

Thomasville City Schools

Strategic Improvement Planning Report

May 14, 2014



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Strategic Improvement Planning Executive Summary

The Board of Education of Thomasville City Schools voted to use a process developed by the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) and Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) to develop an updated strategic improvement plan for the school district. This comprehensive process engaged the community and all stakeholder groups to create universal ownership and support for district and school improvement. Highlights of the process include:

- A comprehensive community engagement component to allow stakeholders to have a voice in the strategic improvement planning process
- A diverse planning team that represented stakeholder groups to develop the plan
- A facilitated planning process that assisted the planning and action teams in analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the school district and developing/defining the mission, vision, beliefs, goal areas and elements of the strategic improvement plan
- A facilitated process to work with experts within the district and community on developing initiatives and action steps to implement the plan



The strategic improvement planning process follows a continuous improvement cycle designed around the five questions listed in the visual above. This process begins with a community engagement session and survey of stakeholders. The entire process usually takes 8-10 months to complete and is divided into the following phases.

Phase I

Community Engagement: In February 2014, the strategic improvement planning process began with a community engagement session, involving representatives from all stakeholder groups and a stakeholder survey to gather vital input from the community.

Planning Team: In March 2014, a group of 32 people representing stakeholder groups from the school board, central office, schools, parents, students, business and other community representatives were assembled to answer the questions: “Who are we”, “Where are we now”, and “Where do we want to go”. Specific outcomes include a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, developing beliefs, mission and vision for the district, and developing strategic goal areas and priorities for the strategic improvement plan.

Action Teams: In April 2014, four smaller teams totaling 28 people were assembled to answer the question “How will we know when we have arrived”. The action teams looked at each proposed strategic goal area and identified the performance objectives, measures and targets to answer this question. Additionally, the action teams began to look at the initiatives and action steps that might be needed to answer the fourth question of the GSBA Strategic Improvement Planning Process, “How do we plan to get there”.

Action Team Report to Planning Team: In May 2014, the Action Teams delivered a report of their work back to the Planning Team. The planning team reviewed the action team’s work, discussed priorities, implications and made recommendations for additions or changes that might be needed.

Phase II

GSBA/GLISI Report to the Board of Education: In May 2014, representatives from GSBA/GLISI present a report of the strategic improvement plan to the board. The board reviews the report, offers input and considers approval of the plan for 2014 – 2019.

Board and Staff: Once the board has adopted the work of the Planning and Action Teams, specific initiatives, and action steps necessary to execute the plan will be investigated and/or implemented as necessary. These initiatives will be investigated and/or implemented at the board, district, school (School Improvement Plans) and community levels.

Phase III

Alignment: The plan initiatives and action steps will be aligned to the districts and school budgets, as well as board, superintendent and leader evaluations. Additionally, school improvement plans and other system action plans will be aligned with the new strategic improvement plan.

Phase IV

Execution, Monitoring and Reporting: After alignment of the plan, district and school staff in conjunction with the board will execute, monitor, and report on the plan as well as ensure an ongoing process to review and update the plan as needed.

Thomasville City Schools’ Commitment to Ongoing Process: Action Team performance measures and suggested initiatives/action steps have been documented for follow-up. These suggested initiatives/action steps are not inclusive of school-based initiatives that may be developed to support and meet specific established goals. In keeping with the school district’s philosophy, there will be continued focus on systemic processes and goals to improve the district, but differentiated models are encouraged at the local school levels. Where needed, a task force will be created to

further explore suggested system level strategies and initiatives. School-based governance and leadership teams are in place to foster the development of appropriate action items in support of school-based initiatives to support and meet specific established goals, performance measures and strategic priorities.

Strategic plan mid-year and summary updates will be provided to the Board of Education by Action Team Leaders in February 2015 and August 2015. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction will review the school-based status of the strategic goals through the principal evaluation process currently in place. The eBOARD Strategic Plan software provides a Balanced Scorecard that reflects the Strategic Plan goals and progress.

eBOARD Strategic Plan Software: One of the most important aspects of the Strategic Improvement Planning Process is the ability of the school district to use GSBA's eBOARD Strategic Plan Software to assist with the execution, monitoring, and reporting of the plan. GSBA's eBOARD Strategic Plan Module makes the process easy for district staff and the school board. Plan items can be easily updated by staff allowing users to filter the plan by staff, department, status, priority, date, etc. As the plan is updated, results are reported on through the Strategic Dashboard, Balanced Scorecard and Goal Alignment report. eBOARD helps to keep everyone informed and provides real-time status updates of the plan in a transparent fashion.

Mission and Beliefs

Mission

The mission of Thomasville City Schools is to ensure a safe, orderly climate in which quality educational experiences maximize the individual potential of all learners. Our learning organization will produce problem solvers, life-long learners and productive members of our local and global communities.

In Thomasville City Schools, we believe ...

- ✓ All students can have success.
- ✓ Each student is a valued individual with unique intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs.
- ✓ Learning is the primary focus of the school system.
- ✓ A supportive and safe learning environment is primarily the responsibility of the school system, but is also shared with parents, students, and the community.
- ✓ The design for learning should be driven by a clear understanding of goals and high expectations for student achievement.
- ✓ Teachers should employ a wide variety of instructional approaches in order to accommodate a variety of learning styles.
- ✓ Regular evaluation provides valuable information about the status of student performance and about the effectiveness of the instructional programs.
- ✓ Analysis of student evaluation helps only if actual classroom instruction is impacted as a result of such analysis.
- ✓ The continuous process of improving a school system comes through commitment, careful analysis, communication, planning, effective implementation of plans, and the hard work of dedicated people.

Outline of Proposed Strategic Goal Areas and Performance Objectives

Goal Area I – Student Achievement

- Increase high school graduation rate
- Ensure effective instruction
- Ensure an effective assessment system

Goal Area II – Improve Culture and Climate

- Ensure recruitment and retention of quality and diverse faculty and staff
- Ensure professional development of all faculty and staff
- Ensure consistent and effective evaluation of faculty and staff

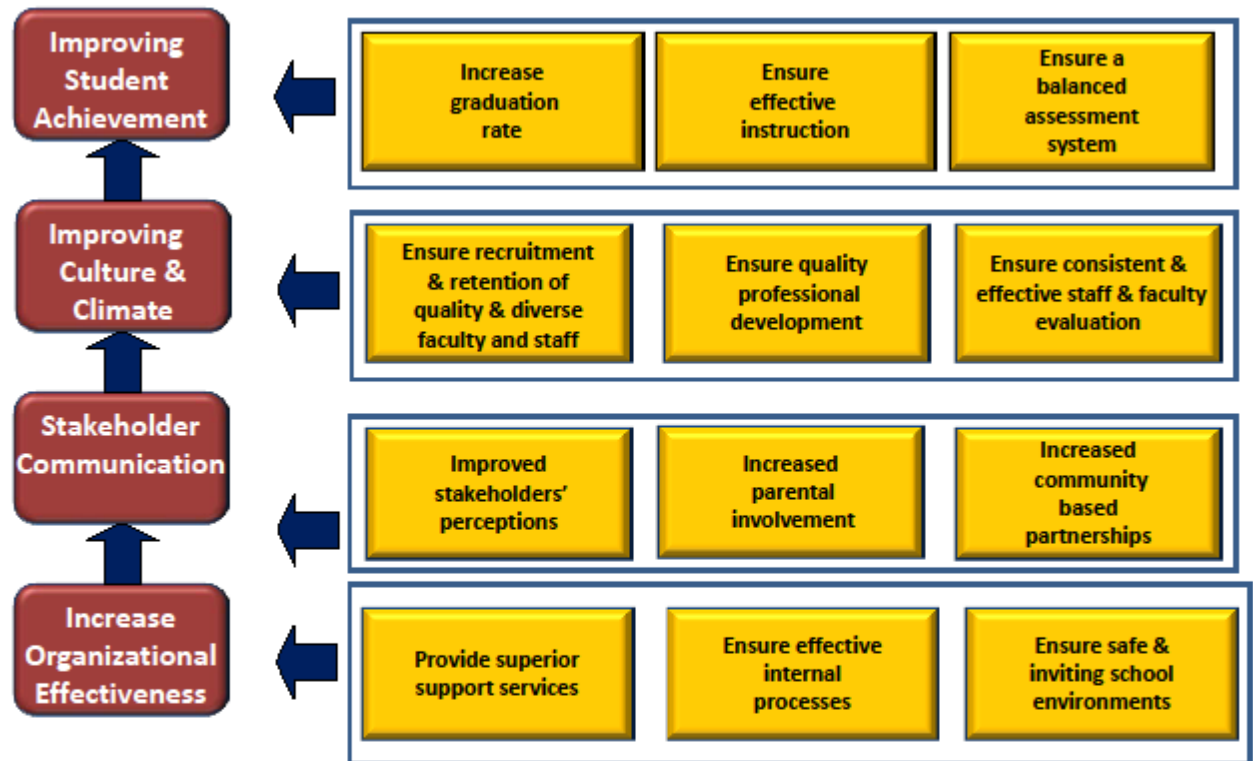
Goal Area III – Stakeholder Communication

- Improve stakeholders' perceptions
- Increase parent involvement
- Increase community partnerships

Goal Area IV – Increase Organizational Effectiveness to Support Student Achievement

- Provide superior support services
- Ensure effective internal fiscal processes
- Ensure safe and inviting school environments

Thomasville City Strategy Map



Thomasville City Schools' Cause and Effect Strategy Statement

If we provide effective and efficient operational processes and safe, inviting school campuses, and clearly communicate and effectively engage all stakeholders, and we cultivate excellence in recruitment, professional development and the accountability of all staff, then we will improve our graduation rate and produce problem-solving life-long learners.

Details of Proposed Strategic Improvement Plan

Strategic Goal I: Improving Student Achievement							
Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Motivation – Rigor and Relevance – Differentiation 							
Performance Objective I.1: To Increase graduation rate							
Metrics:		Possible Targets:					
Increase graduation rate			2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
NOTE: Used State performance target of 83.7% by 2017. The gap was determined and divided by 4 to get yearly increase.		4 year Grad Rate	70.8	74.2	77.6	81	83.7
Possible Initiatives		Action Steps					
I.1.A: Bridge Initiative		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicate requirements of the Bridge Law to all staff and stakeholders ➤ Train appropriate staff to utilize the content lessons required for Bridge Law ➤ Develop a timeline to implement ➤ Create Teachers as Advisors Framework 					
I.1.B: Educational Partnership Initiative		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Extend mentoring program with community members ➤ Assist schools in creating partnerships with the community ➤ Increase opportunities for shadowing, WBL, Student career opportunities, dual enrollment 					

Performance Objective I.B: To ensure effective instruction

Metrics:

Increase percentage of meets and exceeds in all CRCT subject areas in grades 3-5

Increase percentage of meets and exceeds in all CRCT subject areas in grades 6-8

Increase percentage of meets and exceeds in all EOCT in grades 9-12

Increase percentage of students scoring a 3 or better on all AP Exams

Increase percentage of meets and exceeds on Writing tests in grades 5, 8 and 11.

NOTE:

CRCT and EOCT Targets were calculated based on the 2017 state targets and the 2013 data from the system CCRPI report. The gap was determined and divided by 4 to get yearly increase. The only exception was the Geometry EOCT as there is no state target set. By default, a target of 70 for 2017 was set.

Grades 3-5 CRCT

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ELA	85.9	88.3	90.7	93.1	95.4
Reading	92.7	93.7	94.6	95.5	96.4
Math	83.9	86	88.1	90.1	92.1
Science	74.2	77.7	81.2	84.7	88.2
Social Studies	75.3	78.4	81.5	84.6	87.6

Grades 6-8 CRCT

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ELA	87.7	89.7	91.6	93.5	95.4
Reading	92.3	93.4	94.4	95.4	96.4
Math	74.0	78.6	83.1	87.6	92.1
Science	68.6	73.5	78.4	83.3	88.2
Social Studies	62.7	69	75.2	81.4	87.6

EOCT

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
9 th Lit	73	77.5	82	86.5	91.1
Am. Lit	83.2	85.9	88.6	91.3	93.9
Algebra	25.4	36	46.5	57	68.7
Geometry	53.9	58	62	66	70
Physical Science	66	71.3	76.7	82.1	87.5
Biology	65.6	70.4	75.2	80	84.7
US History	68.9	72.3	75.7	79.1	82.5
Economics	78.2	80.2	82.2	84.3	86.4

<p><i>AP Exam target is based on 2% increase each year for students scoring a 3 or better on all tests.</i></p> <p><i>Used the data from CCRPI report for 2013 and used state report that comes with scores for 2014 to determine targets for writing tests. Increased pass rate by 2% per year for 5th and 8th grade and 1% increase from 2013 pass rate for 11th grade.</i></p>	<p>AP Exams</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="591 239 1422 365"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2013</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>AP % 3+</td> <td>74</td> <td>76</td> <td>78</td> <td>80</td> <td>82</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Writing Tests</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="591 491 1422 743"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2013</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5th Grade</td> <td>66.2</td> <td>77</td> <td>79</td> <td>81</td> <td>83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8th Grade</td> <td>70.9</td> <td>73</td> <td>75</td> <td>77</td> <td>79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11th Grade</td> <td>92.9</td> <td>92</td> <td>94</td> <td>95</td> <td>96</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	AP % 3+	74	76	78	80	82		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	5 th Grade	66.2	77	79	81	83	8 th Grade	70.9	73	75	77	79	11 th Grade	92.9	92	94	95	96
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Possible Initiatives	Action Steps																																				
I.2.A: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a system professional learning plan to include training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ UDL ➤ Differentiation ➤ Rigor and Relevance ➤ Standards-based instruction ➤ Co-teaching ➤ Conduct Inter-rater Reliability sessions for TKES standards ➤ Develop a system professional learning website with resources for TKES/LKES and UDL 																																				
I.2.B: Curriculum Alignment Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a process for curriculum mapping and planning ➤ Conduct vertical and horizontal alignment sessions ➤ Develop a system plan for monitoring curriculum ➤ Develop a Literacy plan for CCGPS Literacy standards 																																				
Performance Objective I.3: To ensure an effective assessment system																																					
<p>Metrics:</p> <p>Increase percentages of teachers scoring proficient on TKES standards for Differentiation, Assessment Strategies and Assessment Uses 4,5, and 6.</p> <p>Decrease number of students in Tier 2 and Tier 3</p>	<p>Possible Targets:</p> <p>To Be Determined</p> <p>To Be Determined</p>																																				

Initiatives	Action Steps
I.3.A: Balanced Assessment Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop district-level benchmarks and student performance goals annually ➤ Conduct training on data analysis and use ➤ Develop a balanced assessment planning tool ➤ Develop a plan for the creation and implementation of Student Learning Objectives
I.3.B: Formative Instructional Practice (FIP) Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop and implement a FIP plan to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All staff participate in FIP training ➤ Leaders participate in training to promote, plan and monitor FIP in classrooms
I.3.C: Response To Intervention (RTI) Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fully implement system RTI plan to ensure : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Universal screening at all levels ➤ Research-based interventions are used in Tier 2 and Tier 3 with fidelity ➤ Progress Monitoring occurs with Tier 2 and Tier 3 students

Strategic Goal II: Improvement of Culture and Climate	
Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Communication and feedback</i> – <i>Resources</i> – <i>Processes and Procedures</i> 	
Performance Objective II.1: To ensure recruitment and retention of quality and diverse faculty and staff	
Metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of teachers meeting 80% proficiency on TKES summative evaluation(8 of 10 TKES areas rated proficient) • Percent of Experience Continuity Ratio (ECR) on MYSPA report 	Possible Targets: <p>2014 Baseline: TBD 2015 Target: 90% 2016 Target: 92% 2017 Target: 94% 2014 Baseline: 85% (mid-year) ECR 2015 Target: 87% ECR 2016 Target: 89% ECR 2017 Target: 91% ECR</p>
Possible Initiatives	Action Steps
II.1.A: Recruitment Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement standardized hiring practices that ensure highly qualified personnel • Participate in regional job fairs • Conduct new teacher orientation before pre-planning • Develop a process for the provision of signing bonuses for critical need areas • Establish a plan for targeted recruitment of teachers due to upcoming retirements
II.1.B: Retention Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish on-going staff recognition events • Develop and conduct exit interviews • Implement internal communication newsletter • Provide instructional support through coaches and mentors

Performance Objective II.2 To ensure professional development of all faculty and staff	
<p>Metrics:</p> <p>Percent of teachers participating in Leadership Academy</p> <p>Percent of participation by district employees in PLU opportunities</p>	<p>Possible Targets:</p> <p>2015 Target: 5% participation 2016 Target: 5% participation 2017 Target: 5% participation</p> <p>2014 Baseline: TBD 2015 Target: 90% participation 2016 Target: 90% participation 2017 Target: 90% participation</p>
Possible Initiatives	Action Steps
II.2.A: Certified Personnel Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement monthly professional learning calendar based on needs assessment for each school • Develop a mentor training program • Provide classroom management training • Continue to support the integration of effective technology for classroom instruction through professional development • Establish school level leadership team training for team members
II.2.B: Leader Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Leadership Academy • Implement job-imbedded collaborative and contextual models of professional development
II.2.C: Classified Staff Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct needs assessment of classified staff and supervisors • Establish a training program for classified staff • Provide professional development for the technology specialists (including Apple) • Establish professional development program for paraprofessionals
Performance Objective II.3 To ensure consistent and effective evaluation of faculty and staff	
<p>Metrics:</p> <p>1. Average daily attendance (sick and personal leave) of faculty and staff</p> <p>2. Percent of district employees receiving an annual performance evaluation</p>	<p>Possible Targets:</p> <p>1. 2014 Baseline: 93.8% average (through April 4) 2015 Target: 90% average 2016 Target: 92% average 2017 Target: 94% average</p> <p>2014 Baseline: TBD 2015 Target: 98% evaluations 2016 Target: 98% evaluations 2017 Target: 98% evaluations</p>
Possible Initiatives	Action Steps
II.3.A: Performance Evaluation Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully implement TKES including professional development • Fully implement LKES including professional development • Develop and implement evaluation procedure for all employees

II.3.B: Effectiveness Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement post-evaluation conferences • Provide summative evaluation form to employees at the beginning of the school year • Provide ongoing informational conferences related to the summative evaluation form
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Strategic Goal III: Stakeholder Communication	
Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Communication</i> – <i>Engagement</i> – <i>Perception</i> 	
Performance Objective III.1 To improve perception	
Metrics: Surveys – TBD Enrollment Data	Possible Targets:
Possible Initiatives	Suggested Action Steps
III.1.A: Communication Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create social networking usage plan ➤ Create internal/external partnership/marketing plan ➤ Survey parents from Pre-K – 3, 5, 8, 11
III.1.B: Branding Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create standard documents for internal/external communication (letterhead, forms, logo, etc.) ➤ Create brand awareness training plan ➤ Communicate the positive happenings in our system (media, social media, etc.) ➤ Including the value of attending the TCS
III.1.C: Unity Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create system wide intramural program (staff) ➤ Create inter-school mentoring program (new staff)
Performance Objective III.2 To increase parental involvement	
Metrics: Increase parental involvement percentages per student Surveys to collect stakeholder interests/needs- TBD	Possible Targets:
Possible Initiatives	Suggested Action Steps
III.2.A: Recognition Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognize parent of the month ➤ Plan quarterly luncheons for parents
III.2.B: Education Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plan system-wide curriculum events based on the needs and interests of the TCS stakeholders. This information will be determined through a survey ➤ Provide training on parent portal as scheduled by each school. This training will be implemented through Parent Meeting Nights. ➤ Provide training for graduation requirements
III.2.C: Volunteer Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Survey to find out how parents would like to be involved

Performance Objective III.3 To increase community-based partnerships	
Metrics:	Possible Targets:
Number of business partners	
Possible Initiatives	Suggested Action Steps
III.3.A: Networking Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide best location for community meetings ➤ Present at and attend community-based organization meetings ➤ Host organizations at school lunch ➤ Host career fairs (recruiting staff) ➤ Survey to find percentage of employees that are TCS alumni
III.3.B: Recognition Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create alumni night ➤ Invite partners to participate in student recognition programs

Strategic Goal IV: Increase Organizational Effectiveness to Support Student Achievement

Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Communication</i> – <i>Technology</i> – <i>Funding</i>

Performance Objective IV.1: To provide superior support services

Metrics:	Possible Targets:																				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in School Nutrition program. • Student Attendance Rate • Reduce number of technology requests 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2014 Baseline</th> <th>2014-15</th> <th>2015-16</th> <th>2016-17</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Participation Rate</td> <td>TBD</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student Attendance</td> <td>TBD</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Technology Requests</td> <td>TBD</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2014 Baseline	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Participation Rate	TBD				Student Attendance	TBD				Technology Requests	TBD			
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Possible Initiatives	Action Steps																				
IV.1.A: School Nutrition Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Form student focus group to determine student perception of school lunches. ➤ Determine barriers preventing students from participating. ➤ Develop positive marketing plan for students. ➤ Determine list of available alternative menu items. ➤ Form student panel to “taste test” items. ➤ Develop list of alternative menu items acceptable. ➤ Develop schedule/calendar of serving alternative menu items. 																				
IV.1.B: Attendance Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Form an attendance policy committee (Parents, Administrators, Teachers, School Board Member). ➤ Gather information from other school systems with attendance policies. ➤ Determine objective(s) of attendance policy for Thomasville City Schools ➤ Write attendance policy and submit to public for comment. ➤ Revise policy based on community input. ➤ Submit to board for approval. ➤ In-service all teachers and administrators on Attendance 																				

	<p>Protocol procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assign one administrator per school to monitor compliance. ➤ Assign one central office per to receive reports from schools. ➤ Identify where protocol is not being followed and /or areas where not being followed with fidelity. ➤ Conduct additional training as needed to specific schools and personnel. 																				
IV.1.C: Technology Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Compile statistics on technology requests from the 2013-14 school year as to type of request. ➤ Schedule in-service to teachers on available in-service days to increase their capability to solve minor technology problems. ➤ Identify training needs of technology staff to decrease time required to solve technology problems. ➤ Develop technology replacement schedule for system based on annual technology inventory. 																				
Performance Objective IV.2 To ensure effective internal fiscal processes																					
<p>Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of budget expenditures • Utility bill • Carbon “footprint” of system 	<p>Possible Targets:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2014-15</th> <th>2015-16</th> <th>2016-17</th> <th>2017-18</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>% Budget for Specific Categories</td> <td>TBD</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>System Monthly Utility Bill</td> <td>TBD</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carbon Footprint of System</td> <td>TBD</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	% Budget for Specific Categories	TBD				System Monthly Utility Bill	TBD				Carbon Footprint of System	TBD			
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% Budget for Specific Categories	TBD																				
System Monthly Utility Bill	TBD																				
Carbon Footprint of System	TBD																				
Possible Initiatives	Action Steps																				
IV.2.A: Budget Planning Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Publish system’s budgeting process in system publications. ➤ Form an advisory committee of school principals. ➤ Determine number and timing of meetings. ➤ Advisory council to meet with school board budgeting personnel during budgeting process. 																				
IV.2.B: Systems Management Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop detailed cost analysis of systems operating systems. ➤ Identify process/policies that encourage/cause inefficiencies/wastefulness. ➤ Personnel responsible for operating systems will develop remedies to improve efficiencies. ➤ System will monitor systems. 																				
IV.2.C: Green School Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ System will gather information related to ‘Green Schools’ concept and implementation. ➤ Develop menu of green School initiatives that could be implemented in school system. ➤ System and/or schools will adopt at least one green School Initiative. 																				

Performance Objective IV.3 To ensure safe and inviting school environments					
Metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent’s survey ratings • School Safety Score (DOE Safety Survey) 	Possible Targets:				
		2014 baseline	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	Survey Rating	TBD			
	Safety Score	TBD			
Possible Initiatives	Action Steps				
IV.3.A: Safe School Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Schools use GaDOE School Safety Instrument. ➤ Results from survey will be analyzed and threats to campus safety will be identified and prioritized. ➤ A safety remediation plan will be developed for each school, which will include short term and long term objectives. ➤ Budget allowances will be allocated to remedy identified safety threats. 				
IV.3.B: Positive School Image Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct annual school parent perception survey on image and friendliness. ➤ Results will be compiled and weaknesses and problem areas identified. ➤ The principal of each school will submit to the maintenance director requests for needed improvements to school exterior and interior based on parent’s comments. ➤ Principals of each school will submit to in-service director training needs for administrative staff to improve “friendliness” perception of school. 				

Appendix I: Participants

Planning Team Members

Adams, Dennie
Billups, Lisa
Blake, Denny
DeLaney, Tonya
Everett, Sabrina
Farrell, Jo
Garland, Denise
Gaupp, Jill
Graham, Dale
Hinckley, Donita
Hopkins, Jacquelyn
Hose, Keith
Johnson, Donna Kay
Jones, Hazel
Jones, Tricia
Kirkland, LaRhonda
May, Dan
McCall, Tom
Megahee, Kathy
Millere, Ed
Mobley, Todd
Oldham, Daniel
Rayburn, Lawana
Rayford, Nakesha
Settle, Bill
Snipes, Jodi
Tabb, Rebecca
Von Hellon, Julie

Action Team Members

Student Achievement

Farrell, Jo - Chair
Bailey, Julia
Bennett, Gina
Dawson, Ishia
Laing, Levada
Newman, Emily
Rollins, Dana
Swain, Catherine

Culture and Climate

Hinckley, Donita - Chair
DeVane, Ondrya
Dubose, Carla
Hicks, Dale
Jordan, Jennifer
Muserallo, Carie
Thompson, Jocelyn

Stakeholder Communication

Rayburn, Lawana - Chair
Blake, Denny
Everett, III. Moses
House, Tracy
McBride, Tina
Singletary, Lisa
Spence, Julie

Organizational Effectiveness to Support

Student Achievement

McCall, Tom - Chair
Beaty, Brian
Parke, Sherry
Paulson, Forrest
Singley, Vanessa
Witherspoon, Tret

Appendix II: Community Engagement Report

Community Forum – February 3, 2014

Online Survey – February 3-28, 2014

Thomasville City Schools Community Engagement Session

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To assist the Strategic Planning Team with their work, Thomasville City Schools engaged its community in a process to gauge the thoughts, feelings and perceptions that stakeholders hold regarding the district – before the plan was developed.

The engagement initiative, designed and implemented by the Georgia School Boards Association, included a community conversation and an online survey. A genuine effort was made to make the process as inclusive and transparent as possible.

Participants of the community engagement initiative responded to the following questions:

- To be the best it can be, what should Thomasville City Schools preserve/keep?
- To be the best it can be, what should Thomasville City Schools change/do differently?
- What do you think are the top challenges faced by Thomasville City Schools?
- What do you think are the top challenges faced by the students in Thomasville City Schools?
- As a community, what do we want our public schools to provide for students?

The intention of this report is to provide a collection of the best thinking of school and community members regarding the five questions presented. The information gathered is qualitative and seeks to focus attention on those areas that generated the most energy. Members of the strategic planning team will use the input to assist them in developing a plan to move the district forward and one that is reflective of its community.

The Format

Community Forum

During December 2013 and January 2014, the district worked to recruit participants to attend the community engagement session. A great deal of effort went into inviting all segments of the community. Notices were distributed in the paper, on the district's website, through school announcements and at meetings throughout the district and community.

At the community forum on February 3 at MacIntyre Park Middle School Auditorium, about 180 participants heard a presentation on the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) strategic planning process and a "State of the District" presentation by Sabrina Boykins - Everett, Thomasville City superintendent. Information included: educational issues, school district

achievement data and the process to be followed that evening regarding the small group discussions. Participants were randomly divided into smaller groups to hold their conversation. Volunteer facilitators agreed to lead the discussions, clarify issues, keep each group focused, make sure every person had an opportunity to be heard, and ensure that what was said was properly recorded. Facilitators received training from GSBA to prepare them for the meeting.

Facilitators did not ascribe any individual's name to comments written in the notes of the small group discussions. At the conclusion of the discussion, facilitators asked participants to prioritize their lists of comments by marking the ideas or comments they thought were most important for each question asked.

GSBA staff transcribed all of the notes. Laura Reilly compiled the report by sorting the comments and using the results of each group's prioritizing activity. Results of the community conversation were synthesized with the results of the online survey.

Online Survey

An online survey using the same questions offered an additional input opportunity. If they desired to do so, participants could provide additional comments on all questions and on the survey as a whole. The choices listed for questions were used only to add structure to the survey and avoid ending up with lists of comments in no order or context. Open-ended comments were sorted through a manual process. GSBA administered the survey.

The Response

About 180 community members, teachers, students and staff participated in the community forum. There were 131 full responses to the online survey. The largest percentage of respondents to the online survey identified themselves as parents (55%). The next group with the largest number of participants was the teacher group (26%). Attendees of the community forum were not asked to identify themselves.

Reasons to be Proud and Assets to Build Upon

When asked, "To be the best it can be, what should Thomasville City Schools System preserve/keep?" the following represents the areas of greatest agreement among survey respondents and/or community conversation participants:

Student achievement – Keeping the focus on academics and student achievement are important issues to stakeholders. They also recognize the challenges associated with doing this (funding).

Array of academic and extracurricular programs – Stakeholders are highly supportive of the number of different opportunities offered to students. As the data shows, they also would like to see continual growth and strength applied to the numbers and kinds of programs offered, especially the arts.

Teachers and staff – Stakeholders are alert to the issue of retaining quality teachers. They would like to continue the programs in place, but strengthen the incentives for retention such as pay raises and the end of furlough days.

Communications – The use of technologies such as the parent portal, email and robo-calling are appreciated. Communications crops up again as an area needing improvement.

Safety –Stakeholders are concerned about the safety of students and staff. They recognize and appreciate what is being done in this regard, but also feel safety needs to remain a focus and priority for all levels of administration.

Small schools and class sizes – Preserving small schools and a neighborhood school mentality, as well as small class sizes are important issues to stakeholders.

Possibilities for Change and Growth

When asked, “To be the best it can be, what should Thomasville City Schools change or do differently?” the following represents the areas of greatest agreement among survey respondents and community conversation participants:

Improving student assessments – This issue was mentioned numerous times on the online survey. It also showed up in comments in different groups using different descriptions such as, “making assessments more relevant to curriculum,” there is a need for better and earlier diagnostic intervention,” “there is excessive mandated testing.”

Parental Involvement – Lack of parental involvement was an issue that surfaced in a number of ways at the community meeting and on the survey. There is a feeling that more needs to be done to address parental apathy where schooling is concerned.

Communications – Improving communications with parents and the community came up in different ways. Stakeholders would like to see an expanded communications program that focuses on building understanding of the issues. There is a call for improvement of parent/teacher relationships and communication. Keeping the parent portal up-to-date, procuring a full time communications staff member and developing standards for parent communication were suggestions offered. Stakeholders recognize the challenge of improving communications.

Safety – As mentioned above, stakeholders are concerned about the challenge of safety and security within the school system.

Top Challenges Faced by the School District

The following are issues that surfaced most often through the online survey and the community conversation:

- **Raising the graduation rate/closing the achievement gap** -- Stakeholders are concerned about making sure all children graduate and the challenge this presents the district.
- **Funding** – The financial constraints caused by shrinking state and federal funding presents numerous challenges for the district.
- **Parent and community involvement** – This was cited as being an issue that needs to be addressed and one that presents challenges for the district and students.
- **Retaining highly qualified teachers/staff** – With funding as a major challenge, rewarding highly qualified teachers and staff is made more difficult.
- **Poverty in the community** – A number of groups at the community meeting and participants of the survey cited this as a challenge to the district. They also commented on the effects of single parent homes.
- **Communications/Safety** – As mentioned above, stakeholders recognize the difficulties of improving communications and safety.

Top Challenges Faced by the Students

The following are issues that surfaced most often through the online survey and the community conversation:

- **Student apathy** – Stakeholders are concerned for students' lack of focus on academics and excellence.
- **Excessive mandated testing** – Participants of the survey mentioned this numerous times as a challenge for students.
- **Poverty and the economy** – The effects of poverty on students are a concern.
- **Behavior and Discipline** – Stakeholders are concerned about peer pressure, drug awareness, bullying and social media distractions and their effects on students.

What the Community Wants the District to Provide Students

Several themes emerged from the respondents of the online survey and the participants at the community conversation:

- **Curriculum** – Participants of the community meeting and the online survey voiced support for a curriculum that includes college and career readiness, technical education programs, the arts and a strong extracurricular program. A number of participants said they favored a curriculum that focuses on the basics of math, science and language arts, and others said they were interested in programs that teach life skills such as personal finance.
- **Graduation rate** – Numerous community meeting and survey participants cited the desire for programs to raise the graduation rate and close the achievement gap among all student groups.
- **Highly qualified teachers** – Numerous participants of the survey said they want to provide students “highly qualified teachers who are held accountable and rewarded accordingly.”
- **Career readiness** – Stakeholders are interested in programs that can help students explore career pathways, and they would like to see them offered beginning in middle school.
- **CTAE/Technical programs** – There is great interest in providing students access to programs related to career tech.
- **Technology** – Keeping technology updated and the issue of access to technology came up in a number of different ways as an important component of the instructional process for stakeholders.
- **Parent involvement** – Comments focused on the need to better inform parents and the community on education issues and the needs of students.
- **Safety and Security** – Providing a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff is important.

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Appendix III: Planning Team Stakeholder Wants and Expectations Summary

During the planning team session participants were asked to summarize the wants and expectations of the students, internal and external stakeholders of Thomasville City Schools based on the focus group and survey results?

Students	<p><u>Wants and Expectations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Quality Teachers • Social Opportunities • Engaging-21st Century Classrooms • Sense of Belonging • Want and Desire to Learn • Want to be Successful • Want to be Competitive • Want a Safe Environment • Want to Make Money-Have a job • Want Attention • Individual Needs Met-Support • Opportunity for Success • Respect/Consistency • Relevance-Why! And Why This Matters to Me? • Socialization • Have Fun • Preparation for Adulthood • Relevant Learning that Makes them Successful • Clear outlined Expectations from Faculty and Parents • Equal Access to ALL classes • Interesting Ways of Learning • Want Structure and Discipline • Activities and Athletics • Treated Fairly • Opportunity to Achieve • Acceptance • Consistency • Variety of Extra-curricular Activities
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Internal Stakeholders	<p><u>Wants and Expectations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Classes• School/Classroom Discipline• Parental Involvement• Pleasant Working Environment• Recognition for their Work/Accomplishments• Eliminate Furlough Days• Support and Resources from Internal and External Stakeholders• Positive Workplace/Consistency/Equality• See Success (Student Achievement)• Accountability• Parental Support and Respect• Adhere to Promotion Standards• Better Resources• Less Testing• Want to Work and Provide Experiences• Want to be Respected• Want to Make a Difference• Committed Parental Involvement• Recognition/Respect/Valuation• Better Resource Availability• Student Success• Desire for Students to Perform• Safe Environment• Support for Teaching
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External Stakeholders	<p><u>Wants and Expectations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Racial Balance in Schools• Good Stewards of Tax Dollars• Trust in Leadership• Quality Teachers• The Level of Student Achievement• CTAE Offerings/Variety• *Life Skills (highest on survey) { Life Skills/Morality/Work Ethic }• Targeting and Addressing Student Deficiencies at the Elementary Level before Reaching MS/HS• Better Communication• Consistent Parent Portal• Quality Education• Safety, Trust• More Parental Involvement• See Success (student achievement)• See Community and Parent Support and Involvement/Investment from Internal and External Stakeholders• Transparency, Accountability• User friendly-inviting• Kids Prepared to Work or Go To School• Character Development• Support for ALL Children• Equal Access to ALL Resources to become SUCCESSFUL• Active Remediation for Areas of Weakness (Math, Reading)• *A Consistent System of Communication!!! (email, text, phone call, conferences)• Want Educated Students• Want Productive Citizens• Gainfully Employed/Self-Sufficient• Positive Press for Schools• Work Ethic (Strong)• Self-Respect, Respect for Others• Professionalism
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Appendix IV: Planning Team’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

INTERNAL	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small Class Size (Student-Teacher Ratio) 2. Community Schools 3. AP Gifted Courses/Dual Enrollment 4. Student Technology 5. All Schools are Title I (additional funding) 6. Extracurricular Activities 7. Small System Size 8. Vision/Leadership of Administration 9. Facilities 10. Few Transitions 11. School Pride 12. Technology 13. Tutoring/Mentoring 14. Variety of Offerings 15. State of the Art Buildings 16. Knowing the Teacher Standards 17. Having Pre-k thru 5 – knowing the teachers 18. Community and Business collaboration 19. Rural Area 20. Variety of Academy Avenues students may pursue (Scholars, AP, IB, Move On When Ready, AIMS, etc.) 21. Increased opportunities for cultural/sporting activities i.e. strings, chorus, drama, band, art, soccer, OM, computer, broadcasting, etc. 22. Schools/Teachers communicate regularly 23. Remedial Opportunities 24. Technology 25. Highly Qualified Teachers 26. Safe 27. Elementary Schools pre-k thru 5 (7 years) 28. Separation Campuses 29. Diversity Offering 30. Target high/low 31. Provide free lunch/breakfast 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Segregated Schools (due to school choice) 2. Academic achievement gaps between white subgroup/black subgroup/SWD subgroup 3. Communication (internal and external) 4. No Busing 5. Ineffective Academic Interventions 6. Math/Science/Social Studies 7. Lack of Strategic Planning (continuous improvement) 8. Prioritizing of district and school budgets 9. Above average teacher turnover 10. Student Motivation 11. Transportation 12. Books/Resources – to align with curriculum 13. Googling for resources/no consistency 14. Equal Access to Resources 15. Paraprofessional in grades 1-5 grades non-existent 16. Active Reading Diagnosis & Remediation 17. Public Relations/Marketing 18. Minority/SWD Grade Rate 19. Leadership Training 20. Safety 21. Parent Involvement 22. Big HR Losses upcoming 5 years 23. Communication of Services Availability 24. Life Skills Offerings 25. Funding 26. Graduation Rate 27. Poor Communication 28. Image/Perception 29. Communication/Perception 30. Maximizing Technology 31. Separation Kids 32. Parental Involvement 33. Retention Middle School 34. Lack Motivation Kids Achieve 35. Miss the Middle Level Kids “B” 36. Below state average on standardized tests 37. Retaining veteran teachers at all schools 38. Poor Parent Involvement 39. Lack of teacher diversity across schools 40. Communication – tools in place may not be appropriate to the population 41. Retention Policy – Focus on intervention (K-3)

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EXTERNAL	
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Engagement/Meetings for Input 2. County Students 3. Increase Community Partnerships 4. Local buy-in/support 5. New Talent/Fresh Boots 6. Magnet Schools 7. Collegiate Partnerships 8. School Competition Locally 9. Art & Sport Resources 10. Community Professional Volunteers 11. SPLOST Funding 12. Community Support 13. Partnerships with Local Businesses 14. Marketing 15. Communication 16. Partnerships w/Business Community organization 17. Build on Career & Soft Skills Requirements of Bridge Law with Parental Involvement 18. Work Study 19. Apprenticeships 20. Business Partnerships 21. Advanced Education (Move On When Ready, etc.) 22. Extracurricular (sports, dance, OM, etc.) 23. Competition 24. Mentoring 25. Parental Involvement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. County School System Busing (Competition – Busing) 2. Development of “Academies” (by surrounding school systems) 3. Increase in poverty 4. External Perceptions of School System 5. Political Opposition towards Public Schools 6. Funding reductions 7. State and Federal Mandates – changing curriculum 8. Competition for FTE 9. Safety Threats from Transition Group Homes 10. Funding 11. Perceptions 12. Safety 13. Morale 14. State Mandates 15. Economic Recession 16. Transportation 17. Furlough Days 18. Lack of Confidence/Social Skills 19. Economy 20. Parental Support 21. Grades 22. Single Parent homes 23. More than One School System 24. Unemployment 25. Poor Communication 26. Division Among Schools (perception) 27. Image 28. Poverty 29. Competition 30. Parental Involvement 31. Attendance Protocol 32. Neglect 33. Status Symbol 34. Kids Raising Kids

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Appendix V: Alignment with the Vision for Public Education in Georgia

Vision Recommendations	Plan SG/PO or Page #
Chapter 2 – Vision	
2.1 Promote public education as the cornerstone of American Democracy.	6
Chapter 3 – Early Learning and Student Success	
3.1: Create through a state-wide initiative an Early Learning collaborative in each county of the state that includes all human services organizations.	9, 14
3.2: Create public-private partnerships in local communities between local businesses and educational and human services organizations for the purpose of establishing early childhood initiatives that address healthy child and family development and economic benefits to the community.	9
3.4: Provide an opportunity for all children from birth to five-years-old to participate in high-quality, full-year, full-day educational experiences that are designed to promote all aspects of a child’s development, from cognitive to social and emotional development in the home or in the care of a licensed public or private care provider.	
3.5: Adopt a pre-kindergarten through grade 3 integrated education model for all children ages four through eight.	
Chapter 4 – Teaching and Learning	
4.1: Create collaborative learning communities and implement expert coaching in all schools.	11, 12, 13, 14
4.2: Integrate fully a variety of technologies to support student learning and facilitate assessment.	13, 16
4.3: Develop challenging and dynamic curricula that is sufficiently flexible to meet the diverse needs of students and to support higher-order thinking.	11, 12, 14
4.4: Develop a comprehensive and balanced system of assessments that is useful in guiding the work of teachers and students.	12
4.5: Ensure that all teachers understand and use differentiated strategies effectively in the instruction and assessment of students.	11, 14
Chapter 5 – Teaching and Learning Resources	
5.1: Examine currently adopted and proposed alternative models for the delivery of educational services for the purpose of determining their effectiveness in terms of student learning, needed resources, and feasibility for adoption/adaptation by school districts over the state.	
5.2: Ensure full technology integration into the classroom by providing access to adequate resources, equitable infrastructure and professional learning opportunities for teachers	16
5.3: Develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive, state-wide, longitudinal data system	
5.4: Develop local protocols for collaboration among school systems, other educational entities, public service agencies, business and industry and the community served in decisions related to school siting, school safety, and the co-location of community services.	

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Chapter 6 – Human and Organizational Capital	
6.3: Provide comprehensive recruitment, induction, and retention strategies for all local school districts.	12, 13, 14
6.4: Pilot teacher and leader compensation programs to evaluate the effectiveness and viability of selected compensation scenarios.	
6.5: Examine organizational structures and processes to ensure support of student learning and provide for distribution of leader responsibilities at all levels within the district.	14, 16
Chapter 7 – Governance, Leadership and Accountability	
7.4: Change the method of selection of members of local boards of education from a choice between partisan and non-partisan elections to non-partisan elections only.	
7.7: Establish and maintain high reliability organizations through development of local school district leadership teams.	16, 17
7.9: Develop and implement at the local school district level an accountability system based on local district educational goals that are aligned with state educational goals and state accountability system, and which include clearly defined measures of school district, school and student success.	12
Chapter 8 – Culture, Climate, and Organizational Efficacy	
8.1: Make each school and district an inviting place to be for students, parents, staff, and the larger community.	14, 15
8.2: Establish each school as the center or hub of the community in which it exists.	15
8.3: Determine stakeholder perceptions of schools and school districts.	14, 17
8.4: Develop a culture and climate that foster innovation and responsible risk-taking.	
8.5: Develop school and district cultures that are sensitive and responsive to the cultural, racial, ethnic, and socio-economic make-up of the communities they serve.	
8.6: Develop safe, orderly, supportive learning environments built on respect and encouragement where all individuals believe they can make a positive difference.	17
8.7: Get to know and be willing to truly listen to the students in our schools.	
Chapter 9 – Financial Resources	
9.2: Identify in both state and local budgets for public education sufficient fiscal resources for implementing both a comprehensive data system and an evaluation system that uses data to measure and improve effectiveness in meeting objectives for enhanced student learning.	16, 17
9.3: Initiate an ongoing process at the local district level for systematically evaluating all expenditures to enable the development and adoption of budgets that are focused on district strategies for maximizing student learning.	