



**MUNCIE
COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS**

STRATEGIC PLAN

Update 10/30/2022

MCS Vision: Placing Learners First

MCS Mission Statement: The mission of Muncie Community Schools is to provide a quality education environment where every child is known, safe, inspired, challenged, and empowered.



A Letter from Dr. K.

We are now in the second year of executing MCS' five-year strategic plan and I am happy to report that we have made great strides in a number of our focus areas. This report contains details of those strides from the summer of 2021 through spring semester of 2022. You will also see the areas where we still have significant work to do.

Overall, I am very proud of the progress we've made toward our goals and the action steps taken. Here is a compilation of some of those achievements to date:

- Increased pre-K enrollment and the overall number of pre-K classrooms offered to families.
- Increased employee salaries significantly, putting MCS at or near the top of the pay scale with other school districts in the region.
- Extended coaching and mentoring for the teaching of reading.
- More than doubled enrollment in Project Lead the Way courses (science, math, computers) at Muncie Central High School.
- Enrolled 45 students in an innovative Newcomer Program created in collaboration with the Muncie Afghan Refugee Resettlement Committee (MARRC).
- Increased enrollment in Indiana's 21st Century Scholars program that provides free college tuition for eligible students.
- Established new courses for middle and high school students exposing them to skills needed for high-demand jobs/careers.
- Increased the number of dual credit and dual enrollment College and Technical Education (CTE) courses.
- Provided services to nearly 2,000 student visitors through the Meridian Health Services clinic at Southside Middle School, preventing students from potentially missing more class time.
- Implemented City Connects program, hiring five family navigators to develop and coordinate community services for students and families, meeting their individual needs.

When you look at all of the numerous actionable items in this plan, we have already begun on 83% of them and have actually completed 12% of them. All of our successes would not be possible without the consistent help provided by Ball State University and our local foundations, which continue to be invaluable partners in multiple ways. We also thank the greater Muncie community for their continued support as well as our MCS families as we pursue excellence together.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lee Ann Kwiatkowski,
Director of Public Education and CEO
Muncie Community Schools



A Note to the Reader

Our Intention

The purpose of this report is to provide our students, staff, families, community, and partners with a description of our accomplishments this past year, including the challenges we faced and the lessons we learned, followed by our intentions for SY 2022-23. This report is a required by the State of Indiana in accordance with the State’s statutory directive (I.C. 20-23-18-10) of MCS forming its partnership with Ball State University. This report is to specifically include innovative methods of instruction in our schools.

Our Presentation

Our presentation follows the outline of the *MCS Innovation and Strategic Plan* with sections for each of the five pillars:

- Pillar I:** High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education
- Pillar II:** Recruitment, Development, and Retention of Educational Leaders
- Pillar III:** Student-Centered Teaching and Active Learning
- Pillar IV:** Social and Emotional Learning
- Pillar V:** Family and Community Engagement

Within each pillar, the report presents each strategy and key action step from the *MCS Innovation Plan* with four areas that describe our progress and plans.

1) **Rationale:** an explanation of why the strategy or action is a priority

2) **Progress Toward Goal:** stated as the “Progress Key”



3) **Evidence of Progress:** a description of the completed activities

4) **Next Steps:** the actions planned to advance the strategy in the future

Most strategies are multi-year tasks with multiple key action steps.

Thank You to the administrators and principals who provided the data to ensure this document is accurate and timely.



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Pillar I: High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education

GOAL 1: Our 3- and 4-year-old learners will be kindergarten-ready through access to high-quality pre-kindergarten programs in all our elementary schools.

Strategy 1.1 Increase the number of Pre-K classrooms and the number of students enrolled.

Rationale: Critical brain development occurs between birth and age five. This period of development, when compromised for any reason, such as trauma, poverty, or limited stimulation, is extraordinarily difficult to remedy and has lifelong negative impacts on the child. To counter these consequences, MCS will offer an increased number of high-quality, culturally appropriate Pre-K classrooms for 3- and 4-year-olds, reaching maximum capacity in each classroom.

- ◆ **Action Step 1.1 a.** Establish a Pre-K class at Longfellow Elementary for up to 20 learners in partnership with Huffer Memorial Children’s Center.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed SY 2020-21

- ◆ **Action Step 1.1 b.** Establish Pre-K classrooms at North View and West View, thus providing Pre-K classrooms in all MCS elementary schools.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed SY 2021-22

Evidence of Progress: School year 2018-19 served as the goal baseline with three out of six elementary schools housing a Pre-K classroom. In January 2020, Longfellow Elementary, in partnership with Huffer, opened its first Pre-K classroom and in August 2020, North View and West View each opened a preschool resulting in every elementary school housing a Pre-K classroom, thus achieving the initial goal. In SY 2021-22 MCS moved to establish additional Pre-K classrooms. With space available in Grissom and South View, MCS opened a second classroom in each school, bringing the total number to eight classrooms, with the ability to serve 160 young children (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1. Pre-K Classrooms in MCS Elementary Schools

Elementary School	2018-19 Baseline	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1. East Washington Academy	1	1	1	1
2. Grissom	1	1	1	2
3. Longfellow	---	1	1	1
5. North View	---	---	1	1
4. South View	1	1	1	2
6. West View	---	---	1	1
Total	3	4	6	8



With the opening of each new Pre-K classroom, enrollment increased from 50 learners in SY 2019-20 to 154 this school year. MCS strove to reach the IDOE-determined classroom capacity of 20 learners, nearing that mark with a SY 2021-22 enrollment rate of 96 percent of capacity (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Pre-K Classroom Enrollment by Year

Elementary School	2018-19 Baseline	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1. East Washington Academy	20	19	20	20
2. Grissom	17	20	20	38
3. Longfellow	--	10	12	19
5. North View	---	---	19	21
4. South View	13	18	20	38
6. West View	---	---	20	20
Total	50	67	111	156

With a goal of increasing family and community awareness of the existence and importance of Pre-K classrooms, MCS conducted a Pre-K/Kindergarten school registration event at the MCS Field House in April. While this event focused on Pre-K-K learners, families were able to register all their children at this one location. This served not only as a convenience for parents but also as a means of informing families of the Pre-K classrooms. Community partners offering wrap-around services attended and engaged with the families, including providing vaccinations and fun activities for the children.

MCS mailed Pre-K information to all childcare providers in Delaware County, to Head Starts, to church-related childcare programs, and to all elementary students' homes. Each elementary school held a registration event in Spring 2022. Other registration events included the Ross Center Community Market during children's speech and language screenings and at the Muncie Children's Museum.

For young children with special needs, MCS leads the preschool special education cooperative for Delaware County. The program offers a continuum of special education services for 3–5-year-olds with virtual and walk-in services and community-setting placements. MCS provides a language group and a developmental preschool classroom with specific services, such as physical and speech therapy. Currently, 59 students participate in the programs.

- ◆ **Action Step 1.1 c.** Establish additional Pre-K classrooms in the elementary schools based on available space, family interest, and ability to hire certified Pre-K staff.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: MCS will continue to increase the number of preschool classrooms and student enrollment to full capacity. Increasing the number of Pre-K classrooms depends on available space in the school, the ability to hire certified Pre-K teachers, and the interest level of parents with a minimum of ten students required to establish a new classroom. In SY 2022-23, MCS will investigate a new classroom at EWA. New methods to increase community awareness include the distribution of flyers and applications at the middle and high schools and to the families of young learners that receive preschool special education evaluations. MCS will continue to pursue the listing of its Pre-K classroom on the state's website for families to "Find Childcare" (<https://www.in.gov/fssa/childcarefinder/>)



Strategy 1.2 Increase the number of eligible learners whose families receive state-provided funding through *On My Way Pre-K (OMW)* and *Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF)*.

Rationale: MCS bears the costs of the Pre-K classrooms as state appropriation to school districts does not include preschool funding. To assist families with the costs of enrolling their children in preschool, the state provides two funding streams. By increasing the number of Pre-K learners using the funding streams, MCS can offset its costs for the Pre-K classrooms and increase the number of classrooms.

- ◆ **Action Step 1.2** Increase Pre-K enrollment and increase the number of families utilizing state funding for Pre-K by: (a) identifying families with 4-year-olds that are eligible for On My Way Preschool funding; (b) communicating with families about OMW Preschool grants and assisting them in applying; and (c) working closely with the Delaware County OMW Pre-K regional manager.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress #1: MCS strove to improve communication about the existence of On My Way (OMW) preschool funding in SY 2021-22. Staff created eye-catching flyers, adapted for various audiences and available at multiple sites (e.g., at MACC; through DCS caseworkers); utilized social media; and registered families at the Pre-K and Kindergarten registration held at the Fieldhouse.

Evidence of Progress #2: MCS continued to meet regularly with the Delaware County OMW regional manager to determine ways to assist families in Pre-K funding. Activities included adding the OMW Pre-K application in the family school enrollment package; holding events to assist families in completing the forms; and offering incentives for classrooms with 100 percent of families applying. The second funding source, *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)*, helps low-income families pay for childcare costs when the funds allow for parents to work, attend training, or continue their education. To increase the number of families receiving funding, MCS staff reviewed applications and assisted families in completing the forms.

Evidence of Progress #3: With the two funds, the district offset preschool costs, allowing for preschool classrooms in each elementary school in August 2021 and two additional classrooms in 2021-22 (Table 1.3). Preschool tuition paid through the two funding programs increased from 18 families (16 percent of all enrollees) in 2020-21 to 27 families (17.5 percent) in 2021-22 (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Children Receiving OMW Grants and CCDF

Elementary Schools	2018-19 Baseline		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF
1. East Washington Academy	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
2. Grissom	3	0	6	0	8	0	3	2
3. Longfellow	---	---	0	0	0	0	5	2
4. North View	---	---	2	0	4	0	2	1
5. South View	---	---	1	1	5	0	4	1
6. West View	---	---	--	--	0	0	3	0
Subtotal	3	0	9	1	18	0	19	8
Families Receiving Funds	3		10		18		27	



The increased number of Pre-K families using state-provided preschool funding brings in substantial monetary support for the district’s preschools. This amount increased by 66 percent from 2019-20 to 2021-22, reaching a total of \$132,000 (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4: Family OMW Preschool Grants and CCCD Awards Applied to Pre-K Programs

Elementary Schools*	2018-19 Baseline	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1. East Washington Academy	---	\$ 1,939	\$ 3,698	\$ 14,290
2. Grissom	\$ 9,038	\$ 29,411	\$ 60,087	\$ 26,671
3. North View	---	---	---	\$ 25,084
4. South View	---	\$ 13,937	\$ 24,393	\$ 38,739
5. West View	---	---	---	\$ 27,467
Total	\$ 9,038	\$ 45,287	\$ 88,178	\$ 132,251

*Longfellow is not included as its Pre-K program is administered by Huffer.

Next Steps: MCS believes many more families are eligible for OMW grants and CCCF awards as only 17.5 percent used the funding in SY 2021-22. MCS will continue to seek ways to notify families of the funds available and assist them in the paperwork to receive the funds.

Strategy 1.3 Improve the quality of our Pre-K program with all classrooms receiving the highest level of accreditation – *Indiana Paths to QUALITY (PTQ) Level 4* – with certified early childhood staff and high quality, developmentally appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessments.

Rationale: Early childhood programs vary widely in their quality and expectations of young learners and their ability to nurture the social and emotional needs of children. To help families find preschool programs matching the quality they are seeking, the State of Indiana developed the Paths to QUALITY™ rating system. The system consists of four levels of quality from 1-4, with “4” being the highest. Our goal is for all MCS Pre-K classrooms to reach and maintain a Level 4 rating.

Action Step 1.3 a. Achieve and maintain the Paths to Quality (PTQ) Level 4 for all Pre-K classrooms by completing all required certification actions.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Achieving the next level of quality in the preschool programs requires multiple years. Our classrooms are demonstrating satisfactory progress in their first or second year in working towards the highest level (Table 1.5). The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredits programs with the process occurring over two or more years. All five preschool classrooms began the accreditation process in SY 2020-21. This past school year, Pre-K staff completed the rigorous self-assessment, leading to each classroom’s determination of its needs.

A major finding for all schools was that their lead and assistant teachers must obtain specific degrees. All MCS lead teachers held their associate degree in early childhood as required for the highest level of accreditation. However, only one-half the assistant teachers (three of the six) held a child development



associate (CDA) certificate. Being aware of the difficulty in hiring and retaining preschool teachers and assistants, MCS launched a new program offering accelerated CDA courses through the MACC’s Adult Education Program. Professional development specialists from the CDA council served as the instructors with the MCS assistant teachers scheduled to receive certification in July 2022.

Table 1.5. Pre-K Programs Paths to QUALITY™ (PTQ) Ratings and Desired Level to Achieve

Pre-K Programs	2018-19 Baseline	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Desired Level
1. East Washington Academy	---	2	3	In process	4
2. Grissom	3	3	3	In process	4
3. Longfellow	---	3	3	In process	4
4. South View	3	3	3	In process	4
5. North View (new program)	---	---	3	In process	4
6. West View (new program)	---	---	3	In process	4

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, Pre-K staff and district leadership will complete the requirements to receive NAEYC accreditation and the Paths to Quality Level 4 certification. This will require extensive time and effort. During early-release days, the staff will assemble a required portfolio of information and documentation; review, edit, and add to MCS Pre-K policies; and revise the preschool orientation process. The district will ensure that all staff meet the NAEYC requirements regarding degrees.

- ◆ **Action Step 1.3 b.** Adopt and implement with fidelity a comprehensive early childhood curriculum to achieve and maintain Paths to Quality (PTQ) Level 4 for all Pre-K classrooms, especially in the area of preliteracy.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: A requirement of the Level 4 accreditation is the implementation of a comprehensive curriculum in Pre-K classrooms. In August 2021, MCS adopted *Creative Curriculum*, published by Teaching Strategies. *Creative Curriculum* has a long history of research-based success in the development of young children in the five domains: cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional. It is “comprehensive” in that it provides teaching plans, schedules, and activities for teaching preliteracy, concepts of sorting, categorizing, and counting (early math), science, social studies, and physical and social-emotional development.

With lessons scaffolded according to children’s developmental abilities, teachers group students for learning by their strengths and needs rather than by their chronological age. Classroom observations by MCS administration conducted in Spring 2022 determined progress in the curriculum implementation at a basic, initial level of usage but with limited depth. Teachers varied in the time given to using the curriculum and in their understanding of how best to teach the lessons, for example, using rote memorization of letters in alphabetical order rather than individual recognition of letters. As activities are to be hands-on and interactive and encourage pretending and play, additional materials are needed in some classrooms such as, dress-up clothing, manipulatives, and objects for language development.

A training-of-trainers model with preschool teachers that had previously used the *Creative Curriculum* providing the instruction to the Pre-K staff resulted in basic rather than foundational learning by the teachers; a new training process will be implemented next school year.



Next Steps: All hired Pre-K teachers were previously employed by other local agencies with some using the *Creative Curriculum* in those agencies. These teachers voiced their belief in their ability to implement the curriculum. However, observation by the administration determined understanding and use of the curriculum was not occurring at the depth and consistency needed.

In SY 2022-23, Pre-K staff will receive professional development—not from their peers, but from highly educated and experienced early childhood experts—to improve their knowledge of teaching pre-academic concepts to young children and of cognitive and language development. Modeling and coaching from expert early childhood educators will create higher expectations and lead to continual skill development for the Pre-K teachers and assistants. A district-wide daily schedule will be determined by leadership to increase the use of the curriculum and to better prepare learners for kindergarten. MCS will purchase additional classroom materials to create individual bins of hands-on objects and items for teaching each unit or theme, as outlined in the curriculum.

Action Step 1.3 c. Apply best instructional practices for young learners with fidelity to achieve and maintain Paths to Quality (PTQ) Level 4 for all Pre-K classrooms.

Progress Toward the Goal: Not yet started

Action Step 1.3 d. Utilize formative assessments to identify student progress and learning gaps and use the data to plan appropriate instruction to achieve and maintain Paths to Quality PTQ Level 4 for all Pre-K classrooms.

Progress Toward the Goal: Not yet started (MCS purchased the formative assessment *GOLD*, the corresponding assessment tool to the *Creative Curriculum* towards the end of SY 2021-22)

Next Steps: In the upcoming school year, MCS will provide training to Pre-K staff in using the *GOLD* formative assessment system. Some teachers report using the system at their prior agencies and may be able to provide some assistance to others. The district will ensure that Pre-K teachers use the data from *GOLD* to make instructional decisions to address learners' gaps.



Pillar II: Recruitment, Development and Retention of Educational Leaders

GOAL 2: Our leaders at the district, school, and classroom levels are of the highest caliber and continuously excel through professional learning opportunities, coaching, & mentoring.

Rationale: As with other professional occupations, educators—both teachers and administrators—are lifelong learners, continuing to hone their craft, staying aware of new developments, and adhering to the best instructional practices, including culturally appropriate practices. Pillar II, with its focus on MCS staff, consists of two components: (a) the professional development of high-quality teachers and leaders and (b) the hiring and retention of highly competent teachers and leaders.

A. Development of Teachers and Leaders

Strategy 2.1 Develop teachers that know and use best educational practices.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.1 a.** Improve Instructional Leadership Teams’ understanding and ability to recognize best educational practices, leading to improved teacher classroom instruction.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: To improve school and district leaders’ understanding and recognition of best educational practices, MCS hired the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). For the past two years, NIET oversaw Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) weekly meetings. Consisting of school administrators and teacher leaders (master and mentor teachers), the ILTs participated in collective learning of best educational practices as guided by NIET. ILT learning goals advanced MCS school leaders’ ability to improve classroom instruction through:

- Analyzing student and teacher data to set and monitor school goals.
- Developing plans and activities to instill teacher collaboration.
- Supporting teachers’ observations and reflections of student work.
- Analyzing and objectively rating classroom teaching instructional practices.

During SY 2021-22, principals and master teachers participated in monthly, district wide collaborative NIET trainings to deepen their understanding of and ability to recognize best educational practices. NIET provided follow-up support to school leaders as they sought to apply their learning in the weekly ILT meetings, sharing their new learnings with the teachers. Training for principals occurred during their monthly meetings, with topics such as maximizing the ILT and PLC/cluster meeting structure to support student learning gaps; establishing instructional alignment with the academic standards; and using student and teacher data to establish multiple levels of school goals. District administrators and some school principals also participated in the NIET Summer Institute to continue to deepen their learning of educational best practices—a foundational principle of successful schools.



For master teachers, two-hour trainings (i.e., in Master Teacher Huddles) included topics such as analysis of student work and application to instruction; instructional coaching; establishing instructional alignment with academic standards through learning targets and success criteria; and long-range planning for teacher professional learning. Many master teachers and district administrators participated in the March NIET National Conference to further develop their instructional leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities to design and deliver high quality professional learning.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, NIET will continue to support school leadership development and best instructional practices. ILTs will strengthen their skills and knowledge through activities prepared by NIET. Monthly principal and master teacher trainings will include NIET topics such as monitoring teacher and student goals; supporting teachers in student work analysis using standards-aligned criteria; and strengthening the use and impact of the mentor teacher's role. Time allotted to NIET in principals' meetings will increase beyond the current 45 minutes to allow for deeper learning and collaboration. NIET will maintain its role in providing onsite coaching and support to ILTs and principals to increase the capacity of school leadership. The recently hired secondary school director will join the elementary director and the superintendent in supporting school principals in implementing effective instructional leadership practices.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.1 b.** Develop master and mentor teachers to lead professional learning and provide mentoring and coaching to improve teacher instruction.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Two years ago, MCS identified one master and several mentor teachers at each school with the role of coaching and modeling instructional best practices for the classroom teachers. In SY 2021-22, MCS filled open master and mentor teacher positions through an application and interview process. The new master teachers participated in NIET's foundational training, or "CORE," to develop the district/NIET agreed-upon skills and knowledge needed to serve in their critical teacher-leader role. As noted above, master teachers participated in a variety of professional learning opportunities this school year, including the master teacher monthly meetings and NIET's National Conference.

Additionally, NIET coached and supported the master teachers in their schools in planning and leading professional learning meetings (clusters) and in coaching classroom teachers concerning instruction. The training included observing NIET staff lead teacher cluster meetings. In turn, NIET staff observed master teachers conducting cluster meetings and provided critical feedback on the effectiveness of the meetings that they led. Annually, an evaluation of master and mentor teachers occurs through a NIET survey of classroom teachers' perceptions of the quality of master and mentor teachers' implementation of their responsibilities. Average ratings, on a 5-point scale, were 4.52 in SY 2020-21 and 4.39 for SY 2021-22, indicating that the support provided by master and mentor teachers is generally perceived as helpful and impactful by classroom teachers.

Next Steps: The focus for master and mentor teachers in 2022-23 will be to continue: (a) to plan and facilitate high quality professional learning sessions; (b) to conduct best practices instructional demonstrations; and (c) to coach teachers in improving instructional practices. The completion of these strategies will, over time, produce improved student outcomes—a significant need in all MCS schools. Master teachers will conduct a field test of their implementation of high-impact classroom instructional strategies, followed by reflection and discussion to: (a) deepen their planning for professional learning meetings and aligned coaching; (b) support the new district directors as they observe instruction and



provide critical feedback; and (c) co-plan cluster meetings and observe the meetings, providing feedback to master teachers in leading the professional development.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.1 c.** Utilize Ball State Professional Development School (PDS) Liaisons to guide professional learning communities and conduct training sessions to improve teacher instruction.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Ball State faculty from the Teachers College serve as professional liaisons to our schools with one Professional Development Specialists (PDS) serving each elementary school. PDS liaisons conducted weekly school visits consisting of meeting with the principal to discuss staff areas of needed growth, followed by planning and providing training to address those areas. At the secondary schools, two PDS liaisons – one focusing on math and one on literacy – provided professional learning opportunities to content area teachers, as related to curriculum and best practices instruction in the middle and high schools.

Next Steps: The PDS liaisons will continue in the elementary schools providing teacher support for SY 2022-23, but the number will change from six to four liaisons. They will share their time between the six elementary schools. The secondary schools will work with two PDS liaisons as in prior years.

Strategy 2.2 Develop and implement evaluation processes of teachers and school administrators, grounded in best practices for instruction and research-based components of successful school leadership.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.2 a.** Demonstrate principals’ objective and valid completion of the *MCS Evaluation Tool for Teachers*, including the use of rubric and feedback process.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Prior to SY 2020-21, MCS used its own teacher evaluation rubric with principals receiving limited training in agreed-upon measurable item definitions, resulting in low interrater reliability. In SY 2020-21, MCS selected NIET’s evaluation rubric based on educator standards and researched-based qualities of high-quality teachers. NIET’s Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric now serves as the district-wide instructional framework, providing common language for high quality teaching. Teachers learn about the evaluation tool/rubric directly in weekly professional learning meetings to better understand the expectations to which they are accountable.

In Spring 2020, NIET supported principals in conducting evaluations of teachers through classroom observations, which continued into SY 2021-22. NIET provided multiple trainings with the principals, such as observing classroom instruction through videos and reaching agreement on the quality of instruction shown. With a renewed and mutual understanding of best instructional practices, MCS is poised to improve the reliability of the principals’ observations. As common understandings of “highly effective” and “effective” instruction emerge, MCS will most likely see a downward shift in the number of teachers receiving the highest rating, reserving that rating for the exceptional educator (Table 2.1).



Table 2.1 MCS Yearly Teacher Evaluation Ratings

Rating	MCS-created Evaluation Tool				MCS-adopted NIET Evaluation Tool			
	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Highly Effective	175	59%	141	57%	137	38%	95	33%
Effective	118	39%	107	43%	217	59%	186	64%
Improvement Necessary	5	2%	0	0%	11	3%	7	3%
Ineffective	0	--	0	--	0	--	0	--

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, NIET will continue to increase the skills of school leaders to effectively analyze instructional practice in alignment with the newly updated NIET rubric and evaluation process. Through training and practice, the principals will deepen their skills and knowledge of high-quality evaluation and feedback processes. Master and mentor teachers will receive continued support through weekly professional learning meetings and instructional coaching activities led by NIET. These continued areas of focus will increase the accuracy of the ratings and interrater reliability, as well improve teacher’s use of best practices instruction through high-quality, district wide teacher expectations.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.2 b.** Demonstrate the objective and valid completion by directors and principals of the *MCS Evaluation Tool for Administrators*, including the rubric and feedback process.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Prior to this year, MCS principals created SMART goals which served as the basis for evaluation by their supervisors. This provided limited information about the principals’ work and was not an appropriate evaluation tool. As with the teacher’s evaluation tool, MCS studied NIET’s administrator rubric and adopted it for its use beginning 2021-22. Those that evaluate principals and assistant principals (the elementary and secondary directors and principals) participated in two days of training on the NIET Principal Standards Rubric which led to a shared vision and common language to define excellence in school leadership across six domains. Each domain consists of multiple indicators and descriptors to add more granular detail around each leadership practice.

MCS leaders committed to implementing NIET’s yearly cycle to evaluate and support school leaders. The cycle includes conferences and goal setting at the beginning of the school year, a mid-year progress monitoring and reflective conversation, and a summative end-of-year reflection and evaluation conference. NIET trainings included videos, allowing leaders to observe and practice rating school leaders using the Principal Standards Rubric and to review and analyze supervisors conducting evaluation conferences with a principal. The trainings served as a calibration of proficiency around best leadership practices. NIET also provided auxiliary resources including handbooks and templates, and virtual and onsite support to ensure the fidelity of the rubric’s implementation.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to work with NIET to develop the skills of district and school leaders to effectively analyze school leadership in alignment with the NIET Principal Standards Rubric and evaluation process with the specific tasks being,



- Identification of high priority leadership needs based on the 2021-22 principal evaluations based on the Principals Standards Rubric, followed by training related to those needs.
- Continued training and practice to calibrate district and school leaders on their ratings of Principal Standards Rubric domains, indicators, and descriptors, leading to improved consistency and interrater reliability.

NIET will continue to support district administrators and principals in planning and delivering high-quality evaluation conferences and feedback with principals, corresponding to the Principal Standards Rubric evaluation process.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.2 c.** Develop a communication plan to discuss the purposes and processes of the MCS Teacher Evaluation Tool with the teachers.

Progress Toward the Goal: Completed, SY 2020-21

Strategy 2.3 Expand administrator and teacher awareness and application of culturally competent practices.

Rationale: Cultural competence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with people from a diverse array of cultures and backgrounds. The demonstration of cultural competence is the willingness to learn about, respect, and accept the cultural practices, varying perspectives, and worldview of others. Cultural competence is one of the two foundational principles of the MCS Innovation Plan:

Culturally Responsive Practices: We, as a school district, promise to recognize and respond to our learners' cultures in all aspects of our teaching and interactions, ensuring an equitable education for all (pg. 10).

- ◆ **Action Step 2.3 a.** Improve staff understanding of MCS' student and family cultures (racial, ethnic, and economic – poverty).

Progress Toward the Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In teaching and responding appropriately to students' cultures, MCS will provide a variety of professional development experiences. In SY 2021-22, initial PD training focused on minority (Black/African American) students' experience at institutions of higher education. The half-day training included School Equity Teams (SETs) and school administrators. During the school year, SET teams led discussions about culture—ethnic and/or racial—during monthly staff meetings, based on an article read by the staff. Staff engagement varied and the outcome of this type of PD needs to be determined.

Next Steps: For SY 2022-23, teachers will continue to investigate and utilize evidence-based, effective strategies—practices proven to lead to increased knowledge and understanding of cultures. Administrators will develop PD plans based on specific strategies that teachers need to learn. Training for SETs and school and district administrators will include poverty simulation with a goal of increasing awareness and understanding of poverty, as it is a reality for many MCS families. As an interactive, immersion experience, the training addresses misconceptions about students and families of poverty.



- ◆ **Action Step 2.3 b.** Implement instructional practices that reflect understanding and appreciation for students' cultures.

Progress Toward the Goal: Not Yet Started

Strategy 2.4 Create a culture of excellence in teaching, learning, and leading.

Rationale: In many professions, including education, opportunities for advancement serve as incentives. At MCS we provide these opportunities on a broad basis so teachers and administrators can increase their knowledge and accept greater responsibilities through training, endorsements, certifications, and degrees with the outcome of progressing upwardly on the MCS career ladder.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.4** Design and implement a career ladder for teacher leaders of excellence, including master and mentor teacher roles, and compensate with supplemental pay.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In Spring 2020, MCS created two career opportunities for classroom teachers—becoming a master teacher or a mentor teacher. As described earlier, (Strategy 2.1), MCS selected one teacher at each school to serve as a mentor teacher and a master teacher in April 2020. Due to their increased responsibilities, master and mentor teachers received stipends.

Next Steps: MCS will continue the training of master and mentor teachers followed by stipends for their increased responsibilities.

B. Recruitment and Retention of Teachers and Educational Leaders

Rationale: MCS's goal is to create a diverse, high-quality teaching and leadership force, which will come to fruition through the district's intentional actions in staff recruitment and retention. A proven strategy in this area is providing various incentives to encourage educators to initially take employment with the district, and once there, to continue as long-term employees.

Strategy 2.5 Offer incentives to new and returning teachers to improve recruitment and retention.

Rationale: Teachers choose where they want to teach and with a nationwide teacher shortage, school districts are competing for teachers. Offering incentives is a way to increase attention to and attraction for working in a specific district. MCS is committed to creating incentives that correspond to today's teacher needs and wants, and to improve our communication about the availability of those incentives.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.5 a.** Explore and develop incentives, such as financial assistance, for new teachers to locate in Muncie.

Progress Toward the Goal: Early Stages



Evidence of Progress: This school year, the CEO met with a banker from a local Muncie bank regarding the possibility of assisting teachers new to Muncie with home loans.

Next Steps: This discussion will continue in SY 2022-23.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.5 b.** Increase staff salaries to levels comparable to or higher than area school districts to attract and retain personnel.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress #1. Salary increases serve as a financial incentive for recent graduates of teacher education programs, for experienced but new-to-MCS teachers, and for current MCS teachers. Over the past decade, the district’s financial struggles precluded salary increases. With surrounding districts providing yearly increases, MCS witnessed a yearly exodus of staff due to its lower salaries.

To address this issue, in December 2018 the newly appointed MCS School Board provided one-time stipends to teachers, support staff, and administrators. In 2019, the new CEO, Dr. Kwiatkowski, and the board agreed that increasing salaries was a critical priority for the district to recruit new teachers and retain current teachers. With careful examination of the budget and expansion of funding sources, MCS continued to meet its commitment to yearly salary and wage increases. For teachers, salaries increased in 2019-20 by 4.8 percent, followed by a 4.5 percent increase in 2020-21, and an 8.1 percent increase in 2021-22 (Table 2.2). A new high was reached for the upcoming year 2022-23 with an increase of 14.7 percent salary increase for teachers.

Support staff salaries realized an increase of 4.9 percent from 2020-21 to 2021-22. Administrators’ salary increases doubled in 2019-20 to 2020-21 from 1.0 percent to 2.0 percent and doubled again in SY 2021-22 to 4.0 percent and will be determined for SY 2022-23 later in the school year.

Table 2.2: Salary Increases by Groups: Teachers, Support Staff, and Administrators

Staff	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19 Stipends	2019-20	%	2020-21	%	2021-22	%	2022-23	%
Teachers	0	0	\$ 700 each	\$ 701,000	4.8	\$ 645,000	4.4	\$1,300,000	8.1	\$ 2,400,000	14.7
Support Staff	0	0	\$ 500 each	\$ 73,000	2.8	\$ 99,000	2.6	\$ 209,000	4.9	\$279,000	6.7
Administrators	0	0	\$ 700 each	\$ 30,000	1.0	\$ 59,000	2.1	\$ 120,000	4.0		
Total	0	0	\$ 344,750 ¹	\$ 804,000	Avg 3.8	\$ 803,000 ²	Avg 3.7	\$ 1,629,000 ³	Avg 7.1		

¹ Includes stipends of \$350 for part-time teachers and \$200 for part-time support staff.

² Includes supplemental pandemic stipends in Spring 2021 of \$1,000 (full year staff) or \$500 (half-year or part-time staff), Total: \$350,000

³ Includes supplemental stipends in Spring 2022 of \$2,000 (full year staff) or \$1,000 (half-year or part-time staff), for a total of \$350,000



Evidence of Progress #2. Across the U.S., a shortage of teachers exists in certain fields such as mathematics, science, special education, world languages, and dual languages. MCS offers financial incentives for teachers in these hard-to-fill areas. Schools also routinely experience shortages in teachers for dual certification courses (higher level courses providing both high school and college credits) and for Project Lead the Way (PLTW). For teachers certified to teach those courses, MCS offers a financial incentive of up to \$1,000 per semester (\$2,000 per year).

Evidence of Progress #3. Teacher retention is a logical measure of teacher satisfaction. In the prior ten years, MCS witnessed an ever-increasing departure of teachers, primarily due to higher salaries in nearby districts. With the CEO and Board’s focus on increasing teacher salaries, teacher retention rates increased from 67 percent in 2016-17 to 88 percent in 2021-22 (Table 2.3). Salaries now mirror those of other area districts and serve to support teacher retention rates.

Table 2.3: Retention Rates of Teachers

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22*
Teacher Count	423	364	347	361	362	362
Teacher Resignations	140	90	63	60	68	
Retention Percent	67%	75%	82%	83%	81%	79%

This financial strategy is making a difference as noted by the MCS CEO, Dr. Kwiatkowski:

As compared to the exodus of teachers and administrators in the period between 2010 and 2018, we have witnessed a much lower turnover rate each year with a particularly low rate in 2021-22.

Next Steps: The national economic forecast of inflation continues for SY 2022-23. As prices increase, ideally, salaries and wages also increase. The MCS CEO and board will maintain their commitment to increasing wages and salaries with clear recognition its relationship and importance in retaining high-quality educators.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.5 c.** Promote and provide Ball State’s 50% tuition discount and other discounted services, such as use of the exercise facility and admission to sports events.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Through the BSU/MCS partnership, the university provides several incentives for our educators. To encourage continual teacher education, BSU provides a 50% tuition discount for up to six credit hours per semester. As many teachers strive to obtain a Masters’ Degree or an endorsement in a specialty area, the tuition reduction is a highly sought benefit for teacher recruitment and retention (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4: Staff Participation in Ball State’s Tuition Reduction Program

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Number of staff participating	33	28	34	22



Next Steps: MCS will continue to evaluate the current strategies, consider additional strategies, and ensure that the BSU discounts are prominent in teacher recruitment and retention marketing materials.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.5. d.** Support teachers through professional learning and career ladder opportunities.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Professional learning as related to career ladder opportunities includes training for new master and mentor teachers. This past year, MCS provided summer training for new hires to understand and learn the MCS curriculum and adopted research-based instructional best practices and to become familiar with the Muncie community, MCS students, and their families. This is also the time that teachers learn about the career ladder of becoming master or mentor teacher.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to determine and provide additional career ladder opportunities.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.5 e.** Hire highly qualified bilingual educators for dual language immersion classrooms through the development of a talent recruitment campaign that includes stipends as an incentive.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Throughout the U.S., a shortage exists in dual language (DL) educators. MCS works diligently to hire teachers with this specialty. During the 2021-22 school year, licensed bilingual (Spanish/English) teachers led four of the five DL classrooms. A licensed English teacher taught the fifth classroom. One of the four DL teachers is enrolled in the “Transition to Teaching” program and is a native speaker of Spanish. This enhances students' cultural experiences and competencies as well as that of the DL teaching team.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to develop a talent recruitment campaign, specific to bilingual educators, as it strives to increase the number of bilingual classrooms each year. MCS will also explore a partnership with IDOE with visiting (international) teachers who serve as native speakers of Spanish for the 2022-23 school year, with the realization that this is a short-term solution.

Strategy 2.6 Establish culturally responsive processes and communication to improve teacher recruitment and retention.

Rationale: MCS is committed to the development of a culturally responsive community in all aspects of the schools. This includes recruiting and hiring high quality staff that reflect the diversity of the student population. The CEO and board determined the need for a person to lead this initiative and in 2020 established a new position, Director of Diversity, to reflect the district’s commitment.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.6 a.** Review and amend recruitment and retention processes to reflect cultural responsiveness.



Progress Toward the Goal: Early Start

Evidence of Progress: To assist in the retainment of staff of various cultures, the MCS diversity director established several groups this year: district equity team (DET), school equity team (SET), and a minority equality team (MET), whose membership was mostly teachers of color. A similar goal exists for each group to assist planning and developing recruitment and retention efforts of minority teachers to reach a level of diversity that matches the MCS student population. In SY 2021-22, no actions occurred related to this action step but will be pursued in 2022-23.

Next Steps: MCS will conduct a formal review of the current processes of recruiting staff and determine ways to be more inclusive of all teacher groups. The equity teams will develop goals and timelines to implement the needed changes. The diversity director will ensure the completion of these actions in SY 2022-23 and collaborate with the chief communications officer for items related to marketing and messaging of materials.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.6 b.** Review and edit school and district level communications, both written literature and digital media, to reflect cultural responsiveness

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: The collaboration of the chief communications officer and the diversity director resulted in highlighting the achievements of and opportunities for MCS minority students in SY 2021-22. Several press releases, social media posts, videos, and internal and external messages extended MCS' focus on minority students. Highlights include the MLK Youth Citizenship Awards, Black History Month, and MCHS Early College program. In Fall 2021, MCS provided stories in multiple formats regarding the arrival of Afghan refugee students and the district and community efforts, demonstrating our care and concern for our students.

Next Steps: For SY 2022-23, the MCS district will continue to provide communications for and about minority students and their families.

- ◆ **Action Step 2.6 c.** Examine and improve past recruiting efforts and increase marketing efforts to sites reflecting a diverse, high-quality workforce.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2020-21, the assistant superintendent overseeing human resources and the director of diversity reviewed and determined ways to improve recruitment of teachers graduating from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), including those nearest to Indiana: Lincoln University (PA), Tennessee State University, Kentucky State University, Central State University (OH), and Harris Stowe State University (MO). Previously, job fairs to recruit and hire new graduates occurred in-person at colleges and universities. Now, job fairs are virtual with MCS recruiters attending two in 2021-22: the Teacher Minority Job Fair, hosted by MSD of Wayne Township and the Ball State University Teacher Job Fair.

Next Steps: The assistant superintendent/HR director and the diversity director will collaborate and meet with school and district administrators and DET and MET members to determine and implement



changes in recruitment efforts. The director of diversity will increase her communications with minority students that are pursuing teaching degrees at Indiana colleges and universities. The communications will improve in consistency and meaningfulness to the college students with an outcome of increasing their awareness of MCS as a desirable future employer. During SY 2022-23, the diversity director will form relationships with minority education majors at Ball State and will expand to other Indiana universities and colleges the following year.



Pillar III: Student-Centered Teaching and Learning

GOAL 3: Our schools provide an exceptional academic experience for all learners, embracing the whole child, with a commitment to meeting individual needs.

Rationale: “We believe in a learner-centered approach to education—one that focuses on the needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles of the students rather than on the conveniences of adults” (MCS Strategic Plan, 2020-2025, p. 12).

COVID-19 Pandemic: SY 2020-21 began with multiple COVID-19 restrictions in place and ended with most of them being lifted. In Fall 2021, MCS administrators communicated daily with the health department and IDOE and closely monitored Delaware County’s COVID-19 infection rates. When the number of cases declined and vaccines became available, MCS rescinded mask requirements with some students and staff choosing to continue masking. Hygiene measures such as bottle-refill stations and cleansing of desks and classrooms continued throughout the year.

The two years of COVID-19 severely affected teaching and learning throughout our country’s schools. MCS was no exception. Most MCS students returned to in-class instruction in SY 2021-22, but more than 300 students opted for e-learning. Absentee rates were higher than normal as teachers, staff, and students isolated at home due to exposure risks or to recover from the virus. The Brookings Institute, a noted research organization, described the impact on learning during this time.¹

. . . schools have faced severe staff shortages, high rates of absenteeism and quarantines, and rolling school closures. Furthermore, students and educators continue to struggle with mental health challenges, higher rates of violence and misbehavior, and concerns about lost instructional time. . . the cumulative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students’ academic achievement has been large. We tracked changes in math and reading test scores across the first two years of the pandemic using data from 5.4 million U.S. students in grades 3-8. . . test-score gaps between students in low-poverty and high-poverty elementary schools grew by approximately 20% in math and 15% in reading, primarily during the 2020-21 school year. Achievement dropped more between Fall 2020 and 2021 than between Fall 2019 and 2020, indicating that disruptions to learning have continued to impact students well past the initial hits.

Pillar III measures student learning through numerous ways including state assessments, and like the findings from The Brookings Institute, MCS results are lower than we expected. However, many of the related strategies and action steps that were implemented have shown promise in creating change and improvement in the future. MCS continues to work daily to move beyond the limitations placed on us through the pandemic, providing an enriching and safe learning environment for all learners.

¹ Kuhfeld, M., Soland, J., Lewis, K., & Morton, E. (March 3, 2022). *The pandemic has had devastating impacts on learning. What will it take to help students catch up?* Brown Center Chalkboard, [tinyurl.com/ahve8t43](https://www.brookings.edu/ideas-and-issues/the-pandemic-has-had-devastating-impacts-on-learning-what-will-it-take-to-help-students-catch-up/)



A. LEARNER-CENTERED CLASSROOMS and SCHOOLS

Rationale: Creating student-centered teaching and learning requires attention to the physical layout of the room (desk arrangements and seating) and the mode of instruction. The physical layout of the classrooms changed in SY 2020-21 and continued for most of SY 2021-22. The change was not based on best learning practices for students but on social distancing as required by the pandemic. The second goal of adding to the mode of instruction through technology rose to the forefront with MCS implementing a comprehensive and effective e-Learning program in a short amount of time.

Strategy 3.1 Improve visual and linguistic representation of diverse learners and families in classrooms and schools.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.1 a.** Enhance school-wide visual images and languages to reflect diversity of student population, such as signage, bulletin boards, displays, and communications.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

- ◆ **Action Step 3.1 b.** Review and ensure inclusion of diversity in curricula, materials, and lessons with positive, diverse representations.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

Strategy 3.2 Establish best practices learning environments for learners through structural changes in buildings, acquisition of flexible seating, and changes in classroom seating arrangements.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.2 a.** Restructure/remodel school buildings to improve the learning environment.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS seeks to update its school buildings to serve as optimal learning environments for all students. While COVID-19 made for difficult educational settings, it offered an opportunity to improve the structures of our schools through new federal funding, the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund). School construction was an allowable use of ESSER. MCS conducted structural and educational reviews and determined that three schools needed remodeling or restructuring to improve the learning environment, including improvements in safety and security, air quality, and acoustics.

In Summer 2021, construction began at East Washington Academy –built in 1972—to convert its 1970’s “open concept” design to one with classrooms defined by walls. Remodeling will conclude this fall with a reconfigured lobby, upgraded HVAC and IT systems, plumbing, toilets, and new flooring—in addition to classroom walls. As such large public construction projects usually occur through increases in taxes



and /or the creation of school bonds, MCS is fortunate to physically improve its schools without cost to the community.

Next Steps: Construction will occur at two elementary buildings during SY 2022-23 – South View and West View. South View, built in 1980, follows the same open-concept structure as EWA and will undergo a similar redesign and updates. As a school erected in 1953, West View needs additional classroom space, which will occur through the construction of a new wing.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.2 b.** Redesign classrooms to include flexible seating furniture and varied seating arrangements to improve the learning environment.

Progress Toward Goal: Initial Stages

Evidence of Progress: Traditionally, schools use desks, chairs, and tables aligned in rows or groupings. Educational research shows that some students learn better with other types of furniture called “flexible seating.” In this setting, schools provide “a wide variety of furniture and workspaces, to put students at the center of learning, and to allow them to make choices based on their preferences and the objectives of the task at hand.”² At MCS, in SY 2021-22, schools and teachers increased their ordering of flexible seating. Master and mentor teachers also coached teachers to recognize when a student might benefit from flexible seating.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, staff will recommend types of flexible seating needed for their classrooms with the district obtaining the furniture, as deemed appropriate. Master teachers will suggest varied arrangements of the seating, depending on learners’ needs and the learning task.

Strategy 3.3 Establish a cohesive and effective e-Learning program.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.3 a.** Execute technology management services, equipment, and processes to meet the needs of staff and students K-12.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: While MCS had begun to develop technology management services, equipment, and processes prior to SY 2020-21, the arrival of the pandemic required the IT staff to move rapidly to complete the execution. With most tasks completed in SY 2020-21, the IT staff reviewed the systems and made adaptations and changes as needed this past school year.

Next Steps: The IT Department will continue to review systems and processes alongside changing needs and address those needs. New students and staff will receive training on Schoology (LMS).

² Bluteau, J., Aubenas, S., & Dufour, F. (May 2022). Influence of flexible classroom seating on the wellbeing and mental health of upper elementary school students. *Frontiers in Psychology* 27(13). Retrieved <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9186794/>



- ◆ **Action Step 3.3 b.** Enhance educators’ capacity to (1) use technology efficiently and effectively, especially with *Schoology*, the learning management system (LMS) and (2) design and teach best practices for e-learning lessons.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: The informational technology (IT) coach provides trainings to new teachers concerning *Schoology*. In SY 2021-22, the coach developed additional learning materials for teachers to use and visited each school weekly, meeting with staff by appointment.

Next Steps: The IT coach will continue to provide training and support and implement other applicable action items as needed.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.3 c.** Establish a consistent and rigorous e-Learning program for grades K–12 to meet short and long-term educational needs, including a virtual program offering.

Rationale: An essential MCS strategy for instruction is the development of an electronic presence for curriculum, lessons, projects, and assignments that is available to students on the computer or other devices. Termed, “virtual learning programs” (VLP), this action step became critical to teaching during the pandemic as it empowered students to continue to learn remotely through online interactions with their teachers and fellow students.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2020-21 MCS hired *Stride/FuelEd* to provide online coursework, digital resources, and communication tools for the virtual learning program. MCS students enrolled in VLP received academic counseling, participated in extracurricular opportunities, and received support from IT through the school district.

Next Steps: The State of Indiana adopted new requirements for VLP beginning SY 2022-23. Programs with 100 or more number of students must register as a “school.” With the MCS Virtual Learning Program anticipating an enrollment over 100 students in Fall 2022, the school board approved creating a new school for the VLP, Muncie Virtual Learning Academy, to meet the state requirement. The VLA will begin Fall 2022 as a separate, stand-alone school.

Strategy 3.4 Foster educator-created innovative projects.

Note: During the two years of the pandemic, “innovation” was the watchword for teaching and learning to continue in an unfamiliar and restricted learning environment. As classrooms return to normal, MCS anticipates beginning to address this strategy in SY 2022-23.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.4 a.** Encourage educator-created innovative projects.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun



- ◆ **Action Step 3.4 b.** Develop district supports for innovative project awardees for project execution.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

- ◆ **Action Step 3.4 c.** Assist in sustaining and/or broadening projects.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

B-1. LITERACY, K-8 grades

Strategy 3.5. Develop and implement with fidelity a K-5 core literacy (English language arts) curriculum with best practices instruction, and valid and reliable assessments.

Rationale: In Spring 2018 (prior to Dr. Kwiatkowski’s tenure), MCS administration and staff, along with Ball State faculty, realized the need to analyze current literacy instruction and curriculum and make changes based on poor results of IREAD3 and ILEARN state assessments. After studying several programs, staff selected the Fountas & Pinnell Classroom Literacy program. The district secured funding sources, ordered the materials, and established a rigorous professional development training schedule for teachers, principals, interventionists, master and mentor teachers, and district administration, conducted by Fountas and Pinnell consultants.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 a. ELA curriculum, K-5:** Develop a district-wide K5 literacy curriculum map aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards, English/Language Arts: K–5, and ILEARN Blueprints.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, SY 2021-22

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2020-21, teacher groups developed daily literacy curriculum maps and digital lessons using the Fountas and Pinnell Classroom (FPC) materials, which proved to be essential as remote learning became the norm for students during the COVID-19 school building closures. At the beginning of SY 2021-22, a group of teachers updated the reading curriculum maps and digital learning slides and posted them on the district’s shared drive for teachers and administrators to access. K-4 teachers used the maps and shared resources to implement the FPC literacy program with students. Master and mentor teachers provided professional development, modeling, and coaching, and routinely observed classroom teachers, providing feedback and support to improve instructional best practices for reading.

Next Steps: The curriculum maps and digital resources will be reviewed each summer and changes made as indicated by student assessment data.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 b. ELA curriculum, K-5:** Demonstrate understanding of alignment of adopted Fountas & Pinnell Classroom™ (FPC) reading process to Indiana Academic Standards and ILEARN.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, 2019-20

- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 c. ELA curriculum/instruction, K-5:** Increased understanding and knowledge of the five essential components of reading by staff and administrators through district-wide professional development by FPC consultants.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: During Summer 2021, a Fountas & Pinnell Classroom (FPC) consultant led professional development for elementary teachers new to MCS and to all Pre-K teachers. Support during the school year is described in Action Step 3.5. d.1 – the fidelity of implementation of FPC.

Next Steps: During Summer 2022, Fountas and Pinnell will provide “reboot” sessions for interested teachers to find solutions for problem areas and to increase understanding of the components. During the SY 2022-23, the director of elementary education will meet with the master and mentor teachers, principals, and the FPC consultant to determine the evidence-based methods for increasing teachers’ full implementation of the reading program.

From research and experience, the MCS administration knows that extensive hands-on learning is the most effective in changing teacher practices. Thus, we will utilize continued daily modeling and coaching of the teaching the reading program, as provided by the master and mentor teachers and the FPC consultant. Principals will continue their role of observing classrooms and discussing with master and mentor teachers the strengths and areas to improve for each teacher as related to teaching reading.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 d-1. ELA instruction, K-5:** Classroom teachers will Increase their fidelity of implementation of Fountas and Pinnell Classroom reading program through school-based master and mentor teachers selected for their exceptional teaching skills, and as trained by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET).

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: To determine the implementation fidelity of the reading program, a FPC consultant reviewed all classrooms over six days and determined large variance between classrooms and between schools in the teaching of the FPC components: phonics, spelling, and word study; interactive read-aloud; guided reading; shared reading; and writing about reading. A high percentage of teachers were not teaching all components, with the possible result of student learning gaps in reading. To increase teachers’ instruction of all components, each school’s master teacher worked closely with the classroom teachers to provide ongoing coaching and modeling, as well as through weekly grade-level meetings to address identified teacher instructional needs. The master teachers demonstrated implementation of the various FPC components and best instructional practices for teaching reading. They received training from NIET during monthly Master Teacher Huddle working meetings to develop their skills in teaching other teachers.



Next Steps: As determined by the FPC audit, the fidelity of implementation of FPC needs to increase. Daily modeling and coaching of teaching FPC will continue from the master and mentor teachers and the FPC consultant. Principals will observe classrooms and ensure that the master and mentor teachers are supporting those teachers needing the most growth in reading instruction.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 d-2. ELA instruction, K-5:** Develop and implement a digital learning curriculum and materials for the Fountas & Pinnell Classroom literacy program, grades K-5.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, SY 2020-21

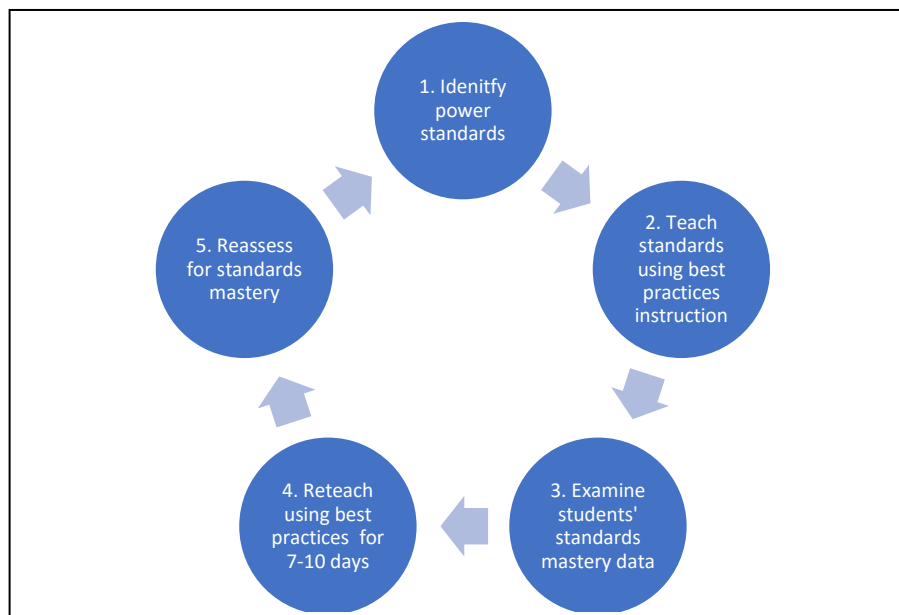
- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 e-1. ELA assessments, K-5:** Utilize two formative reading assessments to routinely evaluate student progress by comparing current levels to past levels: *i-Ready* and Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Systems.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2020-21, MCS adopted *i-Ready* formative assessments from *Curriculum Associates* (CA) for elementary literacy and math, due to its strong alignment to the Indiana State Standards. Formative assessments differ from summative assessments (e.g., state standardized tests) in that they routinely monitor students learning by occurring three or more times during the school year. These adaptive, diagnostic assessments provide MCS with data to identify student learning needs based on the specific state standards that they “mastered.” CA identifies *i-Ready* as a “standards-mastery” assessment as its purpose is to assist teachers in leading all students to mastering the state standards.

During SY 2021-22, *Curriculum Associates* conducted Standards Mastery training to teachers and administrators. The CA Formative Assessment Cycle (Figure 3.1) is an intentional, data driven process to provide all students with the opportunity to master reading grade level content (Figure 3.1). The *i-Ready* assessment allows for real-time data of students’ mastery of the reading standards.

Figure 3.1: *i-Ready* Formative Assessment Cycle





Step 4, “Reteaching” is a unique and critical aspect of the CA process as educators rethink how they presented the information or skills, consider why it was difficult for the learner, identify common error patterns, and implement a new way or method for teaching the lesson to empower student success.

Next Steps: To improve teachers’ and administrators’ ability to make use of the *i-Ready* data, they will receive professional development in SY 2022-23 on implementing the Formative Assessment Cycle. The first step will be to recognize the Power Standards—those standards that are critical to learn—with the assistance of *i-Ready* consultants and IDOE resources. Steps 3 and 4 of the cycle occur during the regularly scheduled data meetings and which follow the designed protocol with principals and master teachers leading the meetings.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 e-2. ELA assessments, K-5:** Analyze *i-Ready* formative assessment data with K-5 classroom teachers, implementing changes in instruction and content depending on data results of literacy learning gaps through professional development by Curriculum Associates.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2021-22, *Curriculum Associates (CA) i-Ready* consultants provided training for classroom and special education teachers, master and mentor teachers, and school principals. Focus areas from the assessment cycle were Step 3, Examining Student Data and Step 4, Reteaching. The consultants led teachers through multiple experiences in interpreting the *i-Ready* data to determine a student’s specific learning gap (Step 3). Once clarified, training moved to Step 4 with teachers answering, “What do I need to do and how often do I need to do it to help this student to bridge this learning gap.” By implementing this step, teachers increased their knowledge of the reading process and improved their understanding of the science of reading. CA also provided teachers with in-depth curricular and instructional strategies and best practices for addressing specific reading learning gaps. For master and mentor teachers, CA provided in-depth training on how to use its protocols to create, present, and discuss data and to develop action plans during the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

Next Steps: Support from CA in SY 2022-23 will include professional development for administrators and master teachers on leading data meetings, utilizing *i-Ready* data and suggested resources, and leading this initiative. Teachers will practice conducting data chats and goal setting with students. CA will continue its check-in meetings to monitor progress and provide support through the following meetings:

- Monthly with district administrators to review the progress of the initiative.
- Bi-monthly with school leaders to focus on leading the initiative.
- Bi-monthly with master teachers to provide professional development in supporting teachers through the formative assessment cycle.

Teachers will receive three days, to be determined by the principals, of professional development during the school year to support the continued implementation of the Formative Assessment Cycle. Teachers will also continue to implement the FPC Benchmarks three times a year to determine student reading levels.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.5 f. ELA instruction, K-5:** Improve classroom teachers’ fidelity of implementation of the Orton Gillingham Approach (OG) for reading with support from school-based master and mentor teachers and OG trainers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2021-22, IDOE outlined the importance of the “Science of Reading” referring to reading research from multiple disciplines—developmental psychology, educational psychology, cognitive science, and cognitive neuroscience. The outcome of this research is the recognition of five components deemed critical to learning to read English, especially for struggling readers: (1) phonics, (2) phonemic awareness, (3) vocabulary, (4) fluency, and (5) reading comprehension. While the FPC curriculum utilizes all five of the components, struggling readers need additional learning experiences in specific areas. To address this issue, MCS will increase its use of the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach in SY 2022-23, which will include additional teaching and learning of phonics, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary. This will help students to break down reading and spelling into smaller skills that involve letters and sounds, and then learning to rebuild them into words.

Next Steps: In Summer 2022, Marian University will provide OG training for teachers that wish to increase their understanding and skills. They may select online or in-person learning. MCS will carry this training forward in SY 2022-23 by providing ongoing OG training during early-release days. The elementary director will participate in PLC discussions regarding OG instruction and will observe and support classrooms alongside the principals to increase the fidelity of implementation. MCS will also develop an OG scope and sequence chart for planning instruction.

Strategy 3.6. Develop and implement with fidelity grades 6-8 core literacy (English language arts) curriculum with best practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.6 a. ELA instruction, middle school:** Increase teachers’ knowledge and skills of the teaching and learning of literacy through (a) professional learning opportunities and (b) school-based master and mentor teachers as selected for exceptional teaching skills and trained by NIET.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: The middle schools utilize the online version of *StudySync* as the ELA curriculum with over 2,000 classic and contemporary titles available. With an embedded approach of learning reading and writing skills, *StudySync* focuses on building learners’ language and comprehension.

Some MCS students enter sixth grade without mastery of phonics and phonemic awareness and with reduced vocabulary, which leads to poor reading comprehension. Since these are K-3 skills, middle school teachers need additional training to learn not only how to reteach these critical literacy skills but how to teach them to older students. To increase teacher ability, middle school ELA teachers received twenty hours of professional development in SY 2021-22 from Dr. Susann Benko, professor of English at Ball State. Dr. Benko conducted weekly visits to the two middle schools and the high school, providing



critical support to extend teachers' knowledge of best instructional practices for teaching ELA. Through observing Dr. Benko's teaching and co-teaching alongside her, teachers introduced instructional practices to counter the three most common student learning gaps in reading and writing in middle and high school:

- *Reading informational text*: the ability to read academic content, which is difficult for learners that have not yet mastered phonemes and phonemic awareness; training centered on how to teach phonemes and phonemic awareness at the middle and high school levels.
- *Writing a constructed response*: the ability to write a response to text using the text to support the answer; training focused on examining student writing and pairing the learning needs to resources that assist students in identifying and writing about the central idea and how to use text-based evidence in their responses.
- *Writing argumentatively*: the ability to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence about the topic; and establish a position in a concise manner; teachers received training on developing student skills to evaluate, judge, and problem-solve, followed by presenting one's opinion or position in a logical and concise manner.

Next Steps: In summer of 2022, middle school teachers will receive training on a curricular program from the National Writing Project called College, Career and Community Writing Program (C3WP). This program focuses on teachers supporting students in reading multiple texts on a topic and practicing their argumentative skills. Eight middle school teachers will participate in the 3-day training to use the instructional resources in SY 2022-23.

Action Step 3.6 b. ELA assessment, middle school: Utilize the ELA formative assessments, *i-Ready*, for middle school students with teachers routinely analyzing data to determine student strengths and areas of weakness and using that information to plan and implement best instructional practices for teaching the learning gaps.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2021-22, Curriculum Associates *i-Ready* specialists met regularly with middle school leaders, master teachers, and reading interventionists. The consultants led the educators in examining student *i-Ready* formative assessment scores and in utilizing the data protocols provided to interpret the data. Through teacher-student data chats and goal setting times, teachers utilized the protocols to draw attention to the importance of students being accountable for their results. Teachers developed an understanding of the importance of and the process for responding in real-time to student learning needs and gaps by answering the question, "What do I do now?"

Next Steps: MCS middle school staff will continue to receive training from *i-Ready* staff that allows for practicing data interpretations and determining the best instructional practice for the learning gap and the specific standard. MCS instructional leaders will receive support through monthly one-on-one consultations to review student data, determine the health status of the implementation of the assessment, and develop PD planning with school leaders. Master teachers will receive professional development monthly in their PLCs to analyze *i-Ready* student data and to fully implement the formative assessment cycle. CA will conduct monthly check-ins with the district administration team.



B-2. MATHEMATICS

Strategy 3.7. Develop and implement with fidelity the K-5 core mathematics curriculum with best practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments.

Rationale: Along with English language arts, mathematics is a foundational content area that all students need to become successful learners and to achieve in college and careers. To improve student knowledge in math, MCS will select a rigorous curriculum and materials, ensure teachers use research-based practices for teaching math, and utilize formative assessments to determine student learning, growth, and needs.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.7 a. Math curriculum, K-5:** Adopt a mathematics curriculum that aligns to Indiana Academic Standards and indicating ILEARN Blueprints and create a district-wide curriculum map.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, Spring Semester 2022

Evidence of Progress: The focus of SY 2021-22 was the investigation and selection of a new elementary math curriculum. MCS requested math curricula from several publishers, as recommended by IDOE. Following teachers' reviews of the products, each school voted to determine its selection with Curriculum Associate's *i-Ready Classroom Mathematics* (K–5) receiving the most votes.

Next Steps: To advance the implementation of the new math curriculum in SY 2022-23, selected teachers and the elementary director will outline the school year and concepts to teach each day/week and for each grade level—mapping the curriculum. *iReady* experts will provide focused professional development prior to school starting for all elementary classroom teachers with additional trainings occurring on early release days and cluster meetings throughout the school year.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.7 b. Math instruction, K-5:** Increase teacher and administrator knowledge of and skills in teaching and learning mathematics through professional learning opportunities based on the eight teacher practices from the National Council of Teachers of Math (NCTM) and provided by *iReady* experts from Curriculum Associates and school-based mentor and master teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Not yet begun

Evidence of Progress: (To be addressed in SY 2022-23 - see Next Steps).

Next Steps: To advance the implementation of the new math curriculum in SY 2022-23, selected teachers and the elementary director will develop the curriculum map of the teaching concepts and the schedule for each day/week and for each grade level. *iReady* experts will provide focused professional development prior to school starting for all elementary classroom teachers with additional trainings occurring on early release days and cluster meetings throughout the school year.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.7 c. Math assessments, K-5:** Analyze results of *i-Ready* formative assessment with K-5 teachers implementing changes in instruction and content depending on data results of students' mathematics learning gaps with assistance in trainings from IDOE and MCS mentor and master teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2020-21, MCS adopted the *i-Ready* formative assessment which K-5 teachers implement three times a year to measure individual learning strengths and areas of need. During SY 2021-22, Curriculum Associate's *i-Ready* specialists met regularly with middle school leaders, master teachers, and math interventionists to understand the process for and the value of the *i-Ready* formative assessment.

Next Steps: *i-Ready* professional staff will continue to provide training to school teams in analyzing the assessment results three times a year to determine the instruction that students need.

Strategy 3.8 Develop and implement with fidelity the middle school core mathematics curriculum with best practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments.

Rationale: Along with English language arts, mathematics is a foundational content area that is essential to future college and career success. To improve student knowledge in math, MCS will select a rigorous curriculum and materials, ensure teachers use research-based practices for teaching math, and utilize formative assessments to determine student learning needs.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.8 a. Math curriculum, middle school:** Adopt a mathematics curriculum that is aligned to Indiana Academic Standards and indicating ILEARN Blueprints and create a district-wide curriculum map and pacing guides.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed

Evidence of Progress: Middle school math teachers met with Dr. Gatza from Ball State to determine the adoption of a new math curriculum. Dr. Gatza serves as the BSU secondary math liaison for the MCS middle and high schools. The textbook adoption committee included math teachers, master teachers, and building administrators who met during weekly cluster professional development time and monthly early release time. Using a criteria/scoring rubric, the committee selected two textbooks with publishing companies providing on-site presentations. The final selection was *Reveal Math™* published by McGraw-Hill with a goal of preparing students in seventh grade to take Algebra I in eighth grade, based on the seventh and eighth grade state standards.

Next Steps: In Summer 2022, MCS staff, guided by Dr. Gatza, will develop curriculum maps and pacing guides for each mathematical area that focus on mastery of the grade level Indiana Academic Standards. Middle school weekly math cluster meetings will focus on understanding and using the new maps and pacing guides in conjunction with the math textbook and resources.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.8 b. Math instruction, middle school:** Increase teacher and administrator knowledge of and skills in teaching and learning mathematics through (1) professional learning opportunities based on the eight teacher practices from the National Council of Teachers of Math (NCTM), provided by an IDOE specialist and Ball State professors and (2) school-based master and mentor teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: This past school year, Ball State liaison Dr. Gatzka provided initial teacher training regarding the NCTM eight effective math instructional strategies cluster during meetings and early release days. He also created and shared resources with middle school math teachers and master and mentor teachers, which aligned to the new *Reveal Math*™ curriculum and to the NCTM practices. In addition, three middle school staff members attended IMLEA national training.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, professional development will continue with the Ball State math liaison and master teachers on effective mathematical instructional strategies. Mentor teachers will field-test the strategies and provide feedback to the instructional leadership team and during weekly math cluster meetings, as to the results. Teachers will examine student work and data throughout the year as related to these instructional strategies and shared with the instructional leadership teams, math department members, and middle school staff members to determine strategy outcomes.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.8 c. Math assessments, middle school:** Analyze results of *i-Ready* formative assessment with grades 6-8 math teachers, implementing changes in instruction and content depending on data results of students' mathematics learning gaps with assistance in trainings from IDOE and MCS mentor and master teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2020-21, MCS adopted the *i-Ready* assessment to measure literacy and mathematics abilities for Grades 6-8. As a formative assessment, teachers utilized the assessment three times a year (August, December, and May) to measure individual learning strengths and areas of need, which then set a student on a specific "math pathway." Students worked one hour each week on their math pathway. As a second method to determine student needs, middle school master teachers, with the assistance of NIET, constructed monthly benchmark assessments using the *i-Ready* platform and bank of questions. Data discussion held during ILT, and cluster meetings provided guidance in the selection of instructional practices.

Next Steps: For the 2022-23 school year, math teachers will use the two assessments to determine student needs and to guide instruction. The *Reveal Math*™ platform will replace *i-Ready* monthly assessments with periodic formative assessments built into instruction as described in the pacing guides. Teacher support concerning the math assessments will be provided by building administrators, master, and mentor teachers, NIET consultants and *i-Ready* consultants.



Strategy 3.9 Develop and implement with fidelity the high school core mathematics curriculum with best practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.9 a. Math curriculum, high school:** Develop a district-wide mathematics curriculum map for high school, aligned to Indiana Academic Standards, Mathematics high school and indicating ILEARN blueprints.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS adopted the McGraw-Hill *Reveal Math*™ textbook and resources in Spring 2022. The middle school algebra teachers, high school math teachers, and the Ball State PDS liaison, Dr. Andrew Gatza began mapping the math curriculum aligning it to the state standards and the ILEARN Blueprints.

Next Steps: The high school math teachers with the guidance of the BSU liaison will complete the maps in the Fall of SY 2022-23.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.9 b. Math instruction, high school:** Increase teacher and administrator knowledge of and skills in teaching and learning mathematics through (1) professional learning opportunities based on the eight teacher practices from the National Council of Teachers of Math (NCTM), provided by an IDOE specialist and Ball State professors and (2) school-based master and mentor teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: MCS high school math teachers increased their knowledge of *5 Practices of Mathematical Instruction* through professional development provided by Dr. Gatza. Central's master teacher shared resources with the high school math teachers that aligned to the state math standards. During weekly cluster meetings and early release times, the high school math teachers, a school administrator, and the master math teacher met throughout the year to collaborate on instructional practices and assessments.

Next Steps: The weekly and monthly meetings will continue to complete the new maps in Fall 2023 and share and curate instructional resources and assessments. An administrator will complete walk-throughs and evaluations to support common practices, assessments, and pacing. Master and mentor teachers will support the implementation by modeling, observing, and providing feedback to math teachers. Teachers will examine student work and data throughout the year as related to these instructional strategies and shared with the instructional leadership team and math department members. Additional professional development sessions will occur with the *Reveal Math*™ vendor.



B-3. SOCIAL STUDIES

Rationale: Events occurred in the United States in Spring 2020 that brought MCS and Ball State to the conclusion that the social studies curriculum needed immediate attention. An MCS/BSU team, including the director of diversity, created an initial strategy and action steps to begin the work.

Strategy 3.10. Generate curriculum and teaching methods that promote history through multiple perspectives, promote civic engagement, and honor and represent the diversity and the cultures of the learners.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.10 a.** Ensure curricula and resources represent the history, culture, and experiences of the learners to encourage growth and understanding about self and others.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS responded to the national events that occurred in 2020-21 with proposed actions to review the social studies curriculum and instruction. With assistance from Ball State, MCS secondary social studies teachers and the diversity director evaluated current social studies and civics curricula and resources.

During this school year, the group made additions to the curricula and resources to present history through multiple perspectives including authors from diverse groups, especially those that represent the race, ethnicity, and cultures of the students. A major focus was teaching students the use of primary sources, both in images and in writing, to represent multiple and first-account views. To extend the learning to all teachers, a capstone project resulted in a presentation of the groups' curriculum additions, including a resource library, to social studies teachers.

Next Steps: Although the funding for this project ended in in 2021-22, MCS and Ball State will continue to support this work with the secondary social studies teachers.

C. SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, FINE ARTS, MATH (STEAM, K-12)

Rationale: "STEAM" is a commonly used acronym of five connected areas of study: science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics. These fields of study share theories and practices to guide student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. Jobs worldwide are moving towards requiring STEAM skills. As MCS prepares learners for the future, we must provide them with thinking, skills, and experiences that are STEAM-based.

Strategy 3.11. Ensure high-quality science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) education.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.11 a.** For science, review and align the middle school curriculum to the state standards and ensure the teaching is "hands-on."



Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: To prepare for the 2021-2022 School year, the middle school science teachers and administrators collaborated with the Ball State Educational Studies department. Together, they reviewed and revised the middle school science curriculum maps to improve instructional strategies and increase student engagement. The process began with four days in July of the teachers reviewing and revising the 6th-8th science curriculum maps, adding additional teacher resources, and sharing best instructional practices. The Ball State team introduced a new instructional practice to the science teachers, Game-Based Learning (GBL). GBL introduces and investigates science and shows improved student engagement. To address and improve use of GBL, middle school teachers met with Dr. Ding, of Ball State, throughout the school year on the monthly, early-release days.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to grow student engagement in middle school science through the development of customized GBL Strategies. Additionally, we will increase student engagement in other middle school classrooms by offering GBL training, co-led by MCS middle school science teachers and Ball State University faculty.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.11 b-1.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by providing training for at least two middle school PLTW teachers to lead three courses: Innovators and Makers, App Creators, and Medical Detective.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, SY 2021-22

- ◆ **Action Step 3.11 b-2.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by providing training for at least two high school PLTW teachers to lead two courses: Engineering and Computer Science.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, SY 2021-22

- ◆ **Action Step 3.11 b-3.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by training additional PLTW elementary teachers and with those PLTW teachers modeling implementation of lessons through classroom teachers assisting in the PLTW classes.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In elementary Grades 1-5, classroom teachers provided PLTW lessons 3-4 times a week and provided initial training to new teachers. In the middle schools, PLTW course-specific certified-teachers provided the teaching. The ability to strengthen the PLTW program continued to grow with five elementary teachers trained in the summer and fourteen trained during this school year to be certified as PLTW Launch Lead Teachers.

Next Steps: For SY 2022-23, all elementary schools will hire a PLTW-certified teacher to ensure at least one trained teacher in each building. Classroom teachers will assist the PLTW in implementing the lessons to increase their knowledge and skills in teaching PLTW lessons.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.11 b-4.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by providing training using an internal train-the-trainers model in all schools with MCS PLTW teachers conducting the training.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

- ◆ **Action Step 3.11 c.** For art and music, increase level of teacher expertise by (1) hiring licensed teachers for all elementary schools, with preference to music teachers with instrumental experience; (2) providing collaboration time for teachers to meet across schools to plan and learn; and (3) utilizing mentor teachers in elementary schools to provide professional learning opportunities and coaching.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2021-22, MCS hired licensed art teachers for all schools and licensed music teachers for all but one school. Collaboration time continued for the art teachers and music teachers, occurring bi-weekly in two districtwide groups. Positive comments emerged from the teachers again this year. To lead the groups, the district identified a music and an art mentor teacher. Outcomes of the District-wide collaborations included the Muncie Community Sing and the Arts Fair Show at the Fieldhouse.

Next Steps: MCS will hire licensed music and art teachers for all schools and offer introductory band for fifth graders at each elementary schools, as one means to grow the high school band program.

Strategy 3.12. Extend students' STEAM learning opportunities and increase the number of students' enrolling in classes and courses.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 a.** For STEAM, implement additional, specific career path courses for the middle schools—Innovators and Makers, App Creators, and Medical Detectives; and (2) for the high school—Engineering and Computer Science.

Rationale: To better prepare students for careers and college after graduation, MCS examined the number and type of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses offered, the student enrollment rate, and the student completion rates. The district determined that the number and types of PLTW courses needed to expand to allow for greater student choice and pursuit of additional career pathways. Middle school students lacked the awareness for the positive impact of STEAM courses on future schooling and employment, and thus, MCS established mandatory PLTW courses.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress #1, Middle School: During school year 2020-21, the middle school added three mandatory PLTW career path courses: for 6th grade - App Creators; for 7th grade - Innovators and Makers; and for 8th grade - Medical Detectives. Enrollment increased in 2020-21 and again this year, 2021-22 (Table 3.1).



Table 3.1: PLTW Student Enrollment: Northside and Southside Middle Schools

PLTW Courses	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021-22
6th - App Creators	85	215	364
7th - Innovators & Makers	181	257	262
8th - Medical Detectives	128	249	290
Total	394*	721	916

* This includes students attending in-person classes only. Due to COVID-19, some students enrolled in the Virtual Learning Program, which does not offer PLTW courses.

Next Steps: PLTW courses will be a continued requirement for all middle school students that attend school in-person.

Evidence of Progress #2, High School: In 2020-21, Central High School added a new course into the career pathways, Introduction to Computer Science, in addition to the two previously offered courses, Biomedical and An Introduction to Engineering and Design. With a goal to increase class enrollment in each course, those rates increased for all three courses in 2020-21 and again this year, 2021-22 (Table 3.2). An increase from 90 to 211 this year in the Computer Science course demonstrated increased student awareness and interest improving their computer skills.

Table 3.2: PLTW Student Enrollment: Muncie Central High School

PLTW Course	2019 - 20	2020 - 21*	2021-22
Biomedical	25	30	32
Engineering & Design	26	28	54
Computer Science	---	32	125
Total Enrollment	51	90	211

* Includes students attending in-person classes only. PLTW is not offered in VLP.

Next Steps: PLTW courses will continue as a course offering with teachers and counselors emphasizing the importance of the courses in preparing students for college and careers.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 b.** Extend interest in K-5 music and art by: (a) introducing band instruments and classes in all elementary schools in Grade 5; (b) extending the partnership with BSU School of Music for courses and practicums; and (c) organizing external performances and showings.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2022-23, North View Elementary School established a Grade 5 instrumental band which met after school. With 21 students regularly attending, North View’s band program served as a model for the other elementary schools, as they begin their band programs next school year. To prepare for the additional bands, the elementary music teachers determined the number and types of instruments needed. One hundred instruments arrived this summer with the music teachers dividing them among the elementary schools. Upon discussion with Ball State music education



faculty and the MCS music teachers, the district ordered sets of beginning instruments: flutes, clarinets, trumpets, trombones, and percussion kits for student use. A grant from the Ball Brothers Foundation provided for the purchase of the instruments, music books, and music stands.

Next Steps: In Summer 2022, the elementary music teachers will prepare the instruments and provide storage. In Fall 2022, they will receive two days of professional development on teaching beginning band from retired music teachers and MCS secondary instrumental music teachers. In partnership with a local music store, MCS will establish times for students to try out the various instruments for selection. The elementary music teachers will consult with their principals to determine if band will be offered during the school day or after school. MCS will conduct at least one concert to showcase the elementary bands with a goal for the following year (2023-24) to embed band as an option for fifth-grade students during the school day at all elementary schools.

D. LEARNING SPANISH AND ENGLISH AS NEW LANGAUGES

Rationale: MCS realizes the importance of children learning languages other than their home language – the earlier the better. Moving beyond the traditional high school foreign languages courses, MCS offers opportunities to learn Spanish through its dual language program and to learn English through its English Language Learner Program. Our dual language, English/Spanish immersion program at West View Elementary School continues to expand one grade level each year, increasing the number of learners able to communicate and think in both languages. The English Language Learners (ELL) Program provides K-12 services for non-native speakers of English. The program includes newcomers, refugees, and immigrants. In addition to learning English, each group requires unique supports, as witnessed this school year with the City of Muncie Afghanistan Refugee Resettlement Program.

Strategy 3.13: Extend opportunities for learners to obtain dual language proficiency in Spanish and English.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.13.** Determine and provide curricula, space, materials, and staffing to extend the dual language classrooms beyond the original K-2 grade levels at West View Elementary School by one additional grade level each academic year: SY 2020-21 Grade 3; SY 2021-22 Grade 4; SY 2022-23 Grade 5; and SY 2023-24 Grade 6 at Northside Middle School.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS achieved its goal by adding an additional dual language immersion classroom at West View Elementary at Grade 3 in SY 2020-21 and at Grade 4 in SY 2021-22.

Next Steps: The dual-language program will continue to expand at West View Elementary to 5th grade in SY 2022-23. With plans to expand into the middle school the following year, (2023-24), staff and administrators will begin planning and will work closely with middle school administrators to introduce best practices in curriculum and instruction for Spanish/English dual language learners.



Strategy 3.14 Develop and implement with fidelity dual-language English-Spanish curricula across the content areas; utilize evidence-based instructional strategies for language and learning; and implement formative and summative assessments to determine areas of growth and need.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.14 a. Curriculum:** Select, adopt, and implement learner-centered dual language curricula for core subjects: English language arts, Spanish language arts, Spanish mathematics, and Project Lead the Way Spanish.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Staff selected and implemented a new math curriculum during 2020-21 and 2021-22. *Eureka Math*, a Spanish-language curriculum, increases the rigor of math content. MCS ensured that the staff received training specific to the curriculum and regularly provided meetings for the staff to review reading and language standards and development, alongside the Spanish language arts curriculum.

Next Steps: From their 2021-22 review, the staff selected the Spanish language arts program *Imagine Española* for K-2 and 3-5 to be purchased and implemented for SY 2022-23. Teachers will receive professional development in the following school year regarding the new curriculum.

Action Step 3.14 b. Instruction: Implement best instructional practices for (a) language development and acquisition and (b) the content areas, for dual language learners.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Throughout the school year, the dual language teachers participated in weekly team meetings to review and reflect on language-learning instructional practices. Through Indiana Dual Language, the MCS program receives support three times a year from the coordinator for Global Education Initiatives at Indiana University. Training focused on best practices in immersive language instruction and language acquisition.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to utilize trainings from the Global Education Initiatives to enhance teachers' knowledge of best practices in language learning.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.14 c.** Assessment, utilize formative assessment, *i-Ready*, to routinely determine evaluate student progress in English literacy and math and Spanish mathematics.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Best practices instruction relies on ongoing formative assessments to determine student growth and areas of need followed by teacher differentiated instruction. MCS introduced the *i-Ready* formative assessment in 2020-21 for literacy and mathematics in the dual language program as in all elementary classrooms. Assessments for dual-language learners include English language literacy, English mathematics, and Spanish mathematics. Students also completed the Differentiated *i-Ready*



Learning Pathways, which are unique to students' needs based on their performance on the beginning of year (BOY), middle of year (MOY), and end of year (EOY) through the formative *i-Ready* assessments.

Next Steps: Dual language staff will analyze student data, especially from summative state assessments, (IREAD and ILEARN) to determine areas of student learning gaps during SY 2022-23. They will use the findings to determine changes needed in the curriculum and/or the instruction, with a focus on best practices instruction.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.14 d.** Establish a student learning community that values multicultural engagement.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

Strategy 3.15: Ensure opportunities for learners of English to obtain English language proficiency, leading to school and life success.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.15 a.** Ensure learners of English receive language, academic and cultural supports and, especially for students that are refugees, appropriate social and emotional supports.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS has long provided for its English language learners (ELLs). Traditionally, the number of EL students enrolled at MCS has remained low. However, in SY 2021-22, international events led to a significant increase in the number of English language learners that were refugees, requiring a rapid response from the City of Muncie and Muncie Community Schools. In October, the Muncie Afghan Refugee Resettlement Committee (MARRC), sponsored multiple Afghan families as they relocated from Camp Atterbury and other military bases to the city. Within one week, MCS welcomed its first family, which included seven boys ages 6-18, and by the end year enrolled 46 Pre-K-12 learners from Afghanistan.

To support their new refugee students, MCS created a newcomer program – a program designed for recent immigrants/refugees at the middle school and high school levels and specifically for students that had little or no English proficiency and limited or no formal education in their native countries. The newcomer program ran full day and occurred in self-contained classrooms. Its purpose was to serve as a transition for students before they are ready to enter the general classroom. Goals included helping students to develop “classroom and school English”—the needed vocabulary and phrases to navigate the school day—and to begin to adapt to their new classrooms, schools, and community. The high school program included 90-minutes daily of English. Elementary students received instruction in the general education classroom with support from EL teachers.

Early on, MCS hired an interpreter, also an Afghan refugee, who was fluent in English, as well. Teachers of EL and a school psychologist, through the interpreter, conducted assessments to determine students' knowledge of reading and writing in their own language, their prior attendance in school, and their



learning levels in the content areas. Understanding that the adult members of the families also needed help in transitioning to this country, MCS introduced an English adult education class multiple mornings a week held at Northside Middle School with community volunteers providing childcare.

The district partnered with local organizations such as Meridian Health and Open Door to provide extended services for the families. On the students' first day of school, MCS Board President Jim Williams described the district's responsibility,

We have people who are fearing for their safety in their country and they're looking for a fresh start in the United States. . . We'll do everything possible to provide the foundation for these parents and these kids to be successful as residents of the United States.

Mr. Williams provided a recent Summer 2022 update: "About 40 children from Afghanistan enrolled in Muncie schools with one of the students graduating in May from Muncie Central High School. Another 10 or 15 children are preschool age or younger, and four babies have been born here since the new neighbors arrived in Muncie." MCS is devoted to continuing to provide for and serve our students—wherever they come from.

Next Steps: Beginning SY 2022-23, MCS will establish and fill a new staff position with a highly qualified professional to serve as the Director of English Learners. The director will oversee the Spanish/English dual language program and the English language learning program, which includes the newcomer program. Her role will be to continue to refine and enhance those programs. MCS will hire additional EL teachers to correspond to the increased identification of EL students.

E. PHYSICAL AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

Rationale: We know that our learners' physical health relates to their ability to concentrate and learn, and we commit to a new emphasis on physical and nutritional health through multiple partners

Strategy 3.16. Improve K-5 learners' nutritional and physical health through physical education classroom and extended opportunities for Grades K-5.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.16 a.** Utilize the district-wide physical education mentor teacher to provide professional learning, mentoring, and coaching to physical education teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS established a physical education mentor for elementary schools. He meets regularly with the PE teachers and reports a high level of collaboration among the teachers.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.16 b.** Develop the In-School Physical Activity Program to improve learners' physical health in partnership with Ball State University and IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital.
- ◆ **Action Step 3.16 c.** Create age-appropriate physical health activities, as designed by Ball State students, and compile into written form.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.16 d.** Implement physical health activities (e.g., active learning, “Brain Break”) throughout the school day as led by Ball State students, initially.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In partnership with IU Health and Ball Memorial Hospital, Ball State faculty created the “MCS Child Health, *Physical Activity*, and Nutrition Education Initiative” in 2020. One aim of the initiative is to increase student physical health and possibly increase attention and engagement in learning by using physical activities for classroom breaks. For SY 2021-22, Ball State implemented the program at South View and Grissom Elementary Schools, occurring biweekly for 10-12 weeks for grades 3-5 (per the principal request) at Grissom and in grades K-5 at South View. A Ball State graduate student led several undergraduate students in teaching the lessons.

To increase students’ physical movement throughout the day, Ball State posted daily activity suggestions at the beginning of the week on the district’s Schoology communication system. Teachers decided whether to lead their students in the activities, which included a video activity, a calming activity, a vigorous activity, and a lunchtime activity. At South View, Ball State added organized recess activities conducted by Ball State students. The physical activities are age-appropriate but not yet compiled in written form.

Next Steps: For SY 2022-23, physical health will expand from Grissom and South View to East Washington Academy and Longfellow. The program will retain its goals of improving teachers’ engagement in daily in-class physical activity breaks. Ball State students will organize the activities into a useful written format.

Strategy 3.17 Improve learners’ nutritional health through extend opportunities for families of students in Grades K-5.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.17 a.** Develop the In-School Nutritional Program to improve learners’ health in partnership with Ball State, including age-appropriate, nutritional educational lessons integrated into the curricula.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In partnership with IU Health and Ball Memorial Hospital, Ball State faculty created the “MCS Child Health, *Physical Activity*, and Nutrition Education Initiative” with an aim of improving student nutritional health through infusing nutrition education into the curriculum. BSU implemented the program for 10-12 weeks in SY 2021-22 at two schools, South View, and Grissom. A Ball State graduate student led several undergraduate students in teaching the biweekly lessons. The nutrition program included the basic food groups, application to children’s daily eating practices, healthy snacks, and gardening and growing. Ball State conducted Fall and Spring Nutrition Knowledge Student Surveys at both schools with the results used to improve the program.

Next Steps: BSU will expand this partnership in SY 2022-23 to two additional schools, East Washington Academy and Longfellow Elementary.



Strategy 3.18 Improve the health of community members through physical and nutritional health opportunities for families of students.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.18 a.** Design and implement an After School/Evening Community Physical Health Program in partnership with Ball State and in collaboration with school principals, community stakeholders, and neighborhood associations.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

- ◆ **Action Step 3.18 b.** Determine the specific and unique needs of the community in the target locale in partnership with Ball state and in collaboration with school principals, community stakeholders, and neighborhood associations.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

- ◆ **Action Step 3.18 c.** Based on the determined needs, develop, and launch an after-school and evening program through the Healthy Lifestyle Center to focus on healthy lifestyle choices and adoption of healthy behaviors.

Progress Toward Goal: Initial Stages

Evidence of Progress: The third aim of the initiative is to improve nutritional and physical health for the school staff, families, and the community. As an initial step (in response to COVID-19 restrictions), Ball State created a weekly *Healthy Lifestyle Center* newsletter for teachers, with such district-wide challenges as increasing the number of steps walked in a day. For families, Ball State created five newsletters this school year which families received through Schoology, and which contained home activities, healthy recipes, and nutrition advice.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to partner with Ball State to design and create the *Healthy Lifestyle Center*.

F. PREPARING FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

Rationale: The MCS goal for all learners is to succeed, not only in school but in life. Their success depends on MCS providing a broad array of opportunities for our learners. We propose to increase the breadth and depth of career education opportunities for all MCS students beginning in first grade. Our goal is to ensure that all learners achieve career awareness and foundational employability skills.



Strategy 3.19 Increase the number of learners that enroll in the Indiana 21st Century Scholars program to improve the number of MCS graduates that attend college or university.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.19.** Increase the number of learners that enroll in the Indiana 21st Scholars program to improve the number of MCS graduates that attend college or university.

Progress Toward Goal: Initial Stages

Evidence of Progress: Indiana’s 21st Century Scholars program can change the trajectory of a Muncie student’s life by providing up to four years of undergraduate tuition to income-eligible students at participating colleges or universities in Indiana. Students must enroll prior to the end of 8th grade and then receive four years of support and step-by-step guidance throughout high school. With support from the Ball Brothers Foundation, MCS’ partner Project Leadership assisted middle school students’ families in understanding the program and in enrolling online (Table 3.3). Northside’s enrollment in the program increased from 85 percent to 98 percent of eligible students. MCS will increase its efforts to enroll Southside students as enrollment dropped from 75 percent to 73 percent in 2021-22. To assist in this task, MCS applied for and received the IDOE state grant — “*Explore, Engage, and Experience (3E) Grant: Establishing Meaningful PK-12 Pathways and Opportunities for All*” which begins in Fall 2022.

Table 3.3. Indiana 21st Century Scholars: Enrollment

	2020-21			2021-22		
	Eligible	Enrolled	Percent	Eligible	Enrolled	Percent
Northside Middle	93	82	85%	110	108	98%
Southside Middle	134	101	75%	109	80	73%

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, MCS will partner with Project Leadership to (a) increase awareness of middle-school students and their families about the program, (b) create multiple opportunities for families to enroll, and (c) provide support to high school students in the program to prepare for college.

Strategy 3.20 Establish career exploration opportunities for high school students.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.20 a.** For Grades 9–12, discuss Graduation Pathway diploma plans with high school students during advisory period with classroom teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In Spring 2022, MCS applied for and was awarded IDOE’s *Explore, Engage, and Experience grant* to expand students’ access to pathways leading to high-wage, high-demand careers. MCS will partner with Project Leadership to develop curriculum for career exploration and to establish opportunities at local companies.

Next Steps: MCS and Project Leadership will develop a plan and begin to implement it in SY 2022-23.



Strategy 3.21 Extend current and create new courses to build Grades 1-12 learners’ awareness and interest in high-demand jobs.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.21 a.** For Grade 7, provide a new course—Business and Information Technology—to develop learner skills in career planning, basic business, personal fiscal responsibility, and using technology as a tool, and increase enrollment over time.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Introduced as a new course in 2020-21, “Business and Information Technology,” offers middle school students an introduction to careers requiring financial, computer software, and basic business skills. The course aligns to the Indiana State Standards and the Workplace Readiness Indicators. Course enrollment increased by 68 percent from 2020-21 to 2021-22 and may reflect increased student interest, counselors’ advice, or student communications with one another (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: “Business Information Technology” Course: Enrollment and Completion Rates–7th Grade

	2020-21	2021-22
Enrollment	156	262
Completion Rate	100%	100%

Next Steps: MCS will continue to determine the response to and the effectiveness of the course through enrollment and completion rate data and principal-led teacher evaluations.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.21 b.** For Grade 8, provide a new course—Preparing for College and Careers—focusing on career options and college planning in preparing for high school and increase enrollment over time.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In Fall 2020, MCS implemented a new elective course for 8th graders, “Preparing for College and Careers.” In this course, learners explore their personal goals, interests, and aptitudes as related to future careers. Learners develop an awareness of the 16 national career clusters and Indiana’s College and Career Pathways. For each career, students learn the level of education and type of training needed. Experiential learning includes field trips, guest speakers, and virtual options. To receive credit for this course, students must earn a C or higher. The course aligns to the Indiana State Standards and the Workplace Readiness Indicators. Interest in this course increased by 125 percent from 2020-21 to 2021-22 (Table 3.5). However, the completion rate decreased from 87 percent to 70 percent.

Table 3.5: “Preparing for College and Careers”: Enrollment and Completion Rates–8th Grade

	2020-21	2021-22
Enrollment	95	213
Completion Rate	87%	70%

Next Steps: MCS will investigate the decreased completion rate for this course. MCS administrators may observe the classroom, have students complete mid- and end-of-year surveys and/or interview



students. Changes in the course will be made to increase student completion rates. MCS will work with Project Leadership to review and refine course curriculum.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.21 c.** For Grades 11–12, establish a new Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway, Engineering Technology program, offering college credit through partnerships with Purdue Polytechnic, Ivy Tech, Magna International (PowerTrain), and Mursix Corporation and continue to increase enrollment over time.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In Fall 2020, the MACC launched a new Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway for Grades 11-12, the Engineering Technology and Advanced Manufacturing pathway. The pathway offers two programs: (a) the Purdue Engineering Program with students earning college credits through Purdue University’s Polytechnic Anderson campus, and (b) the Industrial Automation and Robotics Program through Ivy Tech Community College with students earning dual credits. Through these pathways, students gain exposure to 21st Century manufacturing technologies and conceptual frameworks that are valued in modern engineering and manufacturing workplaces. Senior students participate in extended internships with local manufacturing firms.

For SY 2021-22, the MACC increased awareness of the two programs through the development and distribution of a CTE program brochure and program videos that highlighted the opportunities available in the two programs. Recruitment efforts were also targeted for students in Project Lead the Way (PLTW) classes and engineering pathways at Muncie Central and other area high schools. The instructors hosted open house meetings and lab experiences for prospective students and their families.

Changes in enrollment from 2020-21 to 2021-22 included a decrease of four students in the Industrial Automation & Robotic program and an increase of six students in the Advanced Career and Technology Education program (Table 3.6). Completion rates for both programs increased to 100 percent.

Table 3.6. MACC Engineering and Technology Program: Grades 11-12

Course	Student	2020-21	2021-22
Industrial Automation & Robotics	Enrollment	25	21
	Completion Rate	73%	100%
Advanced Career and Technology Education	Enrollment	14	20
	Completion Rate	71%	100%

Next Steps: The MACC Director will continue to work with Purdue Polytech, Ivy Tech, and local manufacturers to increase the number of courses, programs, and participating employers. He will also pursue methods and ideas to increase student enrollment.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.21 d.** For Grades 11–12, establish new CTE courses, Industrial Automation and Robotics I and continually increase student enrollment.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Over the last two school years, MCS has increased the number of dual credit and dual enrollment CTE courses available to students through program improvements at both Muncie



Central High School and the Muncie Area Career Center (MACC). These additions to MCS’ catalog of classes with college credit alignment helps students meet Graduation Pathways requirements and complete Early College Elective courses. Additionally, students in specific college credit-aligned programs can complete short-term post-secondary certificates (e.g., Automotive: Maintenance and Light Repair Certificate; Health Science: Certified Nursing Assistant Certificate), with some students needing only one or two courses to complete the post-secondary Technical Certificate in a CTE program. In SY 2021-22, the number of CTE courses increased from 33 to 52 (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7: Number Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment CTE Courses Offered

	2020-21	2021-22
Number of courses	33	52

Students demonstrated their interest in the newly increased number of CTE courses and certifications with the number of students achieving certification increasing each year. This past school year students achieved 83 certifications, an increase of six from the prior year (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8: Enrollment in Post-Secondary Certificates

Certificates	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Automotive: Maintenance & Light Repair	---	33	33
Health Science: Certified Nursing Assistant	27	31	25
Welding: Structural Welding	8	12	16
Construction: Electrical Specialist	---	---	9
Total	35	76	83

Next Steps: MCS will continue to implement new CTE courses with embedded college credit at MCHS and the MACC. The state’s Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) course frameworks have created new opportunities for high schools and career centers to facilitate additional college credit opportunities. As MCHS and MACC adopt these frameworks for CTE courses, students in CTE programs will be able to strive towards earning even more college credits while in high school.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.21 e-1.** For Grades 11–12: (a) establish nine new dual-credit, CTE courses representing jobs in high demand: banking/finance, business, and health care and (b) expand three courses from Level 1 to Level 2, while continuing to increase enrollment in all courses.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In school year 2021-2022, MCS continued offering the second level courses in Human and Social Services, Education Professions, and Nutrition Science Careers. Enrollment rates for these exceeded those in all CTE courses from the prior year (Table 3.9). The largest increase in enrollment was in Human and Social Services with 39 students completing the Level I course. However, completion rates need to be examined as they are lower than desired for Level I courses.



Table 3.9: Level II CTE Courses: Enrollment and Completion Rates

CTE Level I, II Courses	2020-21				2021-22			
	Level I		Level II		Level I		Level II	
	Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Completed
Human and Social Services	38	31	2	1	64	39	14	11
Education Professions	9	9	1	1	20	10	9	5
Nutrition Science Careers	10	5	6	4	17	7	3	3
Total	57	45	9	6	126	56	26	19

Next Steps: MCS will transition to Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) course frameworks for both first- and second-level courses in its CTE Pathways. Ball State will apply to receive funding from a new state grant, “Attract—Prepare—Retain,” which provides for the implementation of a new CTE pathway. This new pathway allows students to receive dual credit for education courses taken in high school that are required to obtain a teachers’ license, resulting in their receiving a college degree in three years rather than four. This opportunity adheres to the goal of increasing the teacher pipeline through the MCS/BSU partnership.

Strategy 3.22 Increase job placement and employability skills and experiences for Grade 12 learners.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 a.** Develop learners’ skills in applying and interviewing for jobs through activities such as conducting online job searches, develop resumes, and preparing for and completing job interviews with local employers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In the 2021-2022 school year, all MACC seniors participated in the job-seeking skills workshop – a total of 136 students. Students learned about different jobs and careers in a specific field, then completed a resume-writing workshop with the Talent Development and Employer Engagement Team from Ivy Tech Community College. After the students completed their resume, they were engaged in an interviewing workshop to learn and practice how to participate in a successful job interview. The job-seeking skills workshop culminated in mock interviews with local employers, including Magna, Mursix, Open Door, IU Health, Delaware County EMS, IKORCC, and IBEW.

Next Steps: Moving forward, the job-seeking skills workshop will be expanded to include more robust interview preparation and job search development, with an emphasis on finding the best jobs for each student. Additionally, we will add a "Signing Day" event to recognize students for securing employment and training opportunities after high school. In the future, we will expand the job-seeking skills workshop model beyond the MACC, making it available to all MCHS seniors.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 b.** Extend Career and Technical Education (CTE) learners’ on-the-job experiences through embedded internships during the capstone period, occurring the second year of CTE pathway program.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Muncie Area Career Center (MACC) has a strong track-record of job-embedded learning experiences for CTE students through partnerships with local businesses and organizations. In 2020-21, six professional job experiences existed. In SY 2021-22, four additional partnerships formed to provide professional job experience:

- Advanced Manufacturing/Automation and Robotics: Partners are local manufacturing firms
- Purdue Engineering Technology: Partners are local manufacturing and engineering firms
- Criminal Justice: Partners are Muncie Police Department and Delaware County Prosecutor’s Office
- Emergency Medical Technician: The partner is Delaware County EMS

In the Advanced Manufacturing and Purdue Engineering Technology program, second-year students engaged in long-term, paid internship experiences with local manufacturing and engineering firms. In some of these internships, students researched specific problems or challenges identified by their employer, developed solutions, and made presentations to the leadership team. After a decline amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, the number of students participating in internships rebounded and increased significantly in the 2021-2022 school year (Table 3.10).

Table 3.10 CTE Number of Student Internships

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
142	125	167

Next Steps: For SY 2022-23, MACC will continue to provide appropriate and extensive job-embedded experiences for CTE students, including opportunities that will support the community. MACC will seek new partnerships with companies and organizations in the fields of Digital Design, Automotive Technology, Welding, and Health Sciences.

Strategy 3.23 Strengthen opportunities for high school learners to earn college credits.

Rationale: The MCS Strategic Plan identifies multiple action steps to provide college acceleration opportunities, allowing learners to earn college credit while in high school. Opportunities at Muncie Central to earn college credits include Advanced Placement courses (AP) and dual high school and college credit courses, and Early College High School.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.23 a.** Implement a plan to increase enrollment in and completion of advanced placement (AP) and dual-credit courses.



Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Advanced placement (AP) courses, as created by the College Board, are college-level courses for high school students. Students take end-of-course-exams and “pass” if they earn a three or higher on the exam, with the credits earned transferred to college. Research reveals numerous benefits of the AP courses:

- Students that pass AP exams are more likely than their peers to attend college and graduate on time.
- Students that score a “2” on AP exams do significantly better in introductory college classes than their peers that did not take the exam. (Source: [AP Central](#))

Dual credit, also known as concurrent enrollment, is another option to earn college credits. Benefits from completing dual-credit and AP courses include saving time and money by completing college credits before entering college, improving students’ time management and study skills, and providing students with opportunities to act on future career and college goals. The number of AP exams passed decreased for the past two years but needs to be compared with the number of students that sat for the exams each year, which MCS will determine in future years. (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11: Advanced Placement Courses: Exams Passed and Awards Received

AP Courses	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Exams Passed	151	127	101

The total number of students enrolling in AP course declined for the fourth year in a row with 115 in 2020-21 and 100 in 2021-22 (Table 3.12). Enrollment by ethnicity showed an increase in Black and White student enrollment but a decrease in Hispanic and multiracial enrollment. Black, Hispanic, and multiracial students enrolled in AP classes at a rate lower than their representation in school demographics.

Table 3.12: Advanced Placement Courses: Enrollment by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP
Total	1,388	147	1,341	161	1,300	144	1,261	115	1,330	100
Black	23.8%	8.7% (13)	24.3%	8.6% (14)	23.5%	11% (16)	23.3%	4% (5)	24%	11%
Hispanic	4.0%	6.0% (9)	5.6%	9.8% (16)	5.7%	11% (16)	5.0%	11% (13)	5.4%	7%
Multi-racial	9.1%	6.7% (10)	9.9%	5.5% (9)	10.9%	7.5% (11)	12.2%	14% (16)	12.6%	11%
White	62%	77.0% (115)	59.0%	74.8% (122)	59.0%	69% (101)	57.0%	66% (76)	57.3%	71% (71)

Student representation in AP enrollment remained the same for SY 2021-22 with students receiving free and reduced lunch underrepresented (Table 3.13).



Table 3.13: Advanced Placement Courses: Enrollment by Economics and Gender

FRL Gender	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP
Total	1,388	---	1,341	---	1,300	---	1,261	---	1,300	---
FRL	68.9%	29% (44)	70.1%	29% (47)	59.2%	29% (43)	58.7%	33% (39)	58.7%	31%
Female	47%	49% (73)	47%	48% (78)	47%	51% (74)	45.5%	51% (59)	46.2%	52%
Male	53%	51% (77)	53%	52% (85)	53%	49% (79)	54.2%	49% (56)	53.8%	48%

Next Steps: MCS will review the number of students participating in Early College or AP and will determine ways to increase the participation of minority groups in these rigorous courses.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.23 b.** Implement a plan to increase student enrollment and completion of Early College Program at the high school.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: An additional opportunity for students to receive college credits is through Central’s Early College Program. This program enables students to complete an associate degree while also completing the Indiana Academic Honors Diploma through earning dual credit at Ivy Tech. MCS is one of only 31 fully endorsed Early College Programs in Indiana. MCS focused on increasing student enrollment and completion rates this past year. To that end, an Ivy Tech full-time staff member, who is housed at Central, extended recruitment beyond eighth grade to include freshman and sophomores and lengthened the enrollment period beyond the Spring.

To improve the completion rate, the Medical Terminology course increased the number of credits received from three to six leading to additional students completing their associate degree. Ivy Tech staff succeeded in gaining permission from the Chancellor of Ivy Tech Muncie to accept credits from non-Ivy Tech institutions (e.g., Ball State, Purdue Polytechnic) resulting in three students receiving associate degrees. In addition, Ivy Tech increased completion rates by eliminating student costs of English and English Literature courses, a critical class for one-year and two-year degrees.

Enrollment in Early College remained consistent with 303 students in 2020-21 and 301 this past year. Enrollment by ethnicity also remained the same with Black, Hispanic, and multiracial students enrolling in Early College at a lower percentage rate than each group is represented in school demographics (Table 3.14).



Table 3.14: Early College High School: Enrollment by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College
Total	1,388	---	1,341	---	1,300	---	1,261	303	1,300	301
Black	23.8%	18%	24.3%	23%	23.5%	15.0%	23.3%	15.1%	24%	15.7%
Hispanic	4.0%	7%	5.6%	7%	5.7%	4.0%	5.0%	3.0%	5.4%	4.5%
Multiracial	9.1%	8%	9.9%	10%	10.9%	10.0%	12.2%	12.0%	12.6%	10%
White	62%	65%	59.0%	60%	59.0%	70.0%	57.0%	69.0%	57.5%	68.5%

Students receiving FRL and males were underrepresented in Early High School and females were overrepresented (Table 3.15).

Table 3.15: Early College High School: Enrollment by Economics and Gender

FRL Gender	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College	Student Groups	Enrolled in Early College
Total	1,388	---	1,341	---	1,300	---	1,261	303	1,300	301
FRL	68.9%	53%	70.1%	52%	59.2%	53%	58.7%	missing	58.7%	47%
Female	47%	57%	47%	56%	47%	58%	45.0%	57.0%	46.2%	58%
Male	53%	43%	53%	56%	53%	42%	54.1%	42.0%	53.8%	42%

An essential task this year was to complete the program’s recertification as required by schools that wish to grant associate degrees. The recertification occurred through the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL). Required every four years, recertification included CELL’s review of the school in in the categories of Targeted Student Population, Rigorous Instruction, Supports for Student Success, and Collaboration and Partnerships. CELL completed multiple document and data reviews and conducted an on-site visit, observed the program, and interviewed instructors and students. In Spring 2022, CELL granted Central certification of its Early College Program for four more years. In addition, CELL nominated and awarded Muncie Central with a grant to mentor three urban schools during the next two years as they prepare for certification.

Next Steps: Focus areas that emerged for SY 2022-23 include (a) increasing enrollment by revamping the marketing at the middle schools, especially at Southside and (b) increasing completion rates by recruiting seniors that did not participate in Early College but that completed AP classes. Efforts will be made to educate and streamline students’ involvement in the early childhood education curriculum.



SUMMARY for Strategy 3:23 To strengthen opportunities for high school learners to earn college credit.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS utilizes state-provided and other funding programs that allow students to gain college credit while in high school. Our goal is to increase the number of students participating in the programs and in the number completing the Indiana College Core Degree or an associate degree. For SY 2021-22, the number of credits earned increased by 126; the number of ICC degrees decreased by seven, and the number of associate degrees increased by ten (Table 3.16). The estimated savings for students and families for tuition neared \$500,000.

Table 3.16: College Credits, Degrees Earned, and Tuition Savings of High School Students 2021-22

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Credits Earned	3,377	3,488	3,135	3,261
Tuition Saved	\$ 455,940	\$ 508,416	\$ 471,560	\$ 499,889
Indiana College Core (ICC) Degree	23	10	23	16
Associate Degrees*	23	28	17	27

*Associate Degrees consist of 30 additional credits beyond the ICC degree

Next Steps: MCS will continue to determine funding sources that permit students to obtain college credits while in high school, as well as support students in completing their ICC and associate degree.

Strategy 3.24 Expand and strengthen college and career programs and increase students’ knowledge about colleges and universities.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.24 a.** Align CTE Pathway Plans (course outlines) to: the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Course Standards; the technical certification dual credit sequences; industry certifications; and embedded work-based learning recommendations – making edits and changes in the plans as needed.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In the 2021-2022 school year, all first-year MACC programs that were eligible to convert to the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) course frameworks made that transition: Biomedical, Criminal Justice, Carpentry, Electrical, Welding, Health Science, Fire & Rescue, Early Childhood Education, Automotive, and Digital Design. These programs will adopt the second-year frameworks in the 2022-2023 school year. NLPS frameworks for Dental Careers and Cosmetology is not yet available. The transition to NLPS enabled several programs to offer additional dual credits and certifications as the NLPS frameworks brought the high school CTE curriculum into alignment with post-secondary classes.



Next Steps: In the 2022-2023 school year, most MACC programs will implement the second-year frameworks (NLPS). The Dental Careers and Cosmetology programs will adopt the first-year course sequence, which were published by GWC in the spring of 2022. Additionally, MCHS will begin implementation of the NLPS first-year course sequences in several of the CTE programs at the high school, including Education Profession, Nutrition, and Human and Social Services.

As we transition to NLPS, this will provide students with the opportunity to obtain short-term and technical certificates from post-secondary partners, including Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University, while earning college credits. This will be achieved through a combination of dual credit offerings within CTE programs and dual enrollment opportunities with post-secondary partners that enable our students to take college-level courses with Ivy Tech faculty. Finally, we will continue to build up embedded work-based learning opportunities in CTE programs, with an emphasis on extended and sustained work-based learning experiences for students enrolled in NLPS capstone courses.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.24 b.** Develop and implement the CTE Pathways Marketing Plan for Muncie area students and families to increase student awareness of local employers and jobs options and knowledge of CTE courses.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS strives to ensure that our high school students receive the opportunities as described by the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet.³

The mission of Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Indiana is to ensure an education system of high quality and equity for the academic achievement and career preparation of all Indiana students. Students in Indiana’s secondary CTE programs will gain the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for success in postsecondary education and economically viable career opportunities.

MCS is continuing to expand its CTE program of courses, certifications, and potential careers. To increase student and family awareness of CTS, MCS created a series of videos over the past two school years. Current students provided first-person testimonials describing the array of program offerings and the results of receiving college credit and/or credentials. They highlighted MACC’s use of hands-on instruction and on-the-job experiences through internships, resulting in a highly engaging, experiential, learning experiences. (Visit the videos <https://macc.muncie.k12.in.us/departments/cte>)

Next Steps: MACC staff will continue to market the CTE programs using the videos and other sources. In a renewed effort to build career awareness among younger students, the videos will also be shared with middle school students throughout the district.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.24 c.** Expand the capacity of the Graduation Academy and MCHS online programs to help students recover credits and graduate on time.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

³ Governor’s Workforce Cabinet, *About CTE*. Retrieved 1/29/22 from <https://www.in.gov/gwc/cte/about-cte/>



Evidence of Progress: MCS provides multiple opportunities for students to obtain or recover the high school credits needed to graduate. These opportunities are collectively housed under the Muncie Central Online Program and Graduation Academy. Online learning allows for increased flexibility through the self-paced courses. Several trends emerged over the past three years: an increase in enrollment from the prior year’s 101 to this year’s 179; an increase in credits earned, almost doubling from the prior year to 894; and an increase in the number of students graduating through the program with 29 this past year compared to 17 in 2020-21 (Table 3.17).

Table 3.17: MCHS Online Program for Credit Recovery: Enrollment, Credits, and Graduation

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Students enrolled	84	101	179
Credits earned	282	467	894
# Graduated after program	17	17	29

A second program allowing high school students to complete the required credits is the Graduation Academy at Central. Students participate during the school day or during summer school, allowing students enrolled in high school to, concurrently, recover credits by taking additional courses. Learner progress is closely monitored and celebrated. The number of students enrolled decreased by 34 students in SY 2021-22 from the previous year, which lowered the number of credits earned and students that graduated (Table 3.18).

Table 3.18: MCHS Graduation Academy for Credit Recovery: Enrollment, Credits, and Graduation

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Students enrolled	89	124	90
Credits earned	523	704	632
Graduates	27	66	33

Next Steps: MCS views the Graduation Academy as a value resource for a particular set of students and will continue to provide and improve this program.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.24 d.** Expand and strengthen programs for students to learn about and visit colleges and universities, to increase the number of MCS graduates attending 4-year higher education institutions.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2021-22, MCS and Ball State began planning an initiative to increase high school students’ experiences on college campuses. The project, for juniors and seniors, will include opportunities to learn from various BSU departments and staff on topics such as securing financial aid and selecting a major, how to participate in summer experiences on campus, and how to enroll in university courses.

Next Steps: MCS and BSU staff will develop the program and begin implementation in SY 2022-23.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.24 e.** Increase opportunities for high school minority students to learn about and experience Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: To increase our students’ knowledge of HBCUs, MCS participates in the Muncie Youth Empowerment Program, which provides 50 minority high school students opportunities in education and leadership training. Funded by a partnership between Ivy Tech, NAACP, and Indiana Michigan Power, the goal is to expand minority students’ experiences with higher education. Muncie Central students participated in several Youth Empowerment events in SY 2021-22: HBCU College Fair at Ohio State University - 22 students; Indianapolis Black Alumni Council HBCU College Fair (virtual event at Central) - 15 Students; and HBCU visit to Central State University, Ohio - 25 Students.

Next Steps: MCS will continue providing higher education and leadership experiences through the Muncie Youth Empowerment Program. Plans for SY 2022-23 include student visits to the Black College Football Hall of Fame College Fair, attending the HBCU Football game in Canton, Ohio, and visiting at least one HBCU. To allow more students to participate in the visits, the director of diversity will develop and implement a fundraising plan.

G. EXTENDED OPPORTUNITIES for LEARNING

Strategy 3.24. Provide afterschool and summer programs to extend learners’ academic, social, emotional, and physical development, learning, and exploration.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 a.** Improve learners’ literacy, math and other academic skills and social, emotional, and physical development by providing extended opportunities, after school and during the summer.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2021-22, MCS ensured learning opportunities were available for students after the school day and in the summer for all age groups and for various lengths of time (Table 3.19). An after-school program at Grissom Elementary – Grissom GOLD – continued for a second year through the 21st Century Afterschool Community Learning Center grant. Other offerings focused on literacy and math with new summer programs for this year: Newcomer English Learning Camp and the Middle School Career Camp. The district provided student transportation and meals to encourage participation and is deeply appreciative of the George and Francis Ball Foundation’s provision of incentives for students and families to encourage regular student attendance.



Table 3.19: MCS Afterschool and Summer Student Opportunities with Enrollment

Extended Learning Opportunity	About/Focus Area	Attendance	
		2020-21	2021-22
1. Grissom Gold <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For K-5th grades ○ Afterschool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • SEL 	55	43
2. Camp Adventure: Literacy and Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For 3rd & 4th ○ Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy, writing, math • With outdoor activities, e.g., archery, fishing, art 	45	44
3. Robotics Camp <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For 5th, 6th grades ○ Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills of engineers, programmers, inventors • Uses <i>Lego Mindstorm</i> kits 	34	20
4. IREAD-3 Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For 3rd grade, by invitation only ○ Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized and targeted reading instruction • Newly developed curriculum and lessons specific to the I-READ areas of focus 	129	170
5. Newcomer English Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For refugee students, grades 1-12 ○ Summer, half-day, 8 weeks ○ Included breakfast, lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English as a New Language and cultural learning • Students mostly Spanish speakers from Mexico, Central & South America, and Pashto speakers from Afghanistan 	---	45 Gr. 1-5: #20 Gr. 6-12: #25
6. Middle School Career Camp <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For 6th, 7th, 8th grades ○ Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands on experiences with CTE pathways offered at career center • In partnership with Project Leadership 	---	7
7. Mathematician Exploration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For 9-12 grades ○ Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math through real-world explorations 	---	12
8. MCHS Blended/Online Learning and PUSH to Graduation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For high school students ○ Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advance in Graduation Pathways or for course recovery • Online or in-person learning • Numbers include Session I and II 	241 (210 credits)	272 (225 credits)
8. Marching Band Summer Camp <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For high school students ○ Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prepare for and participate in band contests and other musical experiences 	70	72

Source: <https://www.muncie.k12.in.us/studentsparents/summer-camps-programs>

Next Steps: MCS will review each of the afterschool and summer programs, reflecting on student enrollment numbers, student interest levels, funding sources, staff availability and other factors and make changes as needed.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 b.** In partnership with others, improve learners’ literacy, math and other academic skills and social, emotional, and physical development by providing extended opportunities, during school, after school and during the summer.

Evidence of Progress #1: Summer and Afterschool Programs

Progress Toward Goal: On-Track

MCS works closely with Ball State and the Boys and Girls Club in their provisions for summer programming. Ball State offers several writing sessions and a girls’ STEM camp on campus with a literacy and science camp for second graders at Camp Adventure. BSU also continues to lead the Longfellow afterschool program. The Boys and Girls Camp offers day-long sessions (for a fee) throughout the summer, combining academics with physical activities. Summer programming attendance increased from 2020-21 to 2021-22 (Table 3.20).

Table 3.20 MCS with Partners After School and Summer Student Opportunities with Enrollment

Extend Learning Opportunity with Partner	Partner	About/Focus Area	Attendance	
			2020-21	2021-22
1. Longfellow MP3 ○ For K-5th grades ○ Afterschool	Ball State	• Literacy & Math	67	57
2. Camp Adventure: Literacy & Science ○ For 2nd grade	Ball State	• Reading, writing, science • With outdoor activities, e.g., archery, fishing, art	44	69
3. Youth Writing ○ For 4-5 & 6-8 grades	Ball State	• Creative writing workshop	---	9
4. Youth Poetry Writing ○ For 4-5 & 6-8 grades	Ball State	• Explore language and words	---	7
5. Weekend Writing Warriors ○ For 4-5 & 6-7 grades	Ball State	• Writing workshop	---	9
6. Girls’ STEM Camp ○ For 6-8 grades, girls	Ball State	• STEM activities	1	1
7. Summer All-Day Club ○ For K-5 & 6-8 grades	Boys & Girls Club	• Academics and physical activities	88	215
Total			199	367

Next Steps: MCS realizes that the two months of summer break are critical to students’ maintaining their learning, knowledge, skills, and curiosity from the prior school year. MCS will seek Ball State’s assistance in learning from elementary, middle, and high school students as to camps and activities that would be of interest to them. Hearing from parents/families as to their ideas and needs may also help to increase the number of students enrolled in summer activities.



Evidence of Progress #2: High School Programs

Progress Toward Goal: On-Track

MCS continued its partnerships with four entities during SY 2021-22 – GEAR-UP, Project Leadership, TeenWorks, and City Life. These programs served high school students during the school day, offering extended learning opportunities.

Evidence of Progress #2a. GEAR-UP Partnership: Indiana Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP) is a state competitive grant to increase the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. MCS is one of only ten GEAR-UP partner districts in the state with programs at the two middle schools and the high school.

To increase student academic achievement for SY 2021-22, GEAR-UP staff (hired by Purdue) provided afterschool assistance to Central juniors and seniors. The staff allotted two days for students seeking credit recovery and two days for those needing assistance with homework, which included junior and senior student access to an online program, “tutor.com.” The GEAR-UP staff, housed at the high school, provided academic and social and emotional support to meet student needs and in Fall 2021 offered the “SAT Boot Camp” for juniors and seniors to understand the importance of SAT scores and tips for taking the test. Students received an SAT workbook and practiced assessing the test online.

The staff assisted 21st Century Scholar seniors (97 students) in completing their “Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)” during FAFSA labs and in updating their *Scholartrack* accounts. For the cohort graduating, GEAR-UP offered several Bridge-to-College days during the year and other events in Summer 2022, including a leadership conference for interested juniors and seniors.

The intensification of marketing about the GEAR-UP program (and the opening of afterschool activities post-COVID) resulted in a more than doubling of the number of student tutoring visits from 2020-21 to 2021-22 (Table 3.21).

Table 3.21: GEAR-UP After-School Tutoring: 10th and 11th Grade Student Visits

2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
146	388	335	781

Next Steps: The GEAR-UP staff with MCS partnering will continue to increase student awareness of GEAR-UP for 10th and 11th grade students. The district will provide the facilities to house the program and will ask teachers to inform students needing homework help about the program.

Evidence of Progress #2b. Project Leadership: As a nonprofit serving Muncie students and families. Project Leadership partners with MCS to increase high school and post-secondary completion rates through financial education. With a mission to ensure that low-income students achieve an education with value in the marketplace through college access and completion, Project Leadership created multiple opportunities for students and their families to learn about and complete steps to prepare for college financially:



- Promoted and supported 7th and 8th graders and their families in enrolling to be a 21st Century Scholar.
- Assisted over 100 students in completing the required twelve activities to remain active in the 21st Century Scholars Program.
- Provided two sessions at MCHS regarding FAFSA and assisted 97 in completing their applications.
- Led students to discover over \$600,000 in financial aid to secure tuition and trainings after high school.
- Matched high school 21st Century Scholars to volunteers that committed to a four-year relationship of supporting and guiding the student.
- Provided college and career presentations for incoming 6th and 9th graders during the district's orientation days with 160 high school students and 120 middle school students participating.

Next Steps: MCS will continue its partnership with Project Leadership and examine current and additional ideas for increasing the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Evidence of Progress #2c. TeenWorks. In SY 2021-22, MCS entered its second year of partnership with TeenWorks, a non-profit serving student in Muncie and Indianapolis, to learn about working opportunities through real-life experiences, thought-provoking discussions with a career coach, purposeful learning in a classroom, and hearing from community professionals on their path to success. Student enrollment at Central continues to increase each year (Table 3.22).

Table 3.22: TeenWorks Student Participation

2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
--	56	73	98

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, Central High School will promote this opportunity and increase student participation.

Evidence of Progress #2d. 2d. City Life: With a focus on students 11–19 years old, the non-profit City Life began SY 2021-22. City Life strives to walk with pre-teens and teens in urban communities, being “a steady voice and presence in their lives.” Using indigenous community leaders, City Life established a program at Southside Middle school with a tutoring during the school day and after school with a focus on building relationships with the students. The George and Francis Ball Foundation generously matched financial support for this added support for middle school students.

Next Steps: City Life will continue in SY 2022-23 with the intent to increase the number of students participating.

Strategy 3.26 Provide transition opportunities for learners upon entering new school levels, kindergarteners entering school, 6th graders entering middle school, and 9th graders entering high school.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.26.** Establish transitional experiences over multiple days for kindergarten, 6th grade, and 9th grade students as they enter new school levels.

Progress Towards Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS implemented transitional experiences for students moving into new school levels several years ago. The experience provides learners with a visit to their new school before the first day of school and includes tours and activities appropriate for each level, such as “how to open a locker” at the middle school level. For 9th grade students entering high school, activities occur at Camp Adventure over several days and focus on team building.

The experiences allow students to begin to build relationships with one another and their teachers, increase their confidence on the first day of school, and lower their anxiety. At the middle and high school levels, MCS partnered with Project Leadership to plan activities focused on developing positive relationships and planning early for college and careers. In Spring 2022, MCS communicated about the school transition event through email, social media, and the automated call system.

SY 2021-22 was the first on-site experience following the 2020-21 virtual events due to COVID-19. Table 3.23 shows student participation rates over two years. MCS greatly values the donation from the George and Frances Ball Foundation of incentives to foster student and family participation.

Table 3.23: Student Participation in School Level Transition Experiences

Transition Experience	School Levels	2020-21		2021-22	
		District Enrollment	Attended	District Enrollment	Attended
Kick-Off-to-Kindergarten	All elementary schools	380	113 30%	Available in Sept.	109
Titan Camp	Northside: 5th into 6th	176	101 78%	Available in Sept.	100
Panther Camp	Southside: 5th into 6th	159	69 61%	Available in Sept.	30
Bearcat Camp	Central: 8th into 9th	366	109 43%	Available in Sept.	125

Next Steps: The elementary director and the kindergarten teachers will investigate the low number of families that chose to participate in the Kick-off-to-Kindergarten even and consider changes needed in the event and/or communications about the event. The low number of freshmen participating is also of concern. Project Leadership and MCS will gain student and family feedback from those that did and did not attend; will review pre-event communications; and will research age-appropriate activities and incentives that would more likely attract freshman students.



Pillar IV: Social and Emotional Learning

GOAL 4: Our educators will gain new understandings and practices to guide our learners in maturing towards appropriate social and emotional behaviors and attitudes as related to self and others, in relationships, and in decision-making.

Rationale for Pillar and Goal: Like other schools across the United States, MCS' student population is growing increasingly diverse, with learners coming from different social, ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds. To meet the needs of all our learners, MCS is extending its attention beyond academics to social and emotional learning (SEL). SEL creates a foundation for a safe and positive learning environment and enhances students' ability to succeed in school, careers, and life. SEL functions best with coordinated school, family, and community efforts centered on developing five key skill areas for learners: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

Strategy 4.1 Establish and implement district-wide frameworks and structures to serve students' academic, social, and emotional needs through the Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS).

Description of MTSS: In supporting our students' social and emotional learning (SEL), MCS's goal is to implement a K-12 multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). As with academic learning, learners vary in their social and emotional skills. With a goal of reducing behavioral and disciplinary issues through student SEL growth and maturation, the MTSS framework provides a proactive and preventative approach to support students. MTSS consists of three tiers of learner support with each one providing more support than the previous one.

- **Tier I:** for all learners, taught by their classroom teachers using a district adopted SEL curriculum.
- **Tier II:** for learners needing additional support with small group meetings 2-3 times a week with a specialized teacher, i.e., school counselor, behavior coach.
- **Tier III:** for learners needing intensive support, with one-on-one meetings 1-2 times a week with a specialized interventionist, i.e., school counselor, psychologist, or behavior specialist.

NOTE: MTSS is not special education -

- Rather, MTSS is support for all learners, inclusive of the whole child approach: cognitive, communication, social, emotional, and physical development.
- Rather, MTSS occurs in schools and communities with the realization that some children need additional support in social and emotional learning (SEL) no different than students needing support in academics.

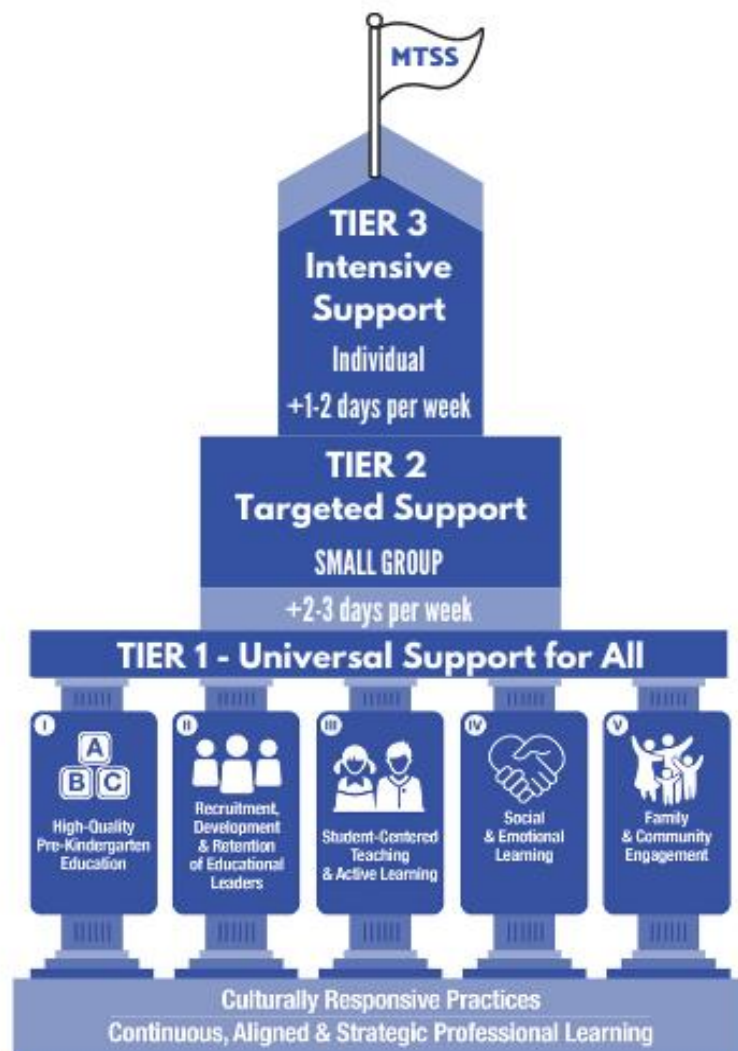


- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 a:** Develop the MCS philosophy regarding social and emotional development and classroom best practices, interventions, and supports in collaboration with Ball State.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2019-20, MCS took the initial step of partnering with Ball State to develop a social-emotional student development and support program. BSU faculty in fields related to social and emotional learning served as “ambassadors” bringing their knowledge and experiences to the planning. In SY 2020-21, the group researched and created a list of evidence based SEL strategies/supports and finalized the action steps for Pillar IV. This school year, 2021-22, the group adopted the components and process of the MCS Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) as represented by the graphic (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 MCS SEL Program: Multi-Systems of Support (MTSS)





To continue the development of the SEL initiative and to guide its implementation, the committee developed a set of Belief Statements that represent the MCS SEL philosophy, and we be shared with the community:

1. All learning is social and emotional.
2. We teach student self-regulation through co-regulation with adults.
3. We build relationships rather than focusing on “the rules” - connection over compliance – by relationship building, touch points with students and families, and teaching SEL competencies embedded in academic content.
4. “Children do well if they can” (Greene, 2014⁴), but they may need help. Staff will work with their students to identify and address lagging skills and unsolved problems in a proactive manner, rather than relying on external authoritarian and punitive reactions from adults.
5. Behavior is best managed through empathy, understanding the concerns of both students and adults, and collaborating to find solutions that address both student and adult concerns (a “win-win”).

Next Steps: MCS will engage staff members in professional learning regarding the belief statements, beginning with school-based MTSS teams and administrators, followed by teachers and support staff.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 b.** Align MCS policies and documents to the MCS MTSS philosophy of social and emotional development, reflective of the cultural diversity of our students.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: MCS began to address this action step this past school year by reviewing the district’s crisis and safety plan. School psychologists reviewed the document and created a set of recommendations to improve the alignment of the plan to the district’s philosophy of encouraging and supporting students’ social and emotional development. The recommendations are specific to the procedures and roles that the district health professionals (e.g., school psychologists, school counselors, behavior coaches, and family navigators) will take during crisis situations.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, the associate superintendent will work closely with the chief security officer to review the recommendations and propose changes in the district’s crisis and safety plan, followed by a review by IDOE. The district discipline procedures and guidelines will also be examined to determine inclusion of preventative and restorative practices, SEL skill building interventions, and alternatives to student suspension and expulsion.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 c.** Determine and obtain the resources needed to implement MTSS, such as staff, training, space, materials, an SEL screener, and schedules.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

⁴ Greene, R. (2014). *Lost at School: Why our kids with behavioral challenges are falling through the cracks and how we can help them*. NY: Scribner.



Evidence of Progress: The special education director/coordinator of SEL oversees the MTSS Leadership Team. The team, comprised of Ball State faculty (ambassadors), MCS administrators, school psychologists, and a board-certified behavior analyst, met twice a month to refine and add resources to support the implementation of MTSS. Actions accomplished in SY 2021-22 include:

- **Staffing:** MCS identified experienced SEL K-8 staff to implement the interventions during this past school year. Staff implementing Tier II and III interventions included MTSS School Team members, (e.g., counselors, behavior coaches), eight Ball State practicum students, an extern, and an intern. In addition, Meridian Health behavior therapists participated, as needed, at each school.
- **Materials, Curriculum:** The team selected SEL curricula for all Tiers and for all grade levels. (See Action Step 4.1 d)
- **Scheduling:** The middle schools piloted interventions occurring during advisory and lunch periods.

Next Steps: For SY 2022-23, the MTSS Team will continue to monitor staffing, materials, and the schedule for the MTSS programs in each school. They will note changes needed to increase support to students and teachers and adjust as determined. The team will review the middle school master schedule and revise it to better serve this age level with SEL support and interventions.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 d.** Select and obtain Pre-K–12 social and emotional learning curricula that correspond to MCS SEL Belief Statements, ensuring it is culturally responsive and developmentally appropriate for the learners.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: This school year, the MTSS Team reviewed the current K-8 SEL curriculum, *Second Steps*, and determined it was appropriate to continue its use in K-8 grades with teachers using it once a week. The team also led the teachers' pilot of an additional program for Tier I curriculum, *Zones of Regulation*. The zones assist learners in being aware of and naming various feelings, and in exploring strategies for self-regulation, prosocial skills, and self-care. The four "zones," categorized as blue, green, yellow, and red are easy for elementary students to understand, providing a shared language to discuss their feelings and regulate their emotions. For Tier II and III curricula, K-8, the committee selected *Ripple Effects* with evidence-based interventions, a focus on educational equity, and inclusion of numerous types of support: motivational counseling, SEL skill building, behavioral interventions, and social empowerment practices.

The team investigated SEL Tier I curricula for high student students and selected *Hope Squad*, to be implemented in the upcoming school year. *Hope Squad* is product of educators and mental health experts based on a model of training student peer squads to come alongside their classmates with a focus on mental health and suicide prevention. For Tier II and III curricula, the committee selected *Ripple Effects*, the same as selected for K-8.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, all schools and staff will implement the new Tier I SEL curricula and the teachers will receive training in teaching the curriculum. At the high school, staff will delve into understanding and responding to mental health issues of teenagers and learn to support and utilize the *Hope Squads* as an additional means to provide student support.



The MTSS school teams will monitor the K-8 implementation of the SEL curricula and will improve their consistent use of student data to determine the appropriate intervention for a student. District administrators, behavior coaches, ABA Specialists, school counselors, and special educators will participate in a book study of *Lost at School: Why Our Kids with Behavioral Challenges are Falling Through the Cracks and What We Can Do About It*, by Dr. Ross Greene to increase discussion and understanding of restorative behavior practices.

The school counselors will investigate the new *Xello* program's SEL lessons and determine their appropriateness as Tier II and III intervention. *Xello* is a college and career readiness program and graduation tracker for grades 6-12.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 e.** Implement multiple measures of identifying students that need additional SEL support, including the Student Risk Screening Scale and the teacher-referral form.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: To identify students that need additional SEL supports, MCS adopted a screener, the Student Risk Screening Scale (SSRS) in SY 2020-21, with all teachers receiving training on its use. MCS provides training each summer for new teachers and administrators. Realizing the need for additional ways to identify students with SEL needs, in this school year the MTSS Team introduced a new teacher referral form this school year to be used by the teachers once they have exhausted the Tier I interventions for a student in their classrooms.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, teachers will administer the SRSS screenings in the two-week assigned assessment window in the beginning of the year. The MTSS Team will guide teachers in using the referral form through the collaborative problem-solving model.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 f.** Design and employ a districtwide MTSS adopted process to (a) identify learners that need Tier II and III supports; (b) collect data; (c) make referrals; (d) provide interventions, and (e) conduct progress monitoring.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2021-22, the MTSS Leadership Team implemented a new process of using the universal screening (SSRS) data and teacher input to determine Tier II and III SEL supports for students. For Tier II, at times, supports may include families. To improve the rigor and consistency of the identification and intervention support process, all school counselors completed the Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) Ready learning modules. The modules assisted the counselors in collecting student data, setting student goals, and monitoring student progress. Once a month, a facilitator met with the counselors to analyze student progress and to address counselor questions.

Next Steps: This past school year, the SEL MTSS Leadership Team determined that the districtwide MTSS process needed an additional framework to identify students and to track their progress. Using the academic intervention framework, behavior specialists created an SEL framework of SEL interventions and introduced it in all buildings. The framework includes an individual, data tracking sheet for each student and will be located on a shared Google Drive for those staff members allowed to access it. This should lead to increased transparency of student progress.



- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 g.** Establish and utilize an effective MTSS Team at each school to make data-based decisions using multiple measures of student data and to conduct progress monitoring of Tier II and III interventions and supports.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In Fall 2020, MCS established MTSS Teams at each school and introduced them to a process for identifying SEL Tier II and III students and for determining appropriate student interventions. The team members, appointed by the school principal, include the principal (or a designated administrator), a school psychologist, a behavior support member (e.g., behavior coach or board-certified behavior analyst), a school counselor, or an interventionist. The principal/designee and the psychologist co-led the team meetings.

At the end of the school year, the MTSS Leadership Team discussed the processes and outcomes of the meetings and found improvements needed due to a lack of focus on analyzing student data; lack of availability of student data; and the lack of team members' understanding the difference between identifying students for SEL MTSS versus special education.

Next Steps: For SY 2022-23, the MTSS Leadership Team will address issues observed at the team meetings that need adjustment to increase the meeting effectiveness and efficiency:

- Develop and implement a formalized agenda template to improve the focus of the meetings on student data and proposed interventions.
 - Provide a link to the agenda, the data collection framework, and the student data tracking sheet on the Google drive for team members to use in the meetings to make rigorous data-based decisions.
 - Provide follow-up trainings to those provided by the Indiana IIEP Resource Center to be led by the school psychologists and the director of special education to further increase staff understanding of SEL MTSS and the differences between identifying students for MTSS and for special education services.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 h.** Provide resources and supports for school based MTSS Teams to create continuity and consistency of implementation of MTSS.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: The MTSS Leadership Team developed and implemented two resources in SY 2020-21: an electronic file system for MTSS referrals and the MTSS toolbox of targeted interventions. Teachers and staff began to use the resources this past school year.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, the MTSS Leadership Team will take inventory of the toolbox of targeted interventions by school and will determine—with the school MTSS team—any missing interventions and/or accompanying materials. The Team will order missing materials to ensure all schools have the SEL interventions that they need. The Leadership Team will develop and refine resources and determine funding needed.



- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 i.** Continue participation in the Delaware County Comprehensive Counseling Coalition—Project Leaders.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: The Muncie SEL Leadership Team continued to work alongside the Ball State SEL Ambassador to implement this grant. The funding includes the RAMP Ready modules, to provide a comprehensive school counseling model in each building.

Next Steps: The MCS special education director will serve as the lead in the Cradle to Career Social-Emotional Learning Community Action Network (See Pillar V).

Strategy 4.2 Implement the MTSS process of learner identification, interventions and supports, and progress monitoring of academics, behavior, and social and emotional development with fidelity.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.2 a.** Increase teachers’ and administrators’ understanding of MTSS through professional learning opportunities to maintain a consistent and evidence-based identification and support process.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In this past year, all schools held regular MTSS meetings to review student data and make recommendations for interventions. Areas of improvement noted by the director were the teams’ use of the meeting procedures and processes, the identification of students, and the determination of appropriate supports and interventions.

Next Steps: To improve the understanding about SEL MTSS, MCS will continue to provide training to teachers and administrators. As an initial step, the MTSS Leadership Team will provide staff with definitions and examples of how to use student data to determine the intervention(s) needed, how and when to conduct progress monitoring, and how to define “adequate progress.”

MCS administrators will attend and lead the MTSS process in collaboration with the school psychologist. Additional training on cultivating a proactive culture of inclusion that is trauma informed and culturally responsive across all classrooms will continue. The MTSS Leadership Team will provide professional development to coach K-12 teachers in how to conduct collaborative problem-solving with challenging students.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.2 b.** Implement processes of classroom teachers gathering student artifacts and/or completing a student SEL referral form to identify students needing SEL support to maintain a consistent and evidence-based identification and support process.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages



Evidence of Progress: During this second year of MTSS, determination of students that needed Tier II and III supports occurred through the screening tool. At the end of the year, the MTSS Leadership Team developed the teacher referral form as another method of identifying students. The use of work samples, behavior frequency checklists, and other artifacts to demonstrate students' needs related to SEL was not yet introduced.

Next Steps: As many staff members are struggling to differentiate referring students for special education versus for Tier II and III supports, training will continue using student data and artifacts to analyze the data, determine needs, and assign interventions. Teachers will receive examples of student work samples, behavior checklists, and reading records to use as an addendum to the SEL referral form.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.3 c.** Increase fidelity of implementation of the K-8 adopted SEL curriculum and evidence-based Tier I SEL instruction.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Started

- ◆ **Action Step 4.3 d.** Increase fidelity of implementation of the K-8 adopted SEL Tier I curriculum in the classroom and specialist-provided Tier II and III SEL interventions.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2021-22, SEL staff received training on data-based decision and using data to diagnose the barriers to progress. MCS compiled the SEL interventions that MCS owns into a catalogue with a description of their purposes.

Next Steps: MTSS school teams will review the catalog in SY 2022-23 to determine gaps, followed by selecting and ordering additional interventions. Understanding and using the new metrics to determine student adequate progress will occur through training provided by the school psychologists. The MTSS Leadership Team will create a data collection system to track the number of interventions available in each of the three tiers and provide the metrics for adequate progress/outcomes.



Pillar V: Family and Community Engagement

Goal 5: Our schools are culturally responsive and welcoming places, where, through impactful family and community partnerships, our leaders and educators provide services that aid in the academic, physical, and emotional well-being of learners and families.

Rationale for Pillar and Goal. Our families and our community are central to our students’ academic and social and emotional growth. As such, we will ensure that our schools are welcoming to families and the community, utilizing culturally responsive practices, with unique and fulfilling family-centered services and events. We believe that as we grow and succeed as a school system, so will our families and the community.

COVID-19 and Pillar V. The inability for parents and families to physically be present in the school buildings continued for a second year into SY 2021-22. While most safety precautions diminished in Spring 2022, MCS followed health department recommendations and limited large group, indoor events. This situation for the past two years led to the inability to implement most Pillar V strategies and key action steps. We were unable to hold events like Back-to-School-Night and Family Reading Nights fall semester 2021, with principals individually deciding to hold such events in a controlled setting in the spring. Parent-teacher conferences were again virtual, and rarely were volunteers allowed in the buildings. MCS is eagerly approaching SY 2022-23 and the ability to implement our action steps with our families and the Muncie community.

Strategy 5.1 Ensure families feel welcomed, are valued, and have increased opportunities to actively participate in our schools.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.1 a.** Create Family and Community Engagement (FCE) teams at each school with representation reflective of the diversity of the learners and organize, communicate, implement, and monitor engagement strategies and events for families.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Started

- ◆ **Action Step 5.1 b.** Initiate active recruitment of family and community volunteers for class and school activities through multiple means.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In July 2022, MCS hired a volunteer/wellness coordinator to serve at the district level, assisting all schools in recruitment and placement of volunteers using the online platform, *GivePulse*. In SY 2022-23, the coordinator will enter MCS volunteer opportunities into the online *GivePulse* database; oversee the computer-based volunteer screening process; match the opportunities with the volunteers; communicate regularly with the principals to learn of their volunteer needs; and inform



volunteers of their selection. In addition, the director will collaborate with schools to identify areas of need and coordinate the volunteers to provide support.

Next Steps: Implementation of the volunteer program will begin in Fall 2022 with the director determining and creating the processes, including a system for school staff to submit their volunteer needs on a regularly scheduled basis; a system for improving family and community awareness of MCS volunteer needs and the *GivePulse* program; and a system of matching opportunities with volunteers.

The director will follow all MCS procedures for volunteering, e.g., background checks. Once systems and processes are in place, the director's goals are to (a) increase the number of events utilizing volunteers, especially in early literacy (e.g., volunteers to conduct read-aloud and buddy-read); (b) increase the number of volunteers listed and available, especially for early literacy; (c) improve the volunteer matching process for a successful experience for learners and volunteers; and (d) investigate data-base programs similar to *GivePulse* but that are simplified for community use.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.1 c.** Provide at least two events or activity nights a year related to academics and/or the curricula.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In the previous year, due to the pandemic, schools were unable to hold family or community events. However, in Spring of this year, some MCS schools held a Family Night with health precautions taken.

Next Steps: MCS looks forward to a rigorous schedule of family events in all our schools in 2022-23.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.1 d.** Develop student-led, parent-teacher conferences yearly and provide teacher and student training in using protocols to ensure the meeting of conference goals.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: Beginning in 2021-22, MCS elevated the importance of parent-teacher conferences by listing conference dates in the district master calendar. Parents determined the format, in-person or virtual, depending on their comfort level with teachers leading the conferences.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, administrators will lead the staff in understanding and implementing student-led conferences at all school levels. Students will learn their role in sharing their accomplishments and areas to improve through classroom practice.

Strategy 5.2 Broaden teacher and administer knowledge and use of culturally appropriate practices with learners and families.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.2 a.** Build teacher and administrator capacity to engage in discourse with and about families and communities from an asset-based lens that values others' identities, experiences, funds of



- ◆ knowledge, and cultural wealth, leading to increased understanding of cultural responsiveness and eliminating deficit thinking through professional learning opportunities.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Started

- ◆ **Action Step 5.2 b.** Build teacher and administrator capacity to engage in conversations to understand barriers that students and families experience by having principals (a) conduct listening sessions or facilitating conversations with the Parent Advisory Council and/or (b) facilitate conversations with learners in the Student Advisory Councils.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: Some principals began this action step in SY 2021-22 with the initial establishment of Student Advisory Councils.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, school leaders in all schools will work together to collectively develop the purposes, roles, and duties of the Student Advisory Councils and the process for selection of the members to reflect demographics similar to the student population. The leaders will discuss and determine examples of appropriate council goals and ways to assist students in developing and achieving the council goals in their schools.

Strategy 5.3 Enhance supports for students and their families.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.3 a.** Launch the “Learner Web of Support” initiative to provide friendship and mentorship from at least five caring adults for each learner and provide training for the adults and establish partnerships with community organizations.

Progress Toward Goal: Discontinued

Evidence of Progress: As this initiative was highly dependent on face-to-face, frequent conversations between students and their supportive adults, the arrival of COVID-19 in March 2020 brought this initiative to a halt and the search began for other models to support learners.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.3 b.** Create wrap-around community service programs within the schools, following a “Cradle to Career” framework.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress #1: Wrap-around services” are a way to bring community supports into the schools to better serve both students and families. It is a collaborative approach with organizations working together. A prominent example in Muncie Community Schools of wrap-around services is the July 2020 establishment of a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) at Southside Middle School, led by Meridian Health. The school-based clinic offers both primary medical care, and behavioral and social healthcare.



Measures of need and clinic responses demonstrate the value of the FQHC at Southside. SY 2020-21 represented the “COVID year” with most visits occurring virtually. Medical, and behavioral visits in SY 2021-22 moved to on-site and in-person with increases in services provided. Total visits from students, staff, and families to the Meridian Southside Clinic increased dramatically between 2020-21 and 2021-22 (Table 5.1). Notably, primary care visits increased from 14 to 379 with 32 of the visits for immunizations. Behavioral science services reported over 1,200 visits, slightly less than the year before, but demonstrating the continued need for assistance related to mental and behavioral health and our emphasis on social and emotional learning (Pillar IV). Meridian Health provided numerous educational materials for students and families this past school year and hosted the annual “Fam Fest Back-to-School Fair” at Southside for the entire community.

Table 5.1: Meridian Southside Clinic: Patient Visits

Service Visits	2020-21	2021-22
Primary Care (medical services)	14	379
Behavioral Science Services	1,358	1,223
Licensed Clinical Social Worker	239	229
Total	1,611	1,831
Flu Shots	233	98
COVID Vaccines	155	--

Next Steps: Meridian Health services will continue at Southside Middle School in 2022-23. Meridian Health will provide certified nurses in all schools in SY 2022-23 meeting a critical need. Open Door will create a community clinic—addressing another major need.

Evidence of Progress #2: A second wrap-around service instituted in SY 2021-22 was *Family Navigators* in partnership with Marian University. The university began a program based on the City Connects model to train *Family Navigators* for the schools to coordinate the wrap-around services for students and families that occur between the school and the community.

The Navigators’ training from Marian includes executing research-based best practices for student wrap-around support. Navigators served at four schools this year — South View, East Washington, Southside, and Grissom – with funding provided for their hiring through the mayor of Muncie and the George and Francis Ball Foundation. Ball State provides a part-time family/community liaison to serve at Longfellow. One Navigator described his first year in an elementary school this way:

I’m responsible for student support plans for about 500 students. I am following up with teachers on how different student support plans are working regarding student classroom success. . . I am excited for the future of City Connects at MCS schools. Even when student support plans need to be adapted, I always prioritize student wellness, especially student’s social and emotional learning.⁵

To coordinate efforts and provide consistency, the director of Special Education arranges the group’s meetings at different community resource sites, allowing the Navigator staff to learn about specific services offered and a time of networking.

⁵ https://www.ballstatedaily.com/article/2022/04/news-muncie-community-schools-introduces-family-navigators-to-improve-childrens-educational-experiences?ct=content_open&cv=cbox_featured



Next Steps: SY 2022-23 offers MCS the opportunity to move beyond the initial introduction of the program to a time of refinement. The Navigators will continue to receive training through Marian University to improve the implementation of the City Connects model. MCS will strive for the Navigators to increase their role as liaison between students, families, and community agencies as measured by increased numbers of and frequency of collaborative wrap-around services to students and families. MCS will place a Navigator at Northside, as funded by Marian University.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.3. c.** Create and implement the neighborhood *Cradle to Career Muncie* initiative to provide children with health, social, and educational supports from early childhood to college and career.

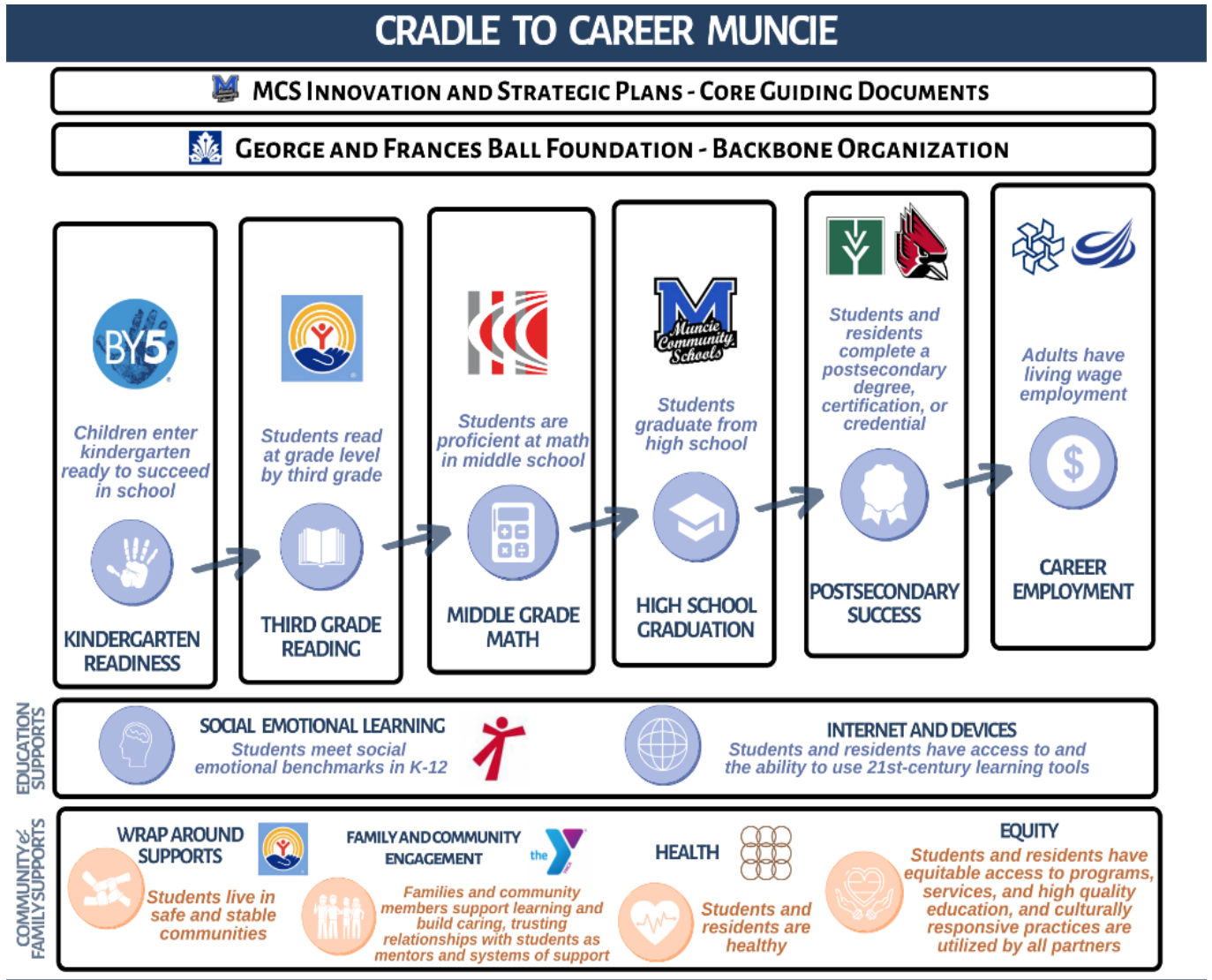
Rationale: In partnership with the George and Frances Ball Foundation, MCS extended the strategic plan to include dependence on and involvement of the entire community. Using the neighborhood “Cradle to Career” model, the framework serves Muncie children from birth to college or career through school and community wrap-around services. Research indicates that wraparound education may lead to breaking the cycle of generational poverty by helping children effectively learn, grow, and succeed. To reach this goal, Muncie residents, school staff, community leaders, and service providers must unite to bring their collective efforts to support the pivotal areas of child, youth, and young adult development. These crucial periods of development mirror the focus areas of the *Cradle to Career Muncie* initiative:

- Early learning readiness
- Elementary school benchmarks achieved
- Transition to middle and high school successfully
- On-time high school graduation
- Postsecondary (college/university) completion
- Career employment

Undergirding the six pivotal areas of development are specific child and family supports provided by the school district and the community, such as SEL and wrap around services. (Figure 2.1). To organize the development and implementation of the *Cradle to Career Muncie* Initiative, ten Collaborative Action Networks (CANs) exist. Led by community leaders, the CANs identify corresponding promising strategies to achieve their area’s goals while using Results Based Accountability and continuous improvement approaches.



Figure 5.1 *Cradle to Career Muncie* Roadmap to Success

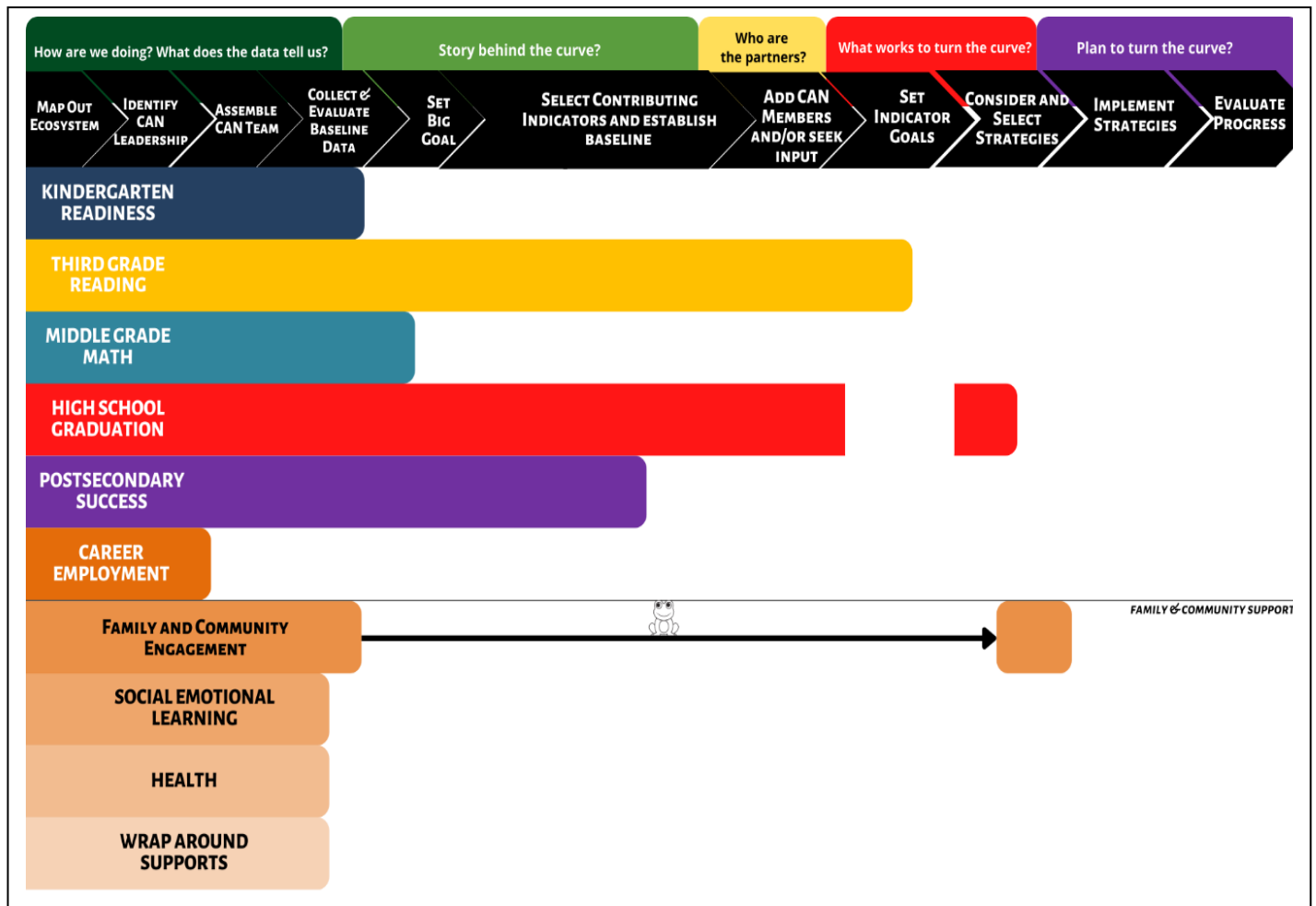


Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: With *Cradle to Career Muncie* aligned to the MCS guiding documents—the Innovation Plan and the Strategic Plan—the George and Frances Ball Foundation led as the backbone organization for the work in SY 2021-22. The CANs completed numerous tasks (Figure 5.2) to assist MCS in improving the use of evidence based instructional practices and support for our students and their families.



Figure 5.2 Progress of Collaborative Action Networks



Next Steps: In Fall 2022, the CANs will assist MCS in providing support to our students. Strategies of focus for Spring 2023 will be determined by the end of the first semester. Each CAN in collaboration with MCS will:

- Complete strategy activation and evaluation of outcomes by all CANs.
- Strengthen collective data, impact, and evaluation capacities to ensure that strategies are making a positive difference in student level outcomes by collaborating with non-profit partners.
- Travel to several other *Cradle to Career* communities with other nonprofit professionals, resident leaders, and local funders to observe and discuss practices.

◆ **Action Step 5.3 d.** Collaborate with community foundations and non-profits to align strategies and resources in support of MCS students, families, teachers, and staff.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track



Evidence of Progress: MCS benefits from world-class foundations, non-profits, and community organizations. The development of *Muncie Cradle to Career* demonstrates the strength of the school and community partnerships.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to work strategically to develop relationships with local foundations.
