for administrators will emphasize building evaluators' capacity in specific aspects of the evaluation system where we need additional growth based on feedback from administrators during the first year of implementation.</p> <p>Additional professional development is needed in 2013-14 that will focus on improving instruction using strategies that reflect the CCT rubric and deepening teachers' understanding of how to deliver new curricula aligned to CCSS, particularly in writing at the elementary level.</p> <p>The Director of Human Resources has identified a need for additional training for administrators in how to conduct the hiring process, which will be provided in April 2014. More outreach to recruit minority candidates is needed.</p>

**2. Academics:**

*Improve fidelity in curriculum implementation.*

Fidelity in curriculum implementation needs to be improved, especially at the elementary level where there are variations across the eight schools in the implementation of new curricula and the integration of the new CCSS standards. This will be a focus in 2014-15.

*Invest in resources to support CCSS-aligned curricula.*

The district has made outstanding progress in the development of new, rigorous, CCSS-aligned curricula in all content areas and at all grade levels. However, robust implementation requires a significant investment in appropriate instructional materials and technology. In 2014-15, HPS will invest in new English Language Arts materials and technology resources to support successful implementation.

*Develop a comprehensive assessment system.*

HPS needs to improve its ability to monitor student growth from the district level. The Director of Assessment and Intervention is working with the district data team to develop or select appropriate CCSS-aligned assessments in the key subject areas of reading, math and writing. In 2014-15, we will also implement Data Dashboard for all administrators to provide them with a current and comprehensive overview of student performance so they can identify and act upon areas of concern more readily.

*Expand capacity to support and track SRBI and academic interventions.*

The district needs to further standardize and strengthen SRBI implementation across the district. We only hired 1 of the 3 SRBI specialists budgeted for our three lowest tier elementary schools because the timing of the funding process prevented us from hiring until after the start of the school year. We were not able to find three strong candidates at that time. We have already posted these positions for 2014-15 and expect that stronger candidates can be recruited prior to the start of the school year.

SRBI is also an area that would benefit greatly from technology integration to support individualized instruction, progress monitoring and assessment. Prior to receiving Alliance funding and a state technology grant, HPS had very few resources to support technology purchases and integration. We will continue to use Alliance funds in 2014-15 to invest in technological resources that can be used to deliver interventions and other academic supports.

Hamden High School has lagged behind the district in SRBI implementation because of scheduling challenges and teachers' expertise in content areas rather than intervention and remediation. To improve in this area, HHS will hire a full-time math specialist to provide greater capacity for intervention in math subjects (mirroring the role of the literacy specialist at HHS). A NEASC coordinator will facilitate the high school's reaccreditation process and help maximize the school's ability to act upon recommendations for overall school improvements, including ways to make progress in SRBI.

<p><i>Increase Opportunities for Credit Recovery at HHS</i></p>	<p>We need to improve options for students who are at risk of not graduating on time to make up credits. Credit recovery is widely used in our alternative and adult education programs. We will seek to expand implementation of credit recovery at HHS in 2014-15.</p>
<p><b>3. Culture and Climate:</b> <i>Reduce Chronic Absenteeism</i></p> <p><i>Provide Additional Supports to Foster a Positive Climate at HHS and Improve Graduation Rates</i></p> <p><i>Continue to Develop Strong Family Engagement</i></p>	<p>The district is concerned about the high rate of chronic absenteeism district-wide and, in particular, at the high school, middle school and lowest tier elementary schools. The chronic absenteeism rate varies from quarter to quarter and from school to school, but trends higher in these specific schools. The district data team has formed a truancy subcommittee to more closely examine the issue, assess causes, and develop recommendations. The district is also at creating an enrichment program at the high school to reduce absenteeism among students in non-tested grades during the SBAC testing period.</p> <p>At HHS, we will continue to focus on supporting ninth graders through the transition to high school with specialized supports such as the Freshman Support Center. We will continue Connections, a school-wide, small-group guidance program that fosters positive mentoring relationships between students and adults in the school.</p> <p>HPS and several community organizations and sponsors are planning Hamden's first Family University for October 2014. Family University will offer free sessions for parents and caregivers of students at all grade levels. Sessions will be developed in several categories, including: Supporting Learning and Navigating the System, Parenting, Family Health &amp; Wellness, and Personal Growth &amp; Development.</p>
<p><b>4. Operations:</b> <i>Technology Integration</i></p>	<p>Integration of technology into our curriculum has been hampered by a lack of resources to purchase sufficient technology for implementation across all of our schools. As new technology funding becomes available through Alliance and other sources, we are purchasing technology for the classroom and adapting curriculum units accordingly.</p> <p>At the district level, we are proposing to use Alliance carryover funds to purchase Data Dashboard so that administrators can better monitor student data on an ongoing basis for early identification of concerns.</p>



## 2. Talent Section

**Year 3 Reform Priorities:** Place an “X” beside the district’s Year 3 talent-related reform priorities. Please note that in Year 3, all Alliance Districts will pursue strategies to advance educator evaluation and support systems. Districts may choose, but are not required, to pursue additional strategies to strengthen district and school talent systems. Please note that PSDs must spend all of their PSD funding on allowable PSD reform areas.

Year 3 Alliance District Priorities:	Allowable initiatives for PSD funding:	Other optional reforms:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educator evaluation and support systems	N/A – PSD funds cannot be used to support talent-related initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment and human capital pipelines <input type="checkbox"/> Hiring and placement processes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional development/coaching <input type="checkbox"/> School leadership development <input type="checkbox"/> Retention of top talent <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

**Summary:** Briefly describe the district’s talent-related reform priorities, as indicated above.

- **Educator Evaluation:** Describe how the district is working to successfully implement educator evaluations district-wide, resulting in improved instruction and professional practice that are aligned to the CCSS.
- **Professional Learning:** Describe how evaluation processes inform professional development. Explain the district’s approach to providing meaningful and impactful professional learning opportunities that are aligned to the CCSS.

**Educator Evaluation and Support Systems:** In 2013-14, we established a strong foundation for the new educator evaluation system with extensive, year-round training and support for evaluators and complementary evaluators that included in-depth orientation to the system, practice observations and feedback sessions, and calibration to the Common Core of Teaching (CCT) rubric. All evaluators are now trained and calibrated to the CCT rubric.

In 2014-15, our professional development for administrators will emphasize building their capacity as evaluators in specific aspects of the evaluation system where we need additional growth. These areas include: continued training to provide appropriate and meaningful post-observation feedback to teachers; fine-tuning the protocol for administrative walk-throughs and informal observations; and ensuring newly hired teachers and administrators are trained in the evaluation system. Dr. Todd White of PHocused on Learning will lead monthly meetings of evaluation teams to address these areas for growth.

**Professional Learning:** The district's overarching theory of change promotes high quality instruction in combination with a rigorous curriculum to drive significant improvements in student achievement. Thus, our district-wide professional learning opportunities will continue to address Marzano's effective teaching strategies. Based on feedback from teachers to the district's professional development committee, this year's focus will be on strategies in the CCT rubric that most directly relate to the CCSS, such as increase text complexity, lead high-level class discussions, teach argument over

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persuasion, focus on process, and authentic assignments. Administrators will observe how well teachers are utilizing these strategies during administrative walk-throughs and informal and formal observations.

The district's approach to professional learning will also continue to emphasize embedded professional development. Alliance funds, in conjunction with other funding sources, will be used to support and expand the use of literacy and math specialists as resident experts in all of our schools. The specialists participate in data team meetings, collaborative planning time, and curriculum development. With their extensive first-hand knowledge of each school's student performance data and their familiarity with the new curricula, the specialists are able to provide embedded professional development that is tailored directly to the needs of the teachers and students in their school. In 2014-15, we will hire a math specialist to fulfill this role at HHS, which has not previously had a staff member in this capacity. The new HS math specialist will be 1 of 10 math specialists. While some of these positions were covered in the Alliance grant last year, this year we moved all math specialists to the Alliance grant and added the math specialist at Hamden High School. The key responsibilities of these staff are to ensure that the math curriculum is being implemented with fidelity, to work with math teachers to assist with differentiating instruction and using engaging teaching strategies to address the needs of all learners. The math specialists also provide professional development on district PD days and throughout the year on a more informal basis.

An elementary science specialist will provide content-area coaching and embedded professional development to K-6 teachers in our eight elementary schools, with a particular focus on those schools with the lowest levels of student performance in science. The elementary science specialist will develop and revise curriculum to align with CCSS; model lessons to illustrate the use of alternative teaching strategies, inquiry methodologies, materials and technology; and increase staff members' ability to embed the CCSS into performance tasks within the science curriculum. The specialist will ensure that teachers are implementing science curriculum with fidelity, and providing them with resources and strategies to help students learn science content. She will also facilitate any elementary curriculum changes and professional development needed as the Next Generation Science Standards approach adoption by the state.

Each specialist serves as a resource person for other educators, parents and the community. Responsibilities include facilitating grade level meetings, supporting individual teachers, especially new teachers and administrators in literacy/math/science knowledge and instruction. This takes the form of leading district professional development and ongoing embedded support to classroom teachers within their assigned schools. Specialists provide leadership and instructional guidance with literacy/math/science interventions through the Scientific Research Based Instruction (SRBI) framework. They give instructional guidance to volunteers and paraprofessionals who work within the classrooms. Specialists also assist with building strong home/school connections.

Also for 2014-15, the district has prioritized increasing the alignment of our writing instruction with the three genres emphasized by the CCSS (opinion/argument, informative and narrative writing). With Alliance resources, we will invest in a professional development partnership with Columbia

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Teachers College to provide 10 days of in-district professional development over the course of the school year for approximately 20 teachers and literacy specialists. This intensive professional development opportunity will improve their ability to teach writing within these genres and create a team of well-trained teachers and specialists to provide embedded writing instruction to their colleagues.					
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of actionable strategies to implement talent-related reform priorities described in the previous sections. Please note that this set of strategies will serve as the foundation for Year 3 progress monitoring.	<b>Progress Metric:</b> Identify progress indicators to monitor the implementation and impact of each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b> Place an “X” indicating when strategies will occur.			
		Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Winter 2015	Spring 2015
1. Build evaluators' capacity in informal observation techniques and feedback through monthly professional development sessions for evaluators led by Dr. Todd White.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 trainings conducted</li> <li>Participation at trainings</li> <li>Level of comfort and/or proficiency with evaluation techniques (survey)</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
2. Provide district-wide PD in Marzano's effective teaching strategies aligned to CCT rubric.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in PD</li> <li>Teacher satisfaction (survey); post survey will indicate that 80% of teachers are using ETS to improve their practice</li> <li>Teacher utilization of strategies (walk-throughs, informal and formal observations)</li> </ul>		X	X	X
3. Provide in-district PD in writing instruction through Columbia Teachers College (approximately 20 literacy specialists and teachers to participate in 10 days of PD during the year).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in PD</li> <li>Teacher satisfaction (survey); post survey will indicate that 80% of teachers are using learning from pd to improve instruction</li> <li>Teacher utilization of strategies (walk-throughs, informal and formal observations, collaborative planning time)</li> </ul>		X	X	X
4. Employ math specialist at high school to provide embedded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire math specialist</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X

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professional development and coaching in CCSS-aligned math curricula for HHS faculty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of PD opportunities provided at HHS</li> <li>All math teachers have at least 80% attendance rate at data team meetings</li> </ul>				
5. Employ elementary science specialist to provide embedded professional development and coaching in rigorous new science units for elementary teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire science specialist</li> <li>Science Specialist will provide one workshop to all grade 5-6 teachers; two planning/coaching sessions will be provided for all new K-6 teachers</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
6. Develop and approve SLOs with teachers and identify related PD needs by November.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of teachers have approved SLOs</li> </ul>		X		
7. Conduct formal/informal observations and post-observation feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% of observations will be conducted each quarter.</li> <li>Major themes from observations</li> <li>PD needs identified based on observations</li> </ul>		X	X	X
8. Conduct administrative walk-throughs to monitor instruction and curriculum implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative teams will conduct four walk throughs per year</li> <li>PD needs identified based on observations.</li> </ul>		X	X	X
9. Provided embedded PD and coaching at school-level based on identified PD needs in walk-throughs, observations, and other settings (data team meetings, collaborative planning time).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four pd opportunities will be provided as result of observation data from walk throughs</li> <li>Teacher satisfaction (survey)</li> </ul>		X	X	X
10. Conduct end-of-year teacher conferences and determine final teacher ratings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of evaluations completed</li> <li>Teacher evaluation ratings; distribution by school</li> <li>80% of teachers rated as developing in a domain in spring 2014 will be accomplished by spring 2015</li> </ul>				X



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11. Develop district-wide and school-specific PD offerings for 2015-16 based on identified PD needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 100% of professional development offerings will be aligned with the District/School Improvement Plans, or teacher need as identified through observations and walkthroughs, and teacher surveys.</li></ul>				X



<b>3. Academics Section</b>		
<b>Year 3 Reform Priorities:</b> Place an “X” beside the district’s Year 3 academic-related reform priorities. Please note that in Year 3, all Alliance Districts will pursue strategies to advance Common Core implementation. Districts may choose, but are not required, to pursue additional strategies to strengthen academics. Please note that PSDs must spend all of their PSD funding on allowable PSD reform areas.		
<b>Year 3 Alliance District Priorities:</b>	<b>Allowable initiatives for PSD funding:</b>	<b>Other optional reforms:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transition to the CCSS and next-generation assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> Dropout prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative and transitional educational programs <input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten program <input type="checkbox"/> Early literacy interventions (PSDs must invest at least 20 percent of PSD funding in support of early literacy) <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional technology	X Supports for special populations X SRBI and academic interventions <input type="checkbox"/> High school redesign X Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage Participation in More Rigorous Coursework at HMS and HHS</li> <li>Improve Graduation Rate with Credit-Recovery</li> <li>Increase access to high quality, affordable preschool</li> </ul>
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district’s academic-related reform priorities, as indicated above. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Common Core Strategy:</b> Describe how the district is working to implement Common Core-aligned curricula, instruction, and assessments; describe the methods for determining that the district’s curricula are aligned to the CCSS. If you use Common Core curricular programs, specifically on-line or technology-related programs, how does the district determine alignment to the CCSS? Explain the district’s approach and parameters, if any, to interim and formative assessments aligned to the CCSS. Explain how the district is monitoring implementation and providing necessary professional development that is aligned to the CCSS.</li> <li><b>K-3 Literacy:</b> Describe the district’s K-3 literacy strategy, including the use of universal screening assessments and targeted interventions.</li> </ul>		
<b>Common Core Strategy:</b>  1. <u>Redesign Curriculum to Increase Rigor and Align with CCSS.</u> HPS' district improvement plan identifies increased rigor as a central component to improving overall student achievement. HPS is engaged in a multi-year effort to redesign its curriculum in all content areas, at all grade levels, using the Understanding by Design (UBD) approach as a means to achieve increased rigor in our curricular content and instruction. Aligning curricula to the CCSS has been an integral component of this comprehensive process. All curriculum units are being written by teams of HPS staff led by content-area directors in collaboration with department chairs, specialists and teachers from across the district. All staff involved in curriculum development have received training in the CCSS and the shifts that these standards make from our prior content and instructional approach. All units are cross-curricular		



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so the CCSS are reflected not only in ELA and Math but also in Science, Social Studies, and other subject areas. A significant gap in this process has been the lack of a district-wide Math Director. We plan to use Alliance funds to hire a Math Director to oversee the curriculum redesign, implementation and improvement process in K-12 math subjects as well as provide overall leadership and supervision to the district's math program.

2. Provide Monitoring and Professional Development to Improve Fidelity. HPS has built its capacity to provide embedded professional development, coaching, and modeling of effective teaching strategies to support implementation of our CCSS-aligned curricula by investing in dedicated teams of literacy and math specialists at each school. These individuals are involved in curriculum development and are also on-site at each school to monitor implementation of curriculum in a non-evaluative capacity. They participate in collaborative planning with teaching teams at their schools, and they work with school data teams to identify and develop plans to respond to specific student needs. They are able to share insights from their school-based work with district personnel through participation in the district data team and feedback to department chairs and directors via the ongoing curriculum development process. The support of the specialists has been so integral to the curriculum development and implementation process that we are expanding to bring on a math specialist at the high school and an elementary science specialist to support K-6 teachers in delivering new science curricula.

Curriculum implementation is also monitored through the educator evaluation process. Administrators conduct informal observations throughout the school year and every teacher has an SLO measured by a performance task embedded in UBD units of study. Professional development needs are identified through the evaluation process. Typically, specialists receive professional development in the identified areas and then provide this training in turn as embedded professional development to the teachers in their schools.

As noted in the district's self-assessment tool, fidelity in implementation is an area we have identified as a high priority for improvement. This is particularly true at the elementary level because of the need to create consistency in implementation across eight separate schools. The Director of Language Arts, the K-6 Language Arts Department Chair, and the K-6 Math Department Chair will focus on increasing fidelity in 2014-15 with additional professional development for the literacy and math specialists. At their schools, the specialists will focus on analyzing student work with the grade level teams; providing professional development to teachers, tutors and paraprofessionals at the beginning of each new unit; and modeling lessons plans for teachers to ensure the curriculum is being implemented with fidelity.

Principals and administrators also need professional development to familiarize them with the new curricula so that they can effectively monitor implementation in their buildings through formal and informal observations of instruction. Because the district is implementing new K-6 language arts units in the fall, the Director of Language Arts will provide this support to administrators in 2014-15. It will focus on the specific unit components they should look for while conducting their observations. There will be a strong focus on writing workshop and guided reading incorporating the Daily 5 as an organizing structure for their literacy block. (See section on K-3 Literacy below).

3. Create District-wide System of Assessments Aligned to the CCSS. We are currently revamping our system of assessments to accomplish several



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goals including: improving alignment with the CCSS; helping teachers to better adjust instruction and interventions based on the results of assessments; and creating a consistent, district-wide system of assessments that provides common benchmarks for district personnel to monitor overall student growth. Alliance funds have allowed us to hire a Director of Assessment and Intervention to oversee this process as well as direct SBAC implementation and coordinate SRBI across the district.

A number of different assessments are currently in use. At the K-6 level, we have established literacy benchmarks using CAP (K), DRA (K-3), and Fountas and Pinnell (4-6). We are currently working on developing a system of benchmark assessments for K-6 math. Math unit tests are currently used to monitor student mastery of content standards and to ensure implementation of CCSS-aligned curricula.

At the middle school, we are piloting a portfolio approach to assess student growth in writing using a common scoring rubric. All UBD curriculum units include an embedded performance task to ensure students are achieving the relevant skills and CCSS for the unit. At the high school, our approach to assessments is under development. The district is now beginning to move forward with plans to use Blue Ribbon assessments for reading, math and science in 9th and 10th grades, leading up to the SBAC in 11th.

#### **K-3 Literacy:**

1. Implement New K-3 Literacy Curriculum: Early literacy has been a district-wide focus for several years in our efforts to improve student achievement. The Director of Language Arts and the Language Arts Department Chair for K-6 have overseen the extensive process of writing new language arts curriculum for the K-6 grades. Our K-3 language arts curriculum has been piloted and approved by the Hamden Board of Education. It will be implemented at the K-3 level in all eight elementary schools in Fall 2014. Additionally, new units will be piloted at the eight elementary schools in grades 4-6. These are all rigorous, CCSS-aligned UBD units.

2. Increase Focus on CCSS Writing Genres: We have also identified writing as a priority to better align with the CCSS in 2014-15. Up to this point, teachers have focused their instruction on the CMT-driven writing genres so there is a need to shift instruction to the three writing genres that the CCSS requires (opinion/argument, informative and narrative writing). Our instructional focus will be the implementation of Lucy Calkins' writing workshop model at all elementary schools. Embedded within this approach is the administration of pre- and post- on-demand writing prompts in each genre. The literacy specialist in each school will facilitate grade-level meetings to analyze the writing for organization, elaboration and fluency using a consistent rubric. Targeted interventions are planned within these groups as they determine the strengths and the needs of each writer. This focus on writing aligned with the CCSS will help to balance the district's K-3 literacy program, which is currently more heavily focused on reading skills.

Alliance funds will also be used to invest in new instructional materials, software, and technology to support implementation of our CCSS-aligned curriculum district-wide.

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#### **Support for Special Populations:**

1. Expand Continuum of In-District Service Options for Special Education. HPS is expanding the array of special education supports available to students and families in the district by creating Instructional Intervention Centers (IICs), which we believe will improve student achievement for special education students who can transition to a typical school setting with certain supports in place. IICs are classrooms taught by special education teachers. The classrooms are not fully self-contained to provide students with more interaction with their typical peers and better access to grade-level instruction aligned to the CCSS. The district piloted three such classes in 2013-14 (one each at Church Street, Dunbar Hill and West Woods). These classrooms have demonstrated the district's ability to effectively educate these students in district in the least restrictive environment. The district will expand to three additional classes in 2014-15 to be located in Ridge Hill and/or Church Street Schools. Alliance funds will support hiring three additional special education teachers to lead these classes, which facilitates our ongoing effort to increase the range of in-district options for special education students at the K-6 level.

#### **SRBI and Academic Interventions:**

1. Expand Capacity to Support and Track SRBI:

The district sees a need to further standardize and strengthen the implementation of SRBI at all of our schools. At our three lowest-performing elementary schools, there are high numbers of students receiving tier II and III SRBI. These interventions are typically provided during a standard intervention block in the daily schedule. Last year, we proposed to use Alliance funds to hire a full-time data facilitator/SRBI specialist at each of these schools to work closely with teachers and data teams to identify appropriate interventions, provide training to tutors and teachers in how to implement them, and monitor their implementation to ensure effectiveness. We were only able to fill one of the three positions because the Alliance funding process did not align with the school year, thus there was not a strong pool of candidates for this role. We expect to hire two additional specialists for 2014-15 and have posted the positions to recruit stronger candidates prior to the start of the next school year.

Throughout the district, our implementation of SRBI uses both certified teachers and tutors to deliver individualized and small-group interventions for targeted students. Alliance resources will help us to continue to employ a sufficient number of tutors at all of our schools to provide SRBI. The three SRBI specialists and a strong corps of SRBI tutors are instrumental in helping to further standardize and strengthen SRBI implementation district-wide.

SRBI is also an area that would benefit greatly from technology integration to support individualized instruction, progress monitoring and assessment. Prior to receiving Alliance funding and a state technology grant, HPS had very few resources to support technology purchases and integration. We will continue to use Alliance funds in 2014-15 to invest in technological resources that can be used to deliver interventions and other academic supports.

### 3. Academics Section

Hamden High School has lagged behind the district in SRBI implementation because of scheduling challenges and teachers' expertise in content areas rather than intervention and remediation. To improve in this area, HHS will hire a full-time math specialist to provide greater capacity for intervention in math subjects (mirroring the role of the literacy specialist at HHS). A NEASC coordinator will facilitate the high school's reaccreditation process and help maximize the school's ability to act upon recommendations for overall school improvements, including ways to make progress in SRBI.

2. Extend Learning Opportunities at Our Three Tier 1 Elementary Schools. At our three lowest-performing, Tier 1 elementary schools (Church Street, Helen Street and Ridge Hill), we will continue to provide after-school, summer and kindergarten readiness programs.

After-school programming operates approximately 28 weeks per school year for four days per week. The programs are literacy-based and use enrichment activities and software such as IReady or Lexia to build stronger literacy skills at the earliest grade levels. Because some students from these schools are enrolled at the Town of Hamden's after-school program at another site, we will also hire a certified teacher to tutor students from these schools at that location. Approximately 120 students (40 per school) will be served by the after-school programs at these locations.

We will also provide a summer program at each of these elementary schools to prevent the summer learning loss that occurs, often in a more pronounced way for students from low-income backgrounds. The specific students, grade levels, and content areas to be targeted will be determined based on the analysis of student performance data at each school. However, all will focus on developing and remediating skills in reading and math. We anticipate that literacy will continue to be targeted at the lower grade levels. A total of approximately 120 students (40 per school) will participate in the summer program at the three Tier 1 elementary schools.

Students will be identified for these additional academic support programs using DRA2 results, Fountas & Pinnell assessments, grade level performance, and DIBELS.

These three schools will continue to offer a four-week kindergarten readiness program in the summer. This program serves incoming kindergartners who have limited or no prior preschool experience. The program allows these new, young students to become acclimated to the school environment and structure in a very positive, calm manner before the official school year begins. It alleviates the stress of the transition and allows teachers to get an early sense of the children's needs and skill levels, a crucial insight that helps them better place students in classes for the fall. A total of approximately 60 incoming kindergartners (20 per school) will participate in the kindergarten readiness program.

The kindergarten readiness program is part of a broader Transition to Kindergarten initiative that the district undertakes in collaboration with Hamden's Partnership for Young Children. The district works with HPYC to increase the continuity between the expectations and curricula of preschool programs in our area and the district's kindergarten program. HPYC also provides professional development and networking opportunities for preschool providers and kindergarten staff to discuss ways to improve the transition process and share information more effectively about students' prior preschool experiences. HPYC coordinates a kinder-prep program for children and families that includes evening sessions throughout the year addressing topics

### 3. Academics Section

related to kindergarten readiness and how to support learning at home. Alliance funds are provided to HPYC to support the overall efforts of the Transition to Kindergarten initiative and a part-time School Readiness Liaison to monitor early childhood programs that receive state funds.

3. Continue Literacy Supports at HHS. The district will also continue to employ a full-time literacy specialist at the high school and will use Alliance funds to support four full-time literacy tutors. The literacy program at HHS began two years ago to support freshman who struggled with literacy skills through the transition to high school coursework. This year, the program expanded to serve sophomores and special education students. The program served approximately 130 students and demonstrated improvements in most students' literacy skills. Sixty-eight percent of students improved their comprehension by at least one grade level (80% of general education students; 46% of student with IEPs). Sixty percent of all participants earned a 70% or higher average in all core subjects (63% of general education students; 54% of students with IEPs). Attendance improved this year with better scheduling and course credit. Tutors also received more professional development this year. We will continue to expand professional development for tutors in 2014-15, increase the use of technology to provide interventions, and seek out a wider selection of high interest books at appropriate reading levels for students to use in independent reading.

#### **Encourage Advanced Coursework at HMS and HHS:**

Increasing the rigor of the district's curriculum has been a central element of the district's strategic plan since 2010. It is the rationale for our curriculum overhaul and complements the need to incorporate the CCSS into our curriculum and instruction. Alliance funds will also be used to support two programs that encourage students from under-represented groups to participate in more rigorous coursework at HMS and HHS. SAILS at HMS and RAISES at HHS use criteria such as standardized test scores, teacher recommendations, grades, and demonstrated ability to select a diverse group of students to be placed in more advanced courses (including AP courses at HHS) than they would otherwise have been placed in based on their past performance. Once chosen to participate, students receive supports such participation in a Summer Institute, tutoring, training in study skills and time management, and parent involvement activities to help them succeed in higher level classes. For example, so far this year, 86% of SAILS students have received an average grade of C or better, and 36% received an average grade of B or better, in their advanced classes. Ultimately, continued enrollment in advanced courses will improve their achievement and increase their opportunities for post-secondary success.

#### **Improve Graduation Rate by Expanding Use of Credit-Recovery Program:**

Online credit recovery is widely used in our alternative and adult education programs using Odysseyware. In 2013-14, we began offering this option for students at risk of not graduating on time at HHS. Four students are currently enrolled, but we see the potential for greater use of the program with sufficient school-day support from certified teachers and better scheduling of time for participation. With Alliance funds, we will seek to serve up to 40 students during a summer program and continue to support credit recovery with three stipended teachers working to support students during the school year.

#### **Increase Access to High Quality, Affordable Preschool:**

Alliance funds will continue to be used to support one preschool teacher to sustain the current number of preschool openings offered by HPS through a



<b>3. Academics Section</b>					
combination of school readiness and sliding fee scale slots. The district will also continue to use Alliance funds to provide financial assistance for low-income families to enroll in HPS preschool programs given the very limited number of School Readiness slots available in Hamden. We were able to use the 2013-14 funds to provide financial support to six Hamden families.					
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of actionable strategies to implement academic-related reform priorities described in the previous sections. Please note that this set of strategies will serve as the foundation for Year 3 progress monitoring.	<b>Progress Metric:</b> Identify progress indicators to monitor the implementation and impact of each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b> Place an "X" indicating when strategies will occur.			
		Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Winter 2015	Spring 2015
1. Redesign Curriculum to Increase Rigor and Align with CCSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire Math Director to oversee development, implementation, and monitoring of CCSS-aligned math curriculum for grades K-12.</li> <li>100% of BOE approved UBD units of study include a performance task aligned to CCSS and at least a level 3 on depth of knowledge scale.</li> <li>Teachers are evaluated based in part on an SLO measured by a performance task in UBD units of study.</li> </ul>	X			
		X	X	X	X
			X	X	X
2. Provide Monitoring and Professional Development to Improve Fidelity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire Math Specialist at HHS and an Elementary Science Specialist by Sept 2014 to support implementation of new curriculum</li> <li>100% of instructional data teams include at least one specialist (literacy, math, science) who participates in collaborative planning to support consistent implementation of curriculum</li> <li>Principals/Administrators participate in district-provided</li> </ul>	X			
			X	X	X



3. Academics Section					
	professional development to facilitate monitoring of fidelity through formal/informal observations.		X		
3. Create District-wide System of Assessments Aligned to the CCSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify CCSS-aligned benchmark assessments to use in math K-12 and reading K-12.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
4. Implement New K-3 Literacy Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of student progress by data teams/literacy specialists using assessments such as CAP, DRA2s, Fountas &amp; Pinnell, and embedded performance tasks aligned to CCSS in each unit will result in no less than 15% increase in achievement each quarter</li> </ul>		X	X	X
5. Increase Focus on CCSS Writing Genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of student progress by data teams/literacy specialists using common scoring rubric for pre- and post-writing prompts in each CCSS genre will result in no less than 15% increase in achievement each quarter</li> </ul>		X	X	X
6. Expand Continuum of In-District Service Options for Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire 2 additional certified Special Education teachers to lead Instructional Intervention Centers by Sept 2014</li> <li>Place approximately 7 students in each of two new IIC classrooms in district</li> <li>100% of ID students will be retained in district.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
7. Expand Capacity to Support and Track SRBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire 2 additional Data Facilitator/SRBI Specialists by Sept</li> </ul>	X			

3. Academics Section					
	2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialists develop and monitor interventions provided by tutors during the school day; 80% of the interventions will be implemented with fidelity</li> <li>Quarterly monitoring of student progress by data teams/specialists using assessments such as CAP, DRA2s, Fountas &amp; Pinnell, and pre- and post-tests administered by teachers or tutors</li> </ul>		X	X	X
			X	X	X
8. Extend Learning Opportunities at Our Three Tier 1 Elementary Schools (Church Street, Helen Street, and Ridge Hill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After-school programs operational by October 2014</li> <li>Summer enrichment and kindergarten readiness program planned for July 2015</li> <li>Quarterly monitoring of student progress by data teams/staff using assessments such as CAP, DRA2s, Fountas &amp; Pinnell, and pre- and post-tests administered in after-school or summer learning programs</li> <li>Early child care providers and kindergarten staff in Hamden will be provided two professional development sessions and one networking session.</li> </ul>		X		X
			X	X	X
			X	X	X
9. Continue Literacy Supports at HHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of student progress by data teams/literacy specialist using Basic Reading Inventory, formative assessments aligned to</li> </ul>		X	X	X



3. Academics Section					
	SBAC four-point rubric will result in increase of at least 15% each quarter				
10. Encourage Advanced Coursework at HMS and HHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly progress monitoring by SAILS and RAISES coordinators of students' grades in advanced and/or AP classes to ensure adequate performance (no less than "C")</li> </ul>		X	X	X
11. Improve Graduation Rate by Expanding Use of Credit-Recovery Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summer School Credit Recovery program operational by July 2014</li> <li>Three stipended teachers selected as credit recovery instructors at HHS by Sept 2014</li> <li>Monitoring by credit recovery instructors of student progress toward completion of credits in online coursework will result in progress that increases by 25% each quarter</li> </ul>	X  X		X  X	X  X
12. Increase Access to High Quality, Affordable Preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide financial assistance for approximately 6 low-income families to enroll in HPS preschool.</li> <li>Increase enrollment from 2 classrooms and 35 students to 3 classrooms and 45 students.</li> <li>Monitor fidelity of implementation of prek curriculum</li> </ul>		X  X	X  X	X  X



**4. Culture and Climate Section**

**Year 3 Reform Priorities:** Place an “X” beside the district’s Year 3 climate-related reform priorities. Districts may choose, but are not required, to pursue strategies to strengthen district and school culture and climate. Please note that PSDs must spend all of their PSD funding on allowable PSD reform areas.

Year 3 Alliance District Priorities:	Allowable initiatives for PSD funding:	Other optional reforms:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dropout prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative and transitional programs <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional technology <input type="checkbox"/> Family engagement	X Attendance X Graduation and dropout prevention X Other: <b>Family Engagement</b>

**Summary:** Briefly describe the district’s climate-related reform priorities, as indicated above.

**Promote Positive School Connections to Increase Retention and Improve Student Learning**

At Hamden High School, we have focused many of our efforts on providing supports for freshmen to help them develop a positive connection to the school and navigate the pitfalls of this transitional year, both academically and socially. Students who falter in ninth grade are more likely to have poor attendance and be at risk of dropping out as they fall further behind throughout the high school years. The Freshman Support Center is staffed daily as a resource to help students cope with challenges that commonly arise in the freshman year. The Center provides a structured, supported, and positive alternative to in-school suspension where students can address, under the guidance of a staff member, some of the factors that may be causing disciplinary issues such as time management, organization and study skills, or feelings of disconnection from the larger student body. By redirecting students from disciplinary settings to the support center, we hope to improve their positive connections to school and equip them with the skills they need to be successful, which will increase their likelihood of achieving high attendance, academic success and graduation. Alliance funds will be used to support the two part-time staff members who oversee the Center.

The Connections program is a school-wide, small-group guidance program that fosters positive mentoring relationships between students and adults in the school to ensure each student is well-known by at least one adult in the building. HHS staff developed this program based on significant research showing that students' feelings of connectedness and sense of positive interaction are imperative to develop positive decision-making skills. When students feel they are a part of a school, they feel close to people at school, they are healthier and more likely to succeed. Connections is currently in its second year of implementation. The success of the program has led to the addition of seven more sessions during the school year, and it has developed into a meaningful forum for students and staff to discuss contemporary issues that concern them, such as gender roles, school violence, public decorum, and school safety. It has also provided a venue for students to become more engaged in the school community. For example, through Connections, the students are providing their opinions on how to improve the school as part of the NEASC process that HHS is undergoing. Alliance



#### 4. Culture and Climate Section

funds will support summer planning time, curriculum revisions and guest speakers to participate in next year's program.

Also at HHS, we will use Alliance funds to implement a strategy for reducing absenteeism during the standardized testing period. Currently, students in non-tested grades have a late arrival schedule on days when standardized tests are administered. However, this creates a high rate of absenteeism during the testing period for those non-tested students. In 2014-15, we will provide non-tested students with a series of high-interest assemblies and guest speakers so that they can continue to come to school on the normal schedule and have a structured enrichment program in which to participate. The SBAC enrichment program is an outgrowth of the work of the district data team, which has formed a truancy subcommittee to more closely examine the high rate of chronic absenteeism at HHS (35% and 36.78% in the first two quarters of 2013-14), assess its causes, and develop recommendations for reducing it.

At the elementary schools and Hamden Middle School, the Student Support Center model is being implemented to help students develop the social, emotional and behavioral skills they need to thrive in the classroom and other school settings. At the Student Support Center, students who need help with self-control or behavior in the classroom can receive one-on-one support. The focus is on helping the student regain self-control, reflect on behavioral issues, and regroup with a positive plan for returning to the classroom. These centers are staffed by paraprofessionals throughout the school day with the support of Alliance funds.

Additionally, we will use Alliance funds to continue support for the Educational Care Collaborative (ECC), which addresses the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students by strengthening the school-home-community connection with needed mental health services. The ECC includes three primary service components: classroom interventionists (school psychology graduate students from Southern Connecticut State University or Fairfield University) who address the students' social/emotional needs so that teachers can focus on instruction; Great Start, a program of the Yale Child Study Center, that combines in-home, family interventions and coordination with school personnel; and parent outreach to help parents learn effective ways to address emotional and behavioral concerns their children may exhibit at home. These services complement the existing mental health supports in the school. The classroom interventionists are placed in the highest need classrooms, based on observations conducted three times per year, where they are able to de-escalate disruptive behaviors. Students are able to learn positive social and emotional skills, teachers remain focused on instruction rather than discipline, and the overall classroom climate is improved. Additionally, the school psychologist or social worker can refer families to the Great Start program for additional support in the home if a child has a more serious behavioral concerns. Great Start teaches parents behavioral strategies and helps them build a stronger connection to school and community supports. In 2013-14, the ECC expanded its services to a second school. It now operates at Church Street and Shepherd Glen. The ECC also receives grant funding from The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven.

#### **Strengthen Family Engagement in their Children's Education**

In October 2014, HPS will offer its first Family University. The Family University is an integral component of the district's Parent and Family Engagement initiative. This proactive approach focuses on strengthening our relationship with parents, which will ultimately help all children succeed in the



#### 4. Culture and Climate Section

classroom. The philosophy behind Family University is that parenting, like education, is an ongoing and lifelong learning process. Decades of research show that when parents are involved, students have higher grades, better attendance, increased motivation and self esteem, and fewer risky behaviors.

The Family University will offer workshops that appeal to parents of children of all ages, social background and educational status and will support their role as partners in their children's education. Family University will also provide parents with an opportunity to be connected to community resources and agencies that will ultimately help children succeed in school. The Parent and Family Engagement committee is planning this event in collaboration with the Hamden Partnership for Young Children, Hamden's Family Resource Centers, Hamden Youth Services Bureau, Hamden PTA Council, Quinnipiac University, Wepawaug-Flagg Federal Credit Union and other community agencies.

Family University will be free for all Hamden Public School parents, grandparents, guardians, and other primary caregivers. Lunch and childcare will be provided. Family members will be encouraged to register online for classes that are aligned to the following categories:

**Supporting Learning and Navigating the System** – Classes in this category will help families understand the standards and teaching/learning approaches used in Hamden Public Schools in order to support learning at home. They will also help parents better understand the educational system, how to navigate policies and programs for their children and take a leadership role in advocating for children.

**Parenting** – Classes in this category will provide parents with a clear understanding of how children develop and learn, as well as address questions parents may have regarding raising children in today's world. Classes will offer answers to questions that may range from how to talk to your teenager about bullying, how to keep your children safe on the internet, should you reward for his good behavior to how to save for college.

**Family Health & Wellness** – Keeping your family healthy both mentally and physically is critical to helping your children succeed academically. Classes in this category will help you shop for nutritional food, cope with family stress and support your athlete's nutritional needs, amongst other things.

**Parent's Personal Growth & Development** – When children see their parents taking classes and becoming a lifelong learner, they do the same. These classes will provide opportunities for parents to build their own skills for personal and professional growth. Classes may include topics such as steps to get your GED, learning English, Computer literacy or Money management.

Alliance funds will be used to help offset the costs of the Family University in addition to sponsorship opportunities and in-kind donations being raised from local businesses and organizations.



<b>4. Culture and Climate Section</b>					
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of actionable strategies to implement climate-related reform priorities described in the previous sections. Please note that this set of strategies will serve as the foundation for Year 3 progress monitoring.	<b>Progress Metric:</b> Identify progress indicators to monitor the implementation and impact of each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b> Place an “X” indicating when strategies will occur.			
		Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Winter 2015	Spring 2015
1. Provide a Freshman Support Center to assist freshmen with the transition to high school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of days the Center is available</li> <li>• Number of students utilizing the Center</li> <li>• Percent of in-school suspensions will decrease 10% each quarter</li> <li>• Bi-annual survey of teachers and students using the Center to assess levels of homework completion and satisfaction levels with student support services</li> </ul>		X	X	X
2. Implement the Connections program at HHS so all students have a supportive relationship with an adult in the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly reports of attendance at Connections sessions; 80% of students will attend each Connections session</li> <li>• Annual analysis of school climate surveys completed by students</li> </ul>		X	X	X  X
3. Provide enrichment activities at HHS during SBAC testing period for students in non-tested grades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance daily attendance rate for students in non-tested grades during SBAC testing will be 95%</li> </ul>				X
4. Implement positive alternatives to discipline with elementary and middle school Student Support Centers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percent of in-school suspensions will decrease 20% from spring 2014 to spring 2015</li> <li>• Office referrals will decrease</li> </ul>		X	X	X  X
5. Provide social, emotional and behavioral supports in high-need classrooms through the Educational Care Collaborative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students in ECC classes will attend school at least 90% of the school days</li> <li>• Number of disciplinary referrals in classrooms served by the ECC will</li> </ul>		X	X	X  X



4. Culture and Climate Section					
	decrease				
6. Encourage family engagement in children's education through Family University.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendance at Family University</li><li>• Results of participant surveys will indicate that 80% of parents found sessions to be beneficial</li></ul>		X		



**5. Operations Section**

**Year 3 Reform Priorities:** Place an “X” beside the district’s Year 3 operations-related reform priorities. Districts may choose, but are not required, to pursue strategies to strengthen district and school operations. Please note that PSDs must spend all of their PSD funding on allowable PSD reform areas.

Year 3 Alliance District Priorities:	Allowable initiatives for PSD funding:	Other optional reforms:
<p><b><i>Our Alliance District priorities do not include Operations for 2014-15.</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extended learning time</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use of technology</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> NEASC accreditation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting and financial management</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School operations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Technology integration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student enrollment and registration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</li> </ul>

**Summary:** Briefly describe the district’s operations-related reform priorities, as indicated above.

A variety of technologies will be purchased to support the different efforts described in this application.

Equipment: Student computers and iPads will be used to help students develop understandings and learn skills and concepts described in our CCSS-based curricula and provide. The grant will support replacement of older computers as well as provide additional devices so that more students will have access, especially at our Tier I schools. These computers will also allow us a more efficient way to deliver SBAC assessments. Projectors and interactive white boards will assist teachers in providing multisensory instruction and engaging learning experiences for their students. We will continue to provide more Tier I school teachers with laptops so that they can not only use them in their teaching, but also to provide them with electronic tools and data to use during team meetings. Infrastructure upgrades will allow us to improve connectivity throughout our Wide Area Network and within our schools so that technology based applications run well and student time-on-task is maximized. Computer carts will make new student laptops more easily shared among classrooms.

Software/Applications: Instructional software will be purchased to support literacy interventions and the implementation of the new CCSS-based ELA curriculum. Securing additional licenses for our online course delivery system will allow us to expand our credit recovery program at the high school. We will implement online benchmark assessments at HHS based on our end of unit assessments.

<b>5. Operations Section</b>					
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of actionable strategies to implement operations-related reform priorities described in the previous sections. Please note that this set of strategies will serve as the foundation for Year 3 progress monitoring.	<b>Progress Metric:</b> Identify progress indicators to monitor the implementation and impact of each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b> Place an “X” indicating when strategies will occur.			
		Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Winter 2015	Spring 2015
1. Purchase, install and update software and applications for ELA program. Provide PD to teachers in using the tools with students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New instructional software and applications are installed and ready for use by September 1</li> </ul>	X	X (PD)	X (PD)	X (PD)
2. Math department determines which curricular assessments will become benchmark assessments at HHS and these are put into online delivery system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmark assessments are given 3x/year for all students taking algebra.</li> </ul>		X	X	X
3. Purchase and install switches at HHS to allow uninterrupted Network traffic, including browsing and file transfers. Purchase, initialize and install failing servers in 3 buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Switches are installed at HHS</li> <li>• Servers are purchased, initialized and installed at SpG, BP, and AP</li> <li>• Fewer than 5 help desk tickets per week are submitted related to Internet connectivity or inability to access files.</li> </ul>			X	X
4. Provide online instruction at HHS as an option for students in need of credit recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher is assigned to oversee program</li> <li>• At least 15 students are enrolled</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
5. Purchase student computers, image and deploy them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Labs or learning areas at HMS (2) and HHS (3) are equipped with updated computers.</li> </ul>		X	X	
6. Purchase projectors and document cameras and provide them to teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment is purchased and distributed to 40 elementary teachers currently without these devices</li> </ul>		X	X	
7. Purchase teacher laptops, image and distribute them to teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laptops are purchased and imaged, and distributed to 140 HHS teachers with old/poorly working devices or desktops</li> </ul>		X		
8. Purchase, image and deploy iPads to Tier I schools	iPads in use at Tier I schools			X	

## School Turnaround Strategy

**Instructions:** Your district will receive a prepopulated chart (similar to the chart shown below), listing the district’s Turnaround, Focus, and Review schools. Districts must work in collaboration with school communities to dramatically improve student achievement in these schools. Alliance Districts must invest Alliance and/or PSD (if applicable) funds to support school turnaround efforts. Using the chart provided, describe how the district plans to intervene in its Turnaround, Focus, and Review schools and pursue resources on behalf of such schools. By placing an “X” beside a competitive grant, the district expresses its intent to apply for that grant on behalf of the school. The CSDE will award funds competitively based on the quality of each district’s submissions and the grant specifications. Please note that when awarding 1003(a) and High School Redesign funds, the CSDE will give preference to schools not receiving Commissioner’s Network funding or School Improvement Grants during 2014-15. 1003(a) funds are established by Section 1003(a) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Comprehensive Turnaround and Focus high schools may submit applications for both 1003(a) and High School Redesign.

Competitive school-level grants, such as the School Improvement Grant, 1003(a), and High School Redesign are not included in this consolidated application and require separate school-level applications, which can be accessed at: <http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts>. Districts are strongly encouraged to submit grants on behalf of only those schools that present strong and transformative plans.

In 2013, districts submitted school improvement plans for at least half of their Review schools. No later than April 11, 2014, districts must submit plans for their remaining Review schools and any newly-identified Focus or Review schools, using the template at: <http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts>.

School:	Classification:	Funding Source/Competitive Grants Sought:
School A	Turnaround	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner’s Network <input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Grant (SIG) <input type="checkbox"/> 1003(a) Competition <input type="checkbox"/> High School Redesign Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Alliance District Funding <input type="checkbox"/> PSD Grant
School B	Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner’s Network <input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Grant (SIG) <input type="checkbox"/> 1003(a) Competition <input type="checkbox"/> High School Redesign Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Alliance District Funding <input type="checkbox"/> PSD Grant

Ridge Hill Elementary School	Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner's Network <input type="checkbox"/> High School Redesign Competition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alliance District Funding <input type="checkbox"/> PSD Grant
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## 7. Budget Instructions

**Instructions:** Please complete and submit the Excel budget workbook as a part of the Year 3 consolidated application. Follow the instructions outlined below.

- Budget Cover Page:** Using Tab #1, please enter the district's name and total 2014-15 Alliance District and PSD, if applicable, allocation amounts. Do not add data in the remaining cells; these total amounts will be auto-generated as you enter budget information on the remaining tabs. Please note that the total Alliance District and PSD budget amounts should match the district's 2014-15 allocations exactly.
- Budgets for Reform Funding (for new priorities and the expansion of existing priorities):** Using Tabs #2-5, summarize reform expenditures as aligned in the Year 3 consolidated application, including strategies for talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Please provide a line-by-line budget that details the use of 2014-15 grant funding, as well as the use of other funds. Separate expenditures by the ED 114 cost categories, adding rows as necessary. Provide the following information for each line item:
  - Cost, position, or service;
  - Detailed budget justification and cost basis (e.g., cost structure, unit cost, number of units);
  - Total use of Alliance District funding for the particular cost;
  - Total use of PSD funding for the particular cost;
  - Total use of other district funding for the particular cost; and
  - Indication as to whether the investment supports a new or expanded reform initiative.
- Investments in Low-Performing Schools:** All Alliance Districts with Turnaround, Review, and Focus schools must outline investments in each of the district's low-performing schools. Using Tab #6, itemize investments in each of the district's Turnaround, Review, and Focus schools. Please ensure that the district is using Alliance and/or PSD funds to properly resource reform efforts in the district's lowest-performing schools. If the investment/position will be divided across low-performing schools, please explain the allocation across schools in the cost and FTE columns.
- Budget for Alliance District Funding for Other Purposes:** In the event that your budget proposes using Alliance District funds for purposes other than new or expanded reforms, summarize such investments in the final tab. Provide detailed budget information for proposed non-reform expenditures. Separate expenditures by the ED 114 cost categories.

## 8. 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. Also, provide information regarding opportunities for engagement during and involvement in the implementation of this plan.

The primary activities in Hamden's 2014-15 Alliance plan remain largely the same as the first two years of Alliance funding. Our Alliance plan is designed to align with, extend, and deepen the impact of Hamden's District Improvement Plan, which was created through a district-wide planning process in consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders. Many of these stakeholders are involved in the daily oversight and implementation of our Alliance activities, including: principals and other building administrators, curriculum directors and district administrators, teacher's union, Board of Education members (including student representatives), Family Resource Center staff, the Town of Hamden, Hamden Partnership for Young Children (HPYC), School Governance Councils, and parents.

Hamden's Alliance Plan includes extensive opportunities for ongoing progress monitoring and feedback that occur in the district's daily operations. School improvement plans, school and district data teams, Administrative Council committees, teacher evaluation plans, embedded professional development opportunities, and curriculum development teams are all organized around the four key priorities of the District Improvement Plan: Increase Rigor, Create a System of Supports, Implement Data-Driven Decision-making, and Increase Family Engagement. Since these activities align with our Alliance priorities, we feel well-informed about the accomplishments, needs, and progress of our efforts. We remain committed to continuing to pursue this framework to drive improvements in student achievement.



## PART III: APPENDIX SECTION

### A. District Self-Diagnostic Tool

**Instructions:** Complete the district self-diagnostic tool below as part of the Year 3 needs analysis process. Reflect upon district system, processes, and performance in each of the categories outlined below. Rate the district as “1 - Needs Improvement, 2 - Developing, 3 - Proficient, 4 – Exemplary” using the rating key shown at right. After completing the self-diagnostic, prioritize each area as a low, medium, or high reform priority for the 2014-15 academic year. Please complete the self-diagnostic as accurately and honestly as possible.

Rating Key	
1 - Needs Improvement	Weak or nonexistent district systems and practices; poor and minimal implementation.
2 - Developing	Some district systems and some institutionalized practices; inconsistent and moderate implementation.
3 - Proficient	Solid district systems and largely universal practices; strong and consistent implementation across sites.
4 - Exemplary	Excellent district systems with universal practices; excellent implementation and commitment to continuous improvement.

Domains and Subcategories	Self-Assessment				2014-15 Prioritization (Low, Medium, High)
	1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Developing	3 - Proficient	4 - Exemplary	
<b>Talent:</b>					
1.1. Recruitment and human capital pipelines	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low
1.2. Hiring and placement processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
1.3. Educator evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
1.4. Professional development/coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
1.5. School leadership development	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
1.6. Retention of top talent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
<b>Academics:</b>					
2.1. Common Core-aligned curriculum and academic rigor	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High



Domains and Subcategories	Self-Assessment				2014-15 Prioritization (Low, Medium, High)
	1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Developing	3 - Proficient	4 - Exemplary	
2.2. Fidelity in curriculum implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
2.3. Comprehensive assessment system	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
2.4. Data-driven instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
2.5. Support for special populations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
2.6. SRBI and academic interventions	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
<b>Culture and Climate:</b>					
3.1. Positive behavior management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
3.2. Family engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
3.3. Wraparound strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
3.4. Attendance	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
3.5. Graduation and dropout prevention	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
<b>Operations:</b>					
1.1. Budgeting and financial management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
1.2. School operations (e.g., facilities, transportation, food services)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
1.3. Scheduling and extended learning time	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
1.4. Collaborative staff planning time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	High
1.5. Technology integration	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium
1.6. Student enrollment and registration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low

**B. Statement of Assurances**

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

**PROJECT TITLE:**           **Alliance and Priority School District Consolidated Application**          

**THE APPLICANT:**           **Hamden Public Schools**                **HEREBY ASSURES THAT:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A.** The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B.** The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;
- C.** The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- D.** The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- E.** Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- F.** Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- G.** The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;
- H.** The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- I.** If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- J.** The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;
- K.** At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the

applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

**L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)**

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

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

For the purposes of this section “minority business enterprise” means any small contractor or supplier of materials 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: **Signed in PDF**

Name: *(typed)* Christopher Melillo

Title: *(typed)* Interim Superintendent

Date: April 11, 2014