



North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) are accreditation divisions of AdvancED.

Standards Assessment Report

Jefferson City Schools

345 Storey Lane
Jefferson, Georgia, United States 30549-1018

Prepared for the AdvancED Quality Assurance Review

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Standards Assessment Report

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Introduction & Purpose of the Report

Introduction

Purpose of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report is designed to serve as a valuable self-assessment and as a tool to help school systems prepare for their Quality Assurance Review. The report is based on the AdvancED standards, which serve as the foundation of the accreditation process. In order to earn and maintain accreditation, school systems must meet the AdvancED standards, engage in a process of continuous improvement, and demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.

The Standards Assessment Report engages the school system in an in-depth assessment of each of the seven AdvancED standards. In completing the report, the school system identifies the data, information, evidence, and documented results that validate that it is meeting each standard. This self assessment helps the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The Standards Assessment Report also serves as the primary resource for the Quality Assurance Review Team, which uses the report to prepare for the visit to the school system. The team uses insights gathered from the report and information obtained during the on-site visit to provide feedback to the school system and to make an accreditation recommendation.

Structure of the Report

The Standards Assessment Report includes four sections: 1) a review of each standard; 2) a description of the school system's methods for quality assurance; and 3) conclusion.

The review of each standard is divided into three components: 1) the Indicators rubric; 2) focus questions; and 3) overall assessment rubric. The Indicators rubric enables the school system to assess the degree to which practices and/or processes are in place that indicate adherence to the standard and Indicators. For each Indicator, the school system may check if the practices and/or processes are highly functional, operational, emerging, or not evident. The school system should use the rubric as an opportunity to ask itself challenging questions and to respond with accurate answers geared toward self-improvement. After completing the rubric, the school system can quickly see areas of strength and opportunity. The section asks, "To what degree are the noted practices/processes in place?"

The focus questions allow the school system to expand on and think more deeply about the responses to the Indicators rubric. The focus questions provide an opportunity for the school system to describe the systematic and systemic processes that are in place to support its ability to meet the Indicators. The section asks, "How are the practices/processes implemented?"

The overall assessment describes how well the school system and its schools are implementing practices and/or processes and the impact these practices and/or processes have on student results and overall school effectiveness. The overall assessment helps the school system judge where it is in relation to each standard. The "operational"

level is required in order to demonstrate meeting the standard. The section asks, "How well are we meeting the standard overall?"

The description of the school system's methods for quality assurance should include an overview of the practices and methods the school system uses to monitor and document improvement, provide meaningful feedback and support across the district, ensure that the AdvancED standards are met and strengthened, and regularly collect, use, and communicate results.

The conclusion provides an opportunity for the district to share final insights and information.

Completion and Submission of the Report

This Standards Assessment Report is to be completed by the school system between six months and four weeks prior to hosting a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) visit. It is strongly recommended that a wide and broad cross-section of the school system's community participate in completing this report. The report will become the basis of the Quality Assurance Review Team's review.

Directions for Completing the Report

Follow the instructions to complete each section of the report. Be thorough and concise in your answers, focusing on quality and depth over quantity.

Demographics

# Elementary Schools:	2
# Middle Schools:	1
# High Schools:	1
# Other:	0
Grade(s):	PK,K,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12
Enrollment:	2838

Executive Summary

Please provide an overview of the school system's profile. Please include:

- The school system's vision and goals;
- A description of the programs and services (including number and type of schools) under the jurisdiction of the system;
- Demographic information about school system's community;
- A summary of student performance across the system;
- An overview of any major trends or issues impacting the school system; and
- A summary of the major strengths and needs of the school system.

School System's Vision and Goals

Mission of the Jefferson City School System Board of Education - To Graduate Fully Functioning Adults

In keeping with the Mission Statement of the Jefferson City School System-- To Graduate Fully Functioning Adults-- the Jefferson City Board of Education adopts the following vision:

The opportunities that were once available to the marginally trained are disintegrating. Now, more than ever, education is the foundation for prosperity. Only through an adequate education can one acquire the skills and abilities demanded by an increasingly sophisticated job market. To assure such an educational experience, we resolve to provide a highly qualified professional staff with a challenging, rigorous and relevant curriculum in a safe and orderly environment.

We hold ourselves accountable for preparing students to function in an environment characterized by global competition, diversity, abruptly changing job demands, and an absolute requirement for technical skills and abilities. Those who teach in the Jefferson City School System must never cease to learn or emphasize to students that learning will be a lifelong process.

As a Board of Education we face the challenge of balancing the opinions and values of the community with what are perceived to be the demands of the future. Consequently, standards and directions communicated by this Board must be evaluated regularly in order to reaffirm, alter or modify expectations. In conclusion, it is our belief that given a capable staff, adequate resources and an orderly and safe environment, all students can and will learn.

Performance Goals

1. To maintain and improve student achievement by providing a challenging instructional program that meets the needs of all students.
2. To recruit and retain highly qualified personnel necessary to deliver rigorous and up-to-date instruction.
3. To maintain and upgrade facilities to meet the challenging instructional needs of students and staff and accommodate current and anticipated growth.
4. To establish an effective electronic communication system for students, staff, parents, board members, and the community.
5. To generate and manage resources that support a quality instructional program.

District Commitments

To support the Jefferson City Schools' Mission Statement, "*To Graduate Fully Functioning Adults*", we will:

- Support the implementation of defining what is to be taught at each grade level and in each subject (Georgia Performance Standards).
- Support the implementation of assessing each student to determine if he/she has learned the content (Georgia Performance Standards) using ITBS, CRCT, GHSGT, EOCT, State Writing Assessments, and teacher-developed instruments.
- Support the annual review of instructional practice including the support provided for students not meeting expectations and students exceeding expectations.
- Support the annual review of communication patterns for sharing results with students, staff, parents, and community.
- Facilitate the work of collaborative teams of teachers to determine priority areas of focus for student achievement.

Jefferson Elementary School (Pre-K-2nd) - Commitments and Goals

- We commit to differentiated instruction.
- We commit to the use of assessments to guide instruction.
- We commit to research-based strategies.
- We commit to ongoing parent communication.
- We commit to positive character development within a safe learning environment.
- We commit to professional development to improve best practices.

Jefferson Academy (Grades 3-5) - Commitments and Goals

- We commit to research-based instruction in all content areas.
- We commit to differentiated instruction.
- We commit to the use of assessments to guide instruction.
- We commit to a positive learning environment.
- We commit to timely parent communication.
- We commit to positive student behavior through character development.
- We commit to utilizing current technology to enrich the learning environment, broaden independent learning, and support standards-based instruction.

Jefferson Middle School (Grades 6-8) - Commitments and Goals

- We commit to providing learning environments that are physically and emotionally safe.
- We commit to assisting students to become independent and critical thinkers.
- We commit to empowering students with responsibility and self-respect to make positive choices.
- We commit to exposing students to differentiated learning experiences.
- We commit to using a variety of assessments to guide instruction.
- We commit to communicating with our stakeholders - students, staff, parents, and the community.

Jefferson High School (Grades 9-12) - Commitments and Goals

- We commit to providing exceptional academic, career and technology, fine arts, and extracurricular experiences that prepare students to become fully functioning adults.
- We commit that our instructional program will develop and broaden the interests, aptitudes, and abilities of

all students and result in increased standardized test scores.

- We commit that our graduates will be contributing members of society with job entry skills, effective work habits, and the ability to use reasoning and problem solving skills.
- We commit that our students will participate in the democratic process and develop an appreciation for the contributions of the many different cultures of the United States.
- We commit that the instructional program teaches respect, self-esteem, and critical thinking skills and encourages students to practice good physical and mental health.
- We commit that our students will learn to use human and physical resources as they develop into lifelong learners.

Description of Programs and Services (including number and type of schools)

Jefferson City Schools is one of three school districts in Jackson County, Georgia. The small, rural school system is a fast growing district. The student population, currently 2,838, has increased 93% over the last eleven years. Twenty-five percent of the students are enrolled as out-of-district students. The percentage of non-resident students has decreased over the last few years due to space limitations within the various instructional programs and grade levels.

The Jefferson City School System is situated in the northeast section of Georgia approximately 60 miles north of Atlanta. The system is comprised of four schools: Jefferson Elementary School (Pre-Kindergarten-2nd Grade), Jefferson Academy (Grades 3-5), Jefferson Middle School (Grades 6-8), and Jefferson High School (Grades 9-12).

The student enrollment at each school is as follows: Jefferson Elementary - 745 (including 88 pre-kindergarten students); Jefferson Academy - 651; Jefferson Middle School - 651; and Jefferson High School - 791.

The percentage of students by ethnic group is 79% White, 9% Black, 8% Hispanic, 2% Multi-Racial, and 2% Asian. The percentage of students with disabilities is 8%, the percentage of students who are eligible for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services is 3%, and the percentage of students who receive gifted education services is 13%. Currently, there are no migrant students enrolled in the school system.

The system's free and reduced lunch average is 34.6% (JES - 39.0%; JA - 35.6%; JMS - 35.5%; JHS - 28.6%). Jefferson Elementary School, Jefferson Academy, and Jefferson Middle School are eligible to receive Title I funding based on the poverty rate; however, Jefferson City Schools does not receive adequate funding to provide services in all three schools.

As a result, Jefferson Academy and Jefferson Middle School have been identified as Title I targeted assistance schools and provide services to eligible students based on multiple criteria and rank order. Both schools are Title I Distinguished Schools.

Based on *2010 Adequate Yearly Progress By the Numbers* data (Georgia Department of Education), Jefferson City Schools is 1 out of 43 systems with 100% of schools who made AYP, 1 out of 8 out of 180 school systems who made AYP for 7 consecutive years, and 1 out of 2 out of 13 systems in the Northeast Georgia RESA area who made AYP for 7 consecutive years. All four schools and the system made Adequate Yearly Progress in 2011.

The Jefferson City School System believes that all children should have an equitable opportunity to receive quality instruction. The system is committed to ensuring that the needs of all students are effectively identified and addressed. One of the Jefferson City School Board of Education goals is to have highly qualified personnel for all students. Jefferson City Schools has maintained 100% highly qualified teachers for the past seven consecutive years. In addition, 100% of all paraprofessionals have been Hi-Q since 2005.

There are 208 certified employees and 157 classified employees (October 2011 Certified/Classified Personnel Information (CPI) Report) who provide quality educational services to the students enrolled in Jefferson City Schools. The system provides a variety of curricular and extracurricular programs to meet the academic, physical, social, and emotional development of each individual student. A comprehensive academic core program is provided along with instruction in health and physical education (grades K-12), fine arts (grades K-12 chorus and art, grades 6-12 band, and grades 9-12 drama), Spanish (grades 9-12), and Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (grades 6-12).

Off-site learning experiences are included as part of the overall instructional program. Students enrolled in high school have an opportunity to participate in the Scotland Exchange Program and World War II Europe Trip. Students enrolled in middle school participate in an off-site visit to Andersonville, Georgia as part of the Civil War studies, and students enrolled in grades 4 and 5 are provided off-site learning opportunities in Tybee Island, Georgia and Washington, D.C. Multiple opportunities exist for students to explore their interests through various sports, clubs, and other activities.

Support services are in place to ensure the success of each student. Various software programs are utilized to diagnose students' academic strengths and weaknesses. Specific interventions are in place through the Pyramid of Interventions process. Academic assistance is provided before, during, and after school based on individual student needs.

The foundation for support services in Jefferson City Schools is based on strong school to community relationships and a commitment to continuous school improvement. The philosophical framework for student support services is based on the system's mission, vision, and core beliefs. The Jefferson City School System employs qualified professionals who are trained to work with faculty and staff and students and their families to ensure emotional, cultural, social, and health needs are addressed in support of increased student achievement.

Jefferson City Schools receive tremendous support from the Jefferson Foundation, chartered in 1983 as a tax-exempt 501-(C)(3) corporation. Independent of school administration, the Foundation is for the benefit of the school system with scholarships, special grants, supplements and other specific programs and projects as agreed upon with the administration.

The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees. Some of the accomplished projects include renovation of track and field facility, purchasing computer equipment for the high school, construction of the Heritage Courtyard, profits from brick sales used for new science equipment, and support for the beginning of a music department in all four schools. Ongoing projects include providing financing for the Total Person Program, managing provided scholarship funds, and providing assistance to alumni reunions.

All four schools are successful in building partnerships with local businesses to provide quality educational services to all students. The school system is fortunate to have the support of over thirty Partners in Education. The business partners serve on school-level committees, school councils, and provide resources to support the overall school programs. System and school leaders participate in an annual planning session at the beginning of the year with Partners in Education to develop a support plan aligned to the school improvement goals and objectives. This session is sponsored by the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee.

Demographic Information About the School System's Community

Jefferson, a 200 year old community, is located in Northeast Georgia about an hour north of Atlanta along Interstate 85. Jefferson has a population of 9,432 (146.6% increase from a total population of 3,825 in 2000) and is the county seat of Jackson County with a population of 60,485 (2010 U.S. Census Bureau).

Jefferson is named for President Thomas Jefferson. It is a picturesque community set among the gently rolling hills in the piedmont region of Georgia. The landscape is still dotted with small farms and lakes. Jefferson, like many small towns in the south, has gradually made the transition from agriculture, to textiles, to a balance of commercial and industrial businesses. The City's leadership is working to maintain Jefferson's small town character while strongly encouraging the development of a diverse economy that employs the growing local workforce.

Most people move to Jefferson for economic opportunity, its small town atmosphere, acceptance of newcomers, and wholesome environment for raising a family. The Jefferson City School System is highly ranked, year after year, in terms of student achievement and SAT scores, which attracts many new families. There is a broad range of extracurricular activities and an award winning recreation department for adults and children of all ages.

The city's most notable historic feature is the Crawford W. Long Museum. Dr. Crawford W. Long performed the first surgery using ether as an anesthetic in Jefferson on March 30, 1842. One of Atlanta's major hospitals is named after Dr. Crawford W. Long.

The city of Jefferson is one of nine cities in Jackson County, Georgia. Based on information from the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, the median age of Jefferson residents is 34.8 years, and the median household size is 2.66 residents. The percentage of males is 48.2, and the percentage of females is 51.8. The percentages of residents by ethnic group are as follows: 79.5% White, 10% Black, 0.3% American Indian/Alaska Native, 1.6% Asian, 7.5% Hispanic or Latino, and 1.1% Other. Approximately 7.6% of the population speaks a language other than English at home.

The median household income (2005-2009) is \$46,643, with a home ownership rate of 64.4%. The percentage of residents living in the same house for 1 year and over is 85.1%. The median value of owner-occupied housing units is \$168,400. Per capita income is \$21,957 (2009 dollars).

The education level for the 25 years and over population is 68.7% with high school or higher, 18.9% with Bachelor's degree or higher, 7.8% with graduate or professional degree, and 4.1% unemployed. Of the residents who are 15 years and over, 21.0% have never married, 56.5% are married, 1.9% are separated, 6.6% are widowed, and 14.0% are divorced.

Jefferson residents and visitors enjoy the benefits of small town living with convenient access to recreation, cultural activities, historical attractions, shopping, and other activities offered in larger cities, including Athens, Buford, and Gainesville. The community of Jefferson offers many potential resources and strengths. The school system is located two miles off Interstate 85, providing quick access to Atlanta and South Carolina.

The University of Georgia is located in Athens, approximately 18 miles from Jefferson. Other colleges and universities are located in close proximity to Jefferson City Schools, including Georgia Technical Institute, Athens Technical College, Gainesville State College, North Georgia College and State University, Georgia Gwinnett College, Gwinnett Technical College, Lanier Technical College, Piedmont College, and the Art Institute of Atlanta.

Summary of Student Performance Across the System

The students enrolled in Jefferson City Schools have historically performed well on standardized assessments. Performance levels on the spring 2011 CRCT and GHS GT exceeded the annual measurable objectives outlined in Georgia's Adequate Yearly Progress Accountability Plan.

The annual measurable objective for CRCT Math (grades 3-8) was 75.7% - JCS percent meeting or exceeding expectations was 97%; the annual measurable objective for CRCT Reading and English/Language Arts (grades 3-8) was 80.0% - JCS percent meeting or exceeding expectations was 98%.

The annual measurable objective for GHSGT Math (grade 11) was 81.2% - JCS percent meeting or exceeding expectations was 90%; the annual measurable objective for GHSGT English/Language Arts (grade 11) was 90.8% - JCS percent meeting or exceeding expectations was 93%.

The Jefferson High School graduation rate (92.2%) exceeded the state's graduation rate trajectory (85%). The percent of students enrolled in AYP grades who were absent more than 15 days was 3.1%.

Some academic program results from 2010-2011 are listed below:

- Exceeded the state and RESA averages on all statewide assessments
- Exceeded the state and national 2010 SAT average (JHS - 1566, Georgia - 1453, Nation - 1509)
- Scored in the Top 10% on the Georgia High School Graduation Tests in All Tests Passed Category (English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies)
- Scored in the Top 5% on the CRCT in 14 out of 15 content area tests in Grades 3 through 5
- Ranked #1 system in the state in 6 CRCT content area tests in Grades 3 through 5
- Scored in the Top 5% on the CRCT in 10 out of 15 content area tests in Grades 6 through 8
- Ranked #1 system in the state in 2 CRCT content area tests in Grades 6 through 8 - "Exceeds" category - JMS ranked #1 in 4 content area tests
- Academic Achievement Awards - Georgia's Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS) - JES - Highest Performance (Silver); JA - Highest Performance (Gold); JHS - Greatest Gain (Silver) and Highest Performance (Bronze)
- Georgia Council for Administrators of Special Education Award - 2010 recognition for districts meeting and exceeding targets for students with disabilities
- Title I Distinguished Schools - JA and JMS

Some of the 2010-2011 athletic accomplishments include the following:

- Dragon Teams in the Post-Season - Cheerleading, Cross Country, Golf, Tennis, Track & Field, Volleyball, Wrestling
- Cheerleading - Region Champion and State 4th Place Team
- Tennis - Boys Region Runner-up
- Track - Individual State Champion - Pole Vault
- Wrestling - Area Dual Champion and Area Traditional Champion, State Dual Champion (10th Consecutive) and State Traditional Champion (11th Consecutive), Two Individual State Champions

Some of the 2010-2011 accomplishments within the arts program are listed below:

- 1st Place in Class in band, percussion, and drum major (1st Place in Division)
- JMS and JHS Band and Choral Groups received superior ratings (highest possible) at Large Group Performance Evaluation
- Four JHS students competed at the Literary Choral meet placing 4th in state and 1st and 2nd in region
- Fully integrated art curriculum from Kindergarten through 12th Grade
- Advanced Placement Art Studio course offerings - several students received college credit for their performance on the AP Art Studio Exam

Additionally, students have an opportunity to enroll in Career, Technical, and Agricultural courses offered in

grades 6-12. Students participate in clubs and organizations affiliated with each of the CTAE programs and receive recognition and awards from various competitions in the areas of agriculture, business and computer science, healthcare science, and JROTC.

Overview of Major Trends or Issues Impacting the School System

Some of the major trends or issues impacting the Jefferson City School System include a change in student demographics, loss of federal, state, and local funds as a result of the recent economic downturn, and continuing to meet the demands of the federal and state accountability system.

Furlough days and reduction in professional learning funds have impacted the number of course offerings and off-site opportunities for employees. The reduction in federal and state funds have enabled administrators and teachers to focus more heavily and more seriously on everyday practices that impact student learning. However, in order to continuously improve practices, it is critical that teachers have opportunities to develop and refine their knowledge and skills through various professional development activities.

The decrease in the number of workdays and professional learning funds makes it challenging to provide professional learning opportunities in the areas of standards-based instruction, common core standards, use of data to inform teaching and learning, differentiated learning to address the diverse needs of students, depth of knowledge, and technology, which over time can potentially have a negative impact on teacher and student performance.

Budget reductions have impacted the number of personnel in various departments, including counseling, administration, and technology. Previously, the system employed graduation coaches at the middle and high schools, which provided tremendous support in ensuring the needs of students were being met through intensive monitoring of academic and behavioral progress. The elimination of the graduation coaches has presented challenges for school leaders as they strive to maintain the level of monitoring needed to increase student achievement.

Additional counseling or administrative support would enable school leaders to implement various programs and processes that would contribute to overall school effectiveness and student performance. As the student population changes and the system enrolls new students, it is becoming more challenging to ensure that proper support mechanisms are in place to address the individualized needs of students.

In addition, the system's leadership recognizes the importance of establishing 21st Century learning environments and expanding opportunities to increase learning through digital content and the integration of technology. Staying abreast of the rapidly changing trends and best practices along with equipment purchases is essential in assisting the Jefferson City School System in accomplishing its mission and vision to graduate fully functioning adults who are competitive in a global society.

Keeping up with changes in technology is a challenge due to limited personnel in the technology department. Instructional technology support staff would enable the system to more effectively and efficiently provide training and classroom support in using technology to enhance teaching and learning. Funding becomes a challenge as the system explores options for expanding the technology infrastructure and providing a wireless environment that supports a bring your own technology initiative.

Additional challenges lie in closing the achievement gaps among various subgroups and continually increasing performance levels of all students based on federal and state accountability measures. Working with teachers to expand their knowledge on the use of differentiated instructional strategies to address the diverse needs of students, articulation among and between all levels of schooling, retention of highly qualified staff, and increasing

stakeholder involvement and engagement in the overall school improvement process remain high priorities for system and school leaders. Continuous improvements in these areas will lead to increased student achievement.

Systems and schools are facing many changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The decline in economy has presented challenges for system and school leaders. As we strive to accomplish the vision and mission of Jefferson City Schools, it is becoming increasingly more critical to focus on the essential skills that must be taught, deliver quality instruction, and evaluate the impact of instruction in order to produce fully functioning adults who are competitive in a global society.

Summary of Major Strengths and Needs of the School System

The Jefferson City School System is embraced by a community that supports a quality education for all students. All stakeholders share a strong commitment to educational excellence and hold high expectations for student learning. There is a strong level of community support and involvement in the educational process. The belief that exposure to excellence promotes excellence is evident in all aspects of the system's overall program, including the arts, athletics, and academics.

One of the greatest strengths of the Jefferson City School System is the tremendous level of support provided to the system and its schools from the Board of Education members. The Jefferson City School System Board of Education is committed to educational excellence and has a strong working relationship with the Superintendent. The system's leadership strives to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel necessary to deliver rigorous instruction, generate and manage resources that support a quality instructional program, partner with the community to ensure continuous improvement and academic success for all students, and maintain and upgrade facilities to meet the challenging instructional needs of students and staff and accommodate current and anticipated growth.

Administrators, teachers, and support staff are dedicated and possess a strong sense of pride in their role in providing quality services to students. The Jefferson City School System has had a successful track record for employing highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals hired by Jefferson City Schools quite often come with college degrees. Support and encouragement are given to these individuals to return to college to get teaching certificates. This allows Jefferson City Schools to continue to have a quality paraprofessional staff with a potential source for future, quality teachers in the system.

The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement of all students. The Jefferson City School System employs a highly qualified professional staff who are knowledgeable of content and best practices and committed to lifelong learning. Teachers have clearly defined expectations for student learning and are knowledgeable of curriculum standards.

There is a comprehensive Pyramid of Interventions process in place that allows administrators, teachers, parents, and students to collaboratively develop and implement strategies to address specific learning and behavioral needs of students who are performing below expectations. Opportunities for acceleration and enrichment are provided to those students who are achieving above the expected rate.

Teachers regularly collaborate to determine what students need to know, should be able to do, and how to assess mastery of content and skills. Parents are an integral part of the learning process. Efforts are made to channel more resources and time to moving students from "meeting expectations" to "exceeding expectations" on state-mandated assessments. There is a strong commitment to integrating technology to enhance teaching and learning.

Teachers at all grade levels use formative assessments (benchmark assessments, common assessments, or teacher-

developed probes) to determine the success of students in meeting local and state academic achievement standards. Results of the formative assessments are used to assist teachers in diagnosing the success of teaching and learning in the classroom.

System and school leaders meet regularly to discuss student progress toward academic goals and to identify additional resources needed to ensure increased student performance. Teachers use results from state mandated and locally developed assessments to develop target lists that are used in grade level and department meetings throughout the year to monitor student progress toward achievement goals. Formative and summative assessment data are used to identify students for remediation and enrichment as outlined in the Pyramid of Interventions process.

The Board of Education and system leadership are committed to employing principles of sound financial management through careful budgetary analysis and planning. Jefferson City Schools have maintained fiscal discipline and stewardship in light of the recent economic decline, reserving a fund equity balance of \$2.5 million, 14% of the \$18 million total budget.

The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders. The Jefferson City School System has a rich history of community support and involvement. From academics to athletics, the system partners with community stakeholders to support student achievement. System leaders consider the strong level of support as one factor for continued success within the academics, athletics, and arts programs. The residents of Jefferson take great pride in the Jefferson City School System and have high expectations for academic achievement and stakeholder satisfaction.

The Jefferson City School System has built a strong reputation across the state based on past and current performance in the area of academics, athletics, and the arts as a result of the commitment to continuous improvement. System and school leaders are continuously working with teachers, support staff, and other stakeholders to identify areas needing improvement. While we celebrate our successes, we realize there is always room for improvement in our everyday operations and practices.

Administrators and teachers are constantly looking at ways to improve teaching and learning. At Jefferson City Schools, we strive to never be satisfied with current performance levels and keep the question of how we can get better at the forefront of our thinking while holding on to the cherished motto that exposure to excellence promotes excellence.

The major needs identified by the system include the following:

- While there is a strong sense of community and shared purpose, system and school leaders recognize the need to continue to explore additional opportunities for involving all stakeholders in the system and school improvement planning process.
- There is a need to provide more opportunities for vertical and horizontal alignment and articulation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment across the schools.
- School improvement planning exists at the system and school level; however, there is a need to establish a structure that is more consistent across the four schools. The framework for school improvement needs to be expanded to include more representation from various stakeholder groups.
- A technology replacement plan and reservation of funds would enable the system to more effectively and efficiently procure equipment aligned to the system and school needs. Additional personnel is needed to effectively monitor and support the implementation and integration of technology in teaching and learning.
- Teachers need to be provided with additional training and support on the analysis and use of student performance data to guide instructional decisions. System and school leaders need to establish data teams to assist in this work to ensure alignment within and among schools.

- There is a need to provide more opportunities to develop teachers as leaders.
- There needs to be a more systematic and ongoing approach to gathering feedback from stakeholder groups.
- There is a need to provide planning time for teachers outside of instructional time for collaboration, curriculum development and alignment, instructional planning, technology use and integration, and development of formative and summative assessments to ensure increased levels of student and teacher performance.

Standard 1. Vision & Purpose

STANDARD: The system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it commits to a purpose and direction that is shared system-wide. The leadership establishes expectations for student learning aligned with the system's vision that is supported by system and school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance and district effectiveness. The system's vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

Indicators RubricGroup: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators RubricGroup:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

1.1 Establishes a vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Leadership demonstrates stakeholder support

Mission Statement visible throughout the district

Stakeholder perception data used to develop mission

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about vision, mission

Other: Board Retreat; Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson

Other: Vision, Mission, Beliefs, and Performance Goals; Board Meeting - minutes and agendas (e-board); System and school level leadership, grade level, department, and other meetings - agendas and minutes; Organizational Chart; Curriculum Maps; Professional Learning Guidelines; SACS, PTO/PATS, school-level committee, school council meetings - agendas and minutes; System and School Improvement Plans

1.2 Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Handbooks include vision, mission

Meetings incorporate elements of vision, mission

Newsletters include vision, mission

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about vision, mission

Website/page includes vision, mission

Other: Teacher Collaboration; Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson; Open House; Curriculum Night; Annual Title I Parent Meeting; Other Parent Involvement activities

Other: System and School Websites; SACS, PTO/PATS, school-level committee, school council meetings - agendas and minutes; Weekly emails, school newsletters, brochures, and other publications

1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District and school improvement planning incorporates vision, mission

District Improvement Plan includes vision, mission

Goals distributed through publications and communication

Goals that are data-driven and measurable

Strategic Plan includes vision, mission

Strategic planning incorporates vision, mission

Other: Board Retreat; Community Breakfast

Other: System and School Improvement Plans; Professional Learning Plans; Surveys (Technology, Professional Learning, Vision Project, and other)

1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community :

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Annual Report

District Improvement Plan

District profile is used during parent/community meetings

District profile is used during staff meetings

Newsletters, articles

Publications, brochures, handbooks

Stakeholders demonstrate knowledge of District profile

Other: Board Retreat; Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson

Other: Georgia Department of Education Adequate Yearly Progress Reports; Governor's Office of Student Achievement State, System, and School Report Cards; System and School Improvement Plans; Data Rooms; City of Jefferson website; Jackson County Chamber of Commerce website

1.5 Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District and school improvement planning demonstrates alignment with vision, mission

District Curriculum demonstrates alignment with vision, mission

District Improvement Plan demonstrates alignment of vision, mission with teaching and learning

Extra -curricular activities incorporate vision, mission

Policies on instructional practices demonstrate alignment with vision, mission

Staff and Parent Handbooks demonstrate alignment of vision, mission with teaching and learning

Other: Standards-Based Walkthrough Observations; Monthly leadership, grade level/department meetings focus on improving teaching and learning; Quarterly AYP meetings to monitor progress toward learning goals and to identify barriers to improving performance; Shared commitment among stakeholders regarding high expectations for academic achievement

Other: Data Analysis Guidance; CLIP and Plan Descriptors; Updated Accountability Guidelines

1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes for strategic planning demonstrate review

Other: Monthly administrators' and leadership meeting agendas; School Improvement planning sessions (system and school level); Board Retreat

Other: Board Meetings - minutes and agendas; grade level and/or department meeting agendas and minutes

Focus Questions:

1. What is the process for establishing and building understanding of and commitment to the vision statement among the school system and its stakeholders?

The Jefferson City School System is committed to a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system. The system and its schools have established clear expectations for student learning, which are aligned to the vision and mission and supported by internal and external stakeholders. Expectations for student learning provide the focus for assessing academic performance and system and school effectiveness.

In preparation for the first district-wide accreditation process, Jefferson City Schools organized a district-level SACS steering committee in the fall of 2005. The committee consisted of two representatives from each of the schools and central office administrators. To honor the rich history and tradition of Jefferson City Schools, the committee members researched the goals and beliefs of the past decades. Consequently, the previous Board-approved mission statement and a cherished motto, *Exposure to Excellence Promotes Excellence*, were adopted for use in each school.

To individualize the mission statement for each school, a committee of faculty members at each building level interpreted the mission statement and created action-oriented commitment statements. The commitment statements were previewed by all staff, school council members, parent-teacher organizations, students, and by the general community through email, scheduled meetings, and the website. The faculty, staff, and stakeholders revised, agreed upon, and adopted the commitment statements in support of the system's vision and mission.

The system-wide mission and commitment statements became and continue to be the central focus of all planning documents. The system mission, vision, beliefs, performance goals and school-level goals and commitments are reviewed and revised annually as part of the school improvement process.

The system mission, motto, vision, beliefs, and performance goals are listed below.

Mission

To Graduate Fully Functioning Adults

Motto

"Exposure to Excellence Promotes Excellence"

Vision

In keeping with the Mission Statement of the Jefferson City School System-- *To Graduate Fully Functioning Adults*-- the Jefferson City Board of Education adopts the following vision:

The opportunities that were once available to the marginally trained are disintegrating. Now, more than ever, education is the foundation for prosperity. Only through an adequate education can one acquire the skills and abilities demanded by an increasingly sophisticated job market. To assure such an educational experience, we resolve to provide a highly qualified professional staff with a challenging, rigorous and relevant curriculum in a safe and orderly environment.

We hold ourselves accountable for preparing students to function in an environment characterized by global competition, diversity, abruptly changing job demands, and an absolute requirement for technical skills and abilities. Those who teach in the Jefferson City School System must never cease to learn or emphasize to students that learning will be a lifelong process.

As a Board of Education we face the challenge of balancing the opinions and values of the community with what are perceived to be the demands of the future. Consequently, standards and directions communicated by this Board must be evaluated regularly in order to reaffirm, alter or modify expectations. In conclusion, it is our belief that given a capable staff, adequate resources and an orderly and safe environment, all students can and will learn.

System Beliefs

To support the Jefferson City Schools' Mission Statement, “ *To Graduate Fully Functioning Adults*”, we will:

- Support the implementation of defining what is to be taught at each grade level and in each subject (Georgia Performance Standards).
- Support the implementation of assessing each student to determine if he/she has learned the content (Georgia Performance Standards) using ITBS, CRCT, GHSGT, EOCT, State Writing Assessments, and teacher-developed instruments.
- Support the annual review of instructional practice including the support provided for students not meeting expectations and students exceeding expectations.
- Support the annual review of communication patterns for sharing results with students, staff, parents, and community.

System Performance Goals

- To maintain and improve student achievement by providing a challenging instructional program that meets the needs of all students.
- To recruit and retain highly qualified personnel necessary to deliver rigorous and up-to-date instruction.
- To maintain and upgrade facilities to meet the challenging instructional needs of students and staff and accommodate current and anticipated growth.
- To establish an effective electronic communication system for students, staff, parents, board members, and the community.
- To generate and manage resources that support a quality instructional program.

At the beginning of each year, teachers meet by grade level or department to review the vision, mission, belief statements, and performance goals and to revise action plans based on statewide assessment and other performance data. Professional learning needs are identified as principals compile all action plans into an overall school improvement plan. The development and implementation of the PRIDE school improvement cycle (**P**lan, **R**eview, **I**mplement, **D**etermine Effectiveness, **E**xamine Results) has provided a framework for ensuring teachers and administrators engage in the process of reviewing and revising action plans, curriculum maps, instructional units, and formative assessments aligned to the system's vision and mission.

School leaders meet with instructional services staff members to ensure that all requests for professional learning and resources are aligned to the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). School improvement plans are used to determine resources needed to address student learning needs and to allocate professional learning funds to improve teaching practices.

Board members, who serve on the instructional committee, meet with groups of teachers and students at each school prior to the annual board retreat to obtain feedback regarding program strengths and weaknesses and barriers to improving performance. This information is used for future planning and making revisions to the school improvement plans and to ensure that everyone is working collaboratively to achieve the vision, mission, and goals of the system.

Principals review the mission, vision, and system and school beliefs and commitments at curriculum night, school council, parent-teacher organization, and school-level committee meetings, and other events. The mission and vision and performance goals are posted on the system website and are visible in each of the schools.

The Jefferson City School System communicates its mission and commitment statements to stakeholders, including students, parents, business leaders, and other community members through the website, email system, parent portal, school marquees, system- and school-level meetings, media publications (e.g. newsletters, student agendas, handbooks), and during parent-teacher and advisement planning sessions. Additionally, the vision, mission, and beliefs and commitments are prominently placed in all classrooms, central locations in the schools, and data rooms.

In preparation for the system accreditation guided self-study, an oversight committee was established to engage in decision making and planning to guide the system through the self-assessment and associated activities as related to the SACS accreditation process. Each principal established seven focus committees, comprised of various stakeholders representing staff members, students, parents, and other community members, to facilitate the SACS process in each building.

Additionally, each principal appointed a chairperson from each of the seven committees to work with system chairpersons (members from the oversight committee). The first task for the school and system level SACS committees was to review the system's vision, mission, beliefs, performance goals, and school commitment statements and share with stakeholder groups to ensure everyone had a common understanding of the system's vision and purpose.

School board members and system and school leaders are committed to increasing opportunities to involve parents, community members, and business leaders in helping achieve the mission of graduating fully functioning adults. Through continuous community interactions and meetings, system and school leaders are able to establish and build understanding of and commitment to the vision statement among the school system and its stakeholders.

2. What is the system's process for maintaining and using information that describes the school system, its programs, services, and schools and their performance?

Maintaining and using information that describes the school system, its programs, services, and schools and their performance is a critical component in improving student achievement and the overall effectiveness of the system and its schools.

The Georgia Department of Education and Governor's Office of Student Achievement annually compile student performance and system profile information into reports that are available via the internet. Reports include historical and longitudinal data that can be used to compare student performance internally as well as with surrounding school systems. Links to both sites are made available on the system and school websites to ensure

immediate access by students, parents, teachers, other staff members, and community members.

The Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) also serves as a valuable tool in efficiently and accurately managing, analyzing, and using student performance results to make data-informed decisions to improve student learning outcomes and to facilitate discussions among stakeholders on strategies for increasing student achievement and closing achievement gaps among various subgroups of students.

The Jefferson City School System uses Infinite Campus as a tool for storing and managing student performance and demographic data. The system is password protected and allows approved users to easily access student, school, and system profile information, including demographic, enrollment, academic achievement, discipline, and attendance data.

System leaders prepare an annual report that is presented at various events, including the spring board retreat, community breakfast, and other community organizational meetings. The report provides an overview of state-mandated assessment results along with accomplishments and highlights within the academics, athletics, arts, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs. Student assessment results are shared at monthly board, leadership, and administrators' meetings.

Information on system and school performance is provided through newsletters, website postings, handbooks, media publications, and local newspaper.

System and school level profile and performance data are reviewed at Annual Title I Parent Meetings, curriculum nights, school council meetings, parent-teacher organization meetings, school improvement planning meetings, grade level/department meetings, and other school events.

3. How does the leadership ensure that the system's vision, purpose, and goals guide the work of the school system and its schools?

A system-wide commitment to continuous quality improvement ensures the vision, purpose, and goals guide the work of the school system and its schools. The Board of Education has a strong working relationship with the Superintendent. System leaders work closely with the schools to monitor programs and practices to ensure all procedures are aligned to the system's vision, purpose, and goals. System and school leaders take a hands-on approach to providing support to teachers and students and building relationships with parents and community members.

The PRIDE school improvement planning cycle (**P**lan, **R**eview, **I**mplement, **D**etermine Effectiveness, **E**xamine Results) has been established to provide clear guidance to school leaders as they work with teachers, staff members, parents, students, and other stakeholders to set goals, identify resources, and implement programs and strategies designed to improve teaching and learning. School leaders are involved in reviewing and revising the plan descriptors that guide the development of the system improvement plan and use the system's goals in working with teachers and other stakeholders in developing their building level plans.

Principals are encouraged to establish autonomy within their schools; however, they recognize the importance of continuity and consistency throughout the system as they plan and implement programs to improve teaching and learning. All school-level initiatives are directly aligned to the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive LEA Implementation Plan (CLIP) as well as with the system's vision, mission, and purpose.

In order for continuous improvement to occur, it is critical for administrators, teachers, parents, community members, and other stakeholders to engage in the process of examining system and school operations on an ongoing basis to ensure alignment of procedures and processes with school improvement goals. The cycle for

continuous improvement is reviewed and revised regularly to ensure effectiveness.

Monthly leadership and administrators' meetings along with quarterly Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) meetings allow system and school leaders to regularly review the vision, purpose, and goals to ensure that adequate progress is being made toward goals and objectives outlined in the school improvement plans. The annual spring board retreat provides an opportunity for system and school leaders to work collaboratively with board members to review program and student performance data to determine if the vision, purpose, and goals are guiding the work of the system and its schools.

Standards-based walkthrough observations, teacher evaluations, and results from SACS and GAPSS (Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards) visits provide another means for ensuring the vision, purpose, and goals direct the everyday operations of the system and its schools and lead to improved student performance.

Grade level and department meetings along with collaborative planning meetings provide another opportunity for ensuring the vision and purpose of the school system guide the work of the system and its schools.

4. What process is used to ensure that the vision and purpose of the school system remain current and aligned with the system's expectations in support of student learning and the effectiveness of the school system and its schools?

The Jefferson City School System implements several procedures and practices to ensure the vision and purpose of the school system remain current and aligned with the system's expectations in support of student learning and the effectiveness of the school system and its schools.

Board members and system and school leaders review the system vision, mission, performance goals, and commitments and beliefs during the annual spring board retreat. System and school leaders work collaboratively to review the vision, mission, performance goals, and commitments and beliefs as part of the summer leadership institute, data analysis, and school improvement planning process.

During preplanning, the system hosts an annual community breakfast, which provides an opportunity for community members, business partners, representatives from local educational agencies, and JCS staff members to partner in kicking off the start of a new school year. At this event, the Board of Education chairman presents an annual report of the system's progress, highlighting accomplishments within the academics, athletics, and arts programs, and provides information regarding budget and finance and future construction and facility projects.

This community event provides an opportunity for the system's leadership to share the vision, mission, performance goals, and beliefs and commitments with a wide variety of stakeholder groups and is an effective way of establishing accountability of the system among stakeholders.

As part of the PRIDE school improvement cycle (**P**lan, **R**eview, **I**mplement, **D**etermine Effectiveness, **E**xamine Results), school leaders meet regularly with leadership teams, grade levels, and departments to analyze results of most recent state-mandated and locally-developed assessments, refine curriculum maps, instructional units, and formative assessments, and set goals for teaching and learning that are aligned with the system's vision, mission, and school commitments and beliefs.

Teachers, other staff members, parents, and community members are given an opportunity to provide feedback on revisions that should be made to the current vision, mission, and beliefs during school-level committee, parent-teacher organization, SACS, school council, and school improvement planning meetings, curriculum night, Annual Title I Parent Night, and EL Parent Night.

All board meeting agenda items are directly aligned to the system's performance goals as part of the e-board management site. The vision, mission, performance goals, and school beliefs and commitments are visible in each of the schools and posted in the data rooms.

Participation in webinars provided by the Georgia Department of Education and other professional learning opportunities ensures board members, administrators, teachers, and other staff members remain current and abreast of new curricular and instructional approaches to improving teaching and learning. These professional learning opportunities also serve as an effective tool in assisting the system's leadership in ensuring the vision and purpose of the school system remain current and lead to increased effectiveness and student performance.

Overall Assessment:

Highly Functional: The school system has achieved a wide commitment by all groups of stakeholders to a shared purpose and direction. The system and its schools have clearly defined expectations for student learning aligned with the system's vision that is fully supported by system and school personnel and external stakeholders. These expectations serve as the focus for assessing student performance, system and school effectiveness. The vision guides allocations of time and human, material, and fiscal resources.

Standard 2. Governance & Leadership

STANDARD: The system provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has leaders who are advocates for the system's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction and allocate resources to implement curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders function with clearly defined authority and responsibility and encourage collaboration and shared responsibility for system and school improvement among stakeholders. The system's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation.

Indicators RubricGroup: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators RubricGroup:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system operates under the jurisdiction of a governing authority that:

2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system :

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes of governing authority meetings

District-wide Staff and/or student handbooks

Governance Policy handbooks: board, district, school

Governing authority affirms understanding of their role in the operation of the school/district

Local, state, and federal policy handbooks

Organizational chart

Procedural policies: emergencies, contact information, calling tree, discipline, due process, logistics, placement and transfer

Staff and students affirm their understanding of emergency and operational procedures

Stakeholders affirm understanding of operational procedures

Students and staff affirm their understanding of discipline policies and due process

Other: Affiliation with Harben, Hartley, and Hawkins School Board Attorneys, Georgia School Boards Association, and Georgia Department of Education Policy Division - Policy Updates, Guidance, and Review

Other: Vision, Mission, Beliefs, and Performance Goals; Online Board Policy Manual

2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about leadership prerogatives

District staff are knowledgeable about organizational chart

District staff demonstrate knowledge about due process

Governing Board Policies demonstrate leadership prerogatives

Organizational chart

Roles and responsibilities of governing board, advisory councils, and ad hoc committees are clearly outlined

Other: Online Board Policy Manual (e-board); Organizational Chart; Board Meetings - agendas and minutes

2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about curriculum standards

District staff demonstrates knowledge and use of curriculum standards in the teaching and learning process

District staff responsible for the implementation of state and/or federal programs are knowledgeable about compliance

Documentation of adherence to ethical business practices

Documentation of compliance with all regulations regarding copyright law, intellectual property, and international restrictions

Documentation of State and Federal Compliances and Assurances, including NCLB/Title I, EEO, Title IX

Documentation of utilization of all requirement elements of curriculum standards

Documentation with all regulations that apply to accreditation by NCA CASI, SACS CASI, or AdvancED

Stakeholders affirm compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity practices and procedures

Stakeholders affirm compliance with ethical business practices

Stakeholders are involved in the establishment and monitoring of adherence to all regulations

Other: Monthly administrators' and leadership meetings to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local policies and procedures; Roles and responsibilities of system and school level administrators

2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District staff and governing board members affirm their knowledge of governing board policies and procedures

District staff and governing board members affirm their participation in orientation and training

Policies and procedures for governing board training and orientation

Roles and responsibilities of governing board, advisory councils, and ad hoc committees are clearly outlined

Other: Affiliation with Georgia School Boards Association; Adheres to the requirements for board member training (Georgia Department of Education and Georgia School Boards Association); Annual Board Retreat and other GSBA training sessions

2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Documentation of adherence to ethical business practices

Policies and procedures for fiscal planning: short-term and long-range

Stakeholders affirm compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity practices and procedures

Stakeholders affirm compliance with ethical business practices

Other: Bond Referendum/ELOST PowerPoint presentation; FY2012 Budget

2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about due process and complaint resolution

District staff are knowledgeable about access to legal counsel

Documentation of access to legal counsel

Staff and students affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

Other: Harben, Hartley, and Hawkins School Board Attorneys

2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District staff affirm knowledge and support for the district's fiscal responsibility

District staff affirm knowledge of district's insurance carrier, policies, and procedures

Policies and procedures for investments

Policies and procedures for protecting assets and financial resources

Other: Additional documentation available from the Chief Financial Officer upon request

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system has leadership that:

2.8 Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness :

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Advisory Committee: agenda, minutes

District staff affirm the use of student performance and organizational effectiveness data for planning

District Staff meetings: agenda, minutes, decision points

Record of student performance data analysis

Staff and students affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

Student database management system

Student performance data are used during district staff meetings

Student performance data are used for extra-curricular planning

Other: Board Retreat

Other: Data Rooms; System and School Improvement Plans; grade level and/or department meeting - agendas and minutes

2.9 Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Accreditation team members are representative of staff and students

Calendar, agendas, minutes of stakeholder meetings

Committee members are representative of all stakeholder groups

Parent/community compacts

Record of Advisory Committees: calendars, membership, minutes

Record of co-curricular organizations and activities: calendars, membership, sponsors

Stakeholder survey data

Stakeholders affirm a sense of belonging and engagement

Stakeholders affirm that leadership hears and acts upon their suggestions and recommendations

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in the accreditation process

Stakeholders affirm their involvement on committees

Other: Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson and other activities facilitated by Jackson County Chamber of Commerce; Jefferson Foundation

Other: School Council meetings - agendas and minutes; SACS, PTO/PATS, school-level committee meetings - agendas and minutes

2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Budget reflects allocation of support for student performance targets

District staff are knowledgeable about student performance targets

District staff are knowledgeable about the alignment of resources to support student performance

District-wide walk-about demonstrate monitoring of instructional practices

Guidelines outline expectations for instructional standards

Guidelines outline expectations for student performance

Organizational chart reflects allocation of support for student performance targets

Policies demonstrate established student performance targets, measures, and strategies

Other: SPLOST/ELOST

Other: 3-Year Technology Plan; 5-Year Facilities Plan; School Improvement/Professional Learning Plans

2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Accreditation team members are representative of stakeholder groups

Calendar, agendas, minutes of stakeholder meetings

Committee members are representative of all stakeholder groups

Parent/community compacts

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in a district-wide decision-making process

Stakeholders affirm their involvement on committees

Other: School Council meeting agendas; SACS, PTO/PATS, school-level committee meetings - agendas, minutes, and membership (representatives from various stakeholder groups)

2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Artifacts displayed throughout the district demonstrate inclusion of all stakeholder communities

Record of Advisory Committees: calendars, membership, minutes

Stakeholder survey data

Stakeholders affirm their satisfaction with their level of involvement

Other: Survey Results

2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel:*Operational*Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about access to and participation in a professional growth program

District staff are knowledgeable about the criteria, timeline, process, procedures, and dispositions by which they will be evaluated

Documentation of salary schedules

Handbooks demonstrate staff evaluation system

New staff orientation materials

Policies demonstrate evaluation criteria, timelines, and termination processes

Policies demonstrate professional growth opportunities

Professional development plan for all staff

Other: Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP); Standards-based Walkthrough Observations; Site-based professional learning

Other: Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI); Standards-Based Walkthrough Tool

Focus Questions:***1. What is the process for establishing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures for the effective operation of the school system and its schools?***

The Jefferson City School Board of Education establishes, communicates, and implements policies and procedures that support the effective operation of the system and its schools. The Jefferson City School System has an elected school board, consisting of seven members (including the superintendent who is appointed by the board members). Consistent with local board policy, the function of the Board is to legislate, and the function of the Superintendent is to execute. The Board sets policy, and the Superintendent administers the policy.

All board policies are posted on the system's website through e-board provided by the Georgia School Boards Association. Online policies and paperless board agendas allow the Jefferson City Schools Board of Education to centralize key data to use in the data decision-making process and provide greater access and communication with stakeholders. Additionally, all stakeholders may access board meeting agendas and minutes on the system's website and through e-board.

The Board serves to keep the public schools in immediate possession of the people and constitute a check on the proprietary interests developed by professionals and thus carry out the basic American concept of checks and balances. The Superintendent is responsible for providing professional advice and administering policies effectively. The Board is responsible for evaluating administrative advice for final policy decisions and clearly understands its role as policy makers, allowing the administration and staff to be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school district.

Proper administration of the schools is most vital to a successful educational program. The general purpose of the system's administration is to coordinate and supervise, under the policies of the Board, the creation and operation of an environment in which students learn most effectively. Administrative duties and functions are appraised in terms of the contribution made to improving instruction and learning. The Board relies on its chief executive officer, the Superintendent, to provide at the district level the professional administrative leadership demanded by such a far-reaching goal.

The Superintendent, principals, and all other administrative personnel have the authority and responsibility necessary for his/her specific administrative assignment and are accountable for the effectiveness with which the administrative assignment is carried out. Major functions of the governing board in the school system include the following:

- To manage the system's various departments, units, and programs effectively;
- To provide professional advice and council to the superintendent and to advisory groups established by board action. Preferably, where feasible, this will be done through reviewing alternatives, analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of each, and recommending a selection from among the alternatives;
- To implement the management function so as to assure the best and most effective learning programs, through achieving such sub-goals as (a) providing leadership in keeping abreast of current educational developments; (b) arranging for the staff development necessary to the establishment and operation of learning programs that better meet more learner needs; (c) coordinating cooperative efforts at improvement of learning programs, facilities, equipment and materials; and (d) providing access to the decision-making process for improvement ideas of staff, students, parents, and others.

The Board is ethically obligated to support the Superintendent in his/her decisions and administration of the system. In turn, the Superintendent is ethically bound to support the views and decisions of the Board, even if their views differ. The Jefferson City School Board of Education desires to operate in the most ethical and conscientious manner possible. In addressing the issues of authority and accountability, the Board has adopted the following Code of Ethics as part of its governance functions (JCS Board Policy BH):

Domain I: Governance and Structure

1. Recognize that the authority of the board rests only with the board as a whole and not with individual board members and act accordingly.
2. Support the delegation of authority for the day-to-day administration of the school system to the local superintendent and act accordingly.
3. Honor the chain of command and refer problems or complaints consistent with the chain of command.
4. Recognize that the local superintendent should serve as secretary, ex-officio to the board and should be present at all meetings of the board except when his or her contract, salary or performance is under consideration.
5. Not undermine the authority of the local superintendent or intrude into responsibilities that properly belong to the local superintendent or school administration, including such functions as hiring, transferring or dismissing employees.
6. Use reasonable efforts to keep the local superintendent informed of concerns or specific recommendations that

any member of the board may bring to the board.

Domain II: Strategic Planning

1. Reflect through actions that his or her first and foremost concern is for the educational welfare of children attending schools within the school system.
2. Participate in all planning activities to develop the vision and goals of the board and the school system.
3. Work with the board and the local superintendent to ensure prudent and accountable uses of the resources of the school system.
4. Render all decisions based on available facts and his or her independent judgment and refuse to surrender his or her judgment to individuals or special interest groups.
5. Uphold and enforce all applicable laws, all rules and regulations of the State Board of Education and the board and all court orders pertaining to the school system.

Domain III: Board and Community Relations

1. Seek regular and systemic communications among the board and students, staff and the community.
2. Communicate to the board and the local superintendent expressions of public reaction to board policies and school programs.

Domain IV: Policy Development

1. Work with other board members to establish effective policies for the school system.
2. Make decisions on policy matters only after full discussion at publicly held board meetings.
3. Periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of policies on school system programs and performance.

Domain V: Board Meetings

1. Attend and participate in regularly scheduled and called board meetings.
2. Be informed and prepared to discuss issues to be considered on the board agenda.
3. Work with other board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during the discussion and resolution of issues at board meetings.
4. Vote for a closed executive session of the board only when applicable law or board policy requires consideration of a matter in executive session.
5. Maintain the confidentiality of all discussions and other matters pertaining to the board and the school system during executive session of the board.
6. Make decisions in accordance with the interests of the school system as a whole and not any particular segment thereof.

7. Express opinions before votes are cast, but after the board vote, abide by and support all majority decisions of the board.

Domain VI: Personnel

1. Consider the employment of personnel only after receiving and considering the recommendation of the local superintendent.

2. Support the employment of persons best qualified to serve as employees of the school system and insist on regular and impartial evaluations of school system staff.

3. Comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and all board policies regarding employment of family members.

Domain VII: Financial Governance

1. Refrain from using the position of board member for personal or partisan gain or to benefit any person or entity over the interest of the school system.

Conduct as Board Member

1. Devote sufficient time, thought and study to the performance of the duties and responsibilities of a member of the board.

2. Become informed about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed education and training.

3. Communicate in a respectful professional manner with and about fellow board members.

4. Take no private action that will compromise the board or school system administration.

5. Participate in all required training programs developed for board members by the board or the State Board of Education.

6. File annually with the local superintendent and with the State Board of Education a written statement certifying that he or she is in compliance with this Code of Ethics.

Conflicts of Interest

1. Announce potential conflicts of interest before board action is taken.

2. Comply with the conflicts of interest policy of the board, all applicable laws and Appendix B of the Standards document.

Upon a motion supported by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, the board may choose to conduct a hearing concerning a possible violation of this Code of Ethics by a member of the board. The board member accused of violating this Code of Ethics will have thirty (30) days notice prior to a hearing on the matter. The accused board member may bring witnesses on his or her behalf to the hearing, and the board may elect to call witnesses to inquire into the matter. If found by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the board that the accused board member has

violated this Code of Ethics, the board shall determine an appropriate sanction. A board member subject to sanction may, within thirty (30) days of such sanction vote, appeal such decision to the State Board of Education in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. A record of the decision of the board to sanction a board member for a violation of this Code of Ethics shall be placed in the permanent minutes of the board.

The Jefferson City School Board of Education policies recognize and preserve the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system. The Superintendent is appointed to provide leadership in developing, achieving, and maintaining the best possible educational programs and services in such manner that each individual student enrolled in the school system may be provided with a complete, valuable, meaningful, and personally rewarding education.

Performance responsibilities of the Superintendent are outlined in JCS Board Policy CEA and include the following: performs as educational leader of the schools, serves as chief executive officer of the school board, oversees staff and personnel management, oversees facilities management, oversees financial management, directs community relations activities, and oversees pupil personnel services.

Board members listen to recommendations from the Superintendent and act on these recommendations positively if they agree. The Board of Education establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system. Measures are taken to ensure there is a process in place for stakeholders to submit proposals for policy development and feedback on proposed policies.

The process for policy adoption by the Board is outlined in JCS Board Policy BDC and includes the following procedures:

1. Insofar as possible, each policy statement shall be limited to one (1) subject.
2. Policies and amendments adopted by the Board shall be attached to and made a part of the minutes of the meeting at which they are adopted and shall also be included in the policy manual of the district.
3. Policies and amendments to policies shall be effective immediately upon adoption unless a specific effective date is provided in the adopted resolution.
4. Proposals for school system policy may originate from any of the following sources: a parent, a community member, an employee, a student, and a member of the Board, the Superintendent, and a civic group.
5. The Superintendent is authorized to ensure that adequate deliberation by all interested parties precedes any recommendation regarding a proposed policy.
6. Following full review by the Superintendent, the policy will be brought to the Board for consideration with the Superintendent's recommendation.
7. Policies proposed for adoption by the Board shall lie on the table for review by all interested parties for a minimum of thirty days prior to a vote for adoption.
8. On matters of extreme urgency, the Board, by majority vote of the full Board, may waive the thirty day limitation and take immediate action to adopt new policies. When such action is necessary, the Superintendent shall inform concerned groups or individuals about the reasons for this necessity.
9. Policy may be rescinded only through a majority vote of the Board. The aforementioned procedure for policy

adoption shall be in effect for the repeal of system policies.

The system's attorneys, Harben, Hartley, and Hawkins, LLP, review all proposed policies prior to presentation to the public to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. In addition, legal representatives from Harben, Hartley, and Hawkins provide advance notice to the superintendent for all future policies needed to maintain compliance with new local, state, and federal laws. The Georgia School Boards Association also provides strong policy support to Jefferson City Schools. The superintendent and board members regularly attend legislative updates sessions provided through the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA), Georgia School Superintendents Association (GSSA), and Northeast Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA).

As policies are revised or newly adopted, the superintendent provides information at monthly administrators' meetings to ensure principals are fully aware of policies and procedures that need to be disseminated to staff members and included in student and faculty handbooks and/or posted in visible locations throughout the schools. All principals adhere to guidelines regarding distribution of policy to staff members, parents, and others (e.g. anti-bullying, safe and drug free schools, parent involvement, code of student conduct, visitors in the building, acceptable internet use, qualifications for teachers and paraprofessionals). In addition, all system and school leaders are in compliance with state and federal regulations regarding parent involvement (e.g. Annual Title I meeting to review policies and plans, summer planning session to review and revise school improvement plans, parent involvement plans, and targeted assistance plans).

Jefferson City Schools maintains a policy manual with procedures embedded in the manual. A copy of the policy manual is kept in the Superintendent's office and in each principal's office. All staff members receive a handbook at the beginning of the year with procedures and practices that reflect the policies and operations of Jefferson City Schools. During preplanning, principals review all policies and procedures with staff members. Policies and procedures are communicated with parents through the student handbook, website, and various school meetings (e.g. school-level committees, parent-teacher organization, school council).

The Jefferson City School Board of Education is committed to ongoing professional development in an effort to improve effectiveness in their role as board members and to stay abreast of the most current research and innovative practices designed to improve teaching. The Board maintains membership in the Georgia School Boards Association and participates as fully as possible in the activities of the Georgia School Boards Association and the National School Board Association. The Board complies with all training requirements as outlined by the Georgia Department of Education and Georgia School Boards Association.

The Jefferson City School Board of Education has obtained Board of Distinction status for meeting specific operational requirements and has been named as one of the "Top 10 U.S. School Districts in Digital Technology" (mid-sized school system category).

Jefferson City Schools maintains adequate insurance coverage to protect its financial stability and administrative operations. Through the annual budget process, the Board of Education attempts to protect its financial stability with the establishment of a reserve fund balance. Board members and system and school leaders understand their obligation to build community support, secure adequate resources, and serve as good stewards of the system's resources.

2. What process does the system's leadership use to evaluate system effectiveness and its impact on student performance?

The Jefferson City School System uses multiple methods to evaluate system effectiveness and its impact on student performance.

The PRIDE school improvement cycle (**P**lan, **R**eview, **I**mplement, **D**etermine Effectiveness, **E**xamine Results) ensures that all stakeholders are engaged in a quality process that consistently leads to improved student performance:

Plan – At the system level, goals and objectives are set based on previous year’s performance. Board members and system and school leaders review budget information and student achievement results at an annual board retreat held in the spring to determine system effectiveness and to identify instructional support and resources needed to meet program goals. Instructional services staff and school leaders participate in an onsite summer leadership institute to analyze data, review system and school improvement goals, revise plan descriptors, and identify areas of strength and weakness based on performance results and other data sources. Principals meet with leadership teams to review research on potential programs and instructional strategies and interventions in order to effectively plan for program improvement for the upcoming year and to ensure system effectiveness and its impact on student achievement.

Review – School-level administrators and grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers to review action plan goals and strategies. Teachers review student performance and progress monitoring data quarterly to determine target lists for classroom accountability. Additionally, teachers review and revise benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes, which are used to guide instruction and improve student learning. Administrators and teachers reevaluate the continuous improvement model to determine effectiveness and make refinements to the process to ensure progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness.

Implement – Teachers provide differentiated instruction designed to meet the diverse needs of all students and implement programs needed to increase student learning. Formative assessments (e.g. benchmark tests, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes) are administered to determine students’ academic strengths and weaknesses. Instruction is modified based on student performance data.

Determine Effectiveness – Grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers and administrators to monitor action plans based on student performance on formative and summative assessments (e.g. benchmark assessments, common assessments, teacher-developed probes, end-of-unit assessments, progress monitoring data, and state assessments). Teachers meet regularly to discuss student performance and review data used to measure what has been implemented to determine if specific programs and strategies have positively impacted teacher effectiveness and student performance. Instructional services staff provide updated reports on student achievement and progress toward school improvement goals at monthly board meetings. Monthly leadership meetings and quarterly Adequate Yearly Progress update meetings are scheduled to provide an opportunity for system and school leaders to work collaboratively on reviewing performance data, evaluating system effectiveness, and determining the impact of procedures and practices on student performance. The annual board retreat provides yet another opportunity for system and school leaders to review action plan recommendations, student achievement data, and provide yearly progress reports to board members.

Examine Results – Administrators and teachers work collaboratively to review action plans and analyze student performance and other data to determine instructional program strengths and weaknesses based on goals and strategies outlined in the action plans.

The PRIDE cycle (**P**lan, **R**eview, **I**mplement, **D**etermine Effectiveness, **E**xamine Results) enables teachers and administrators to continuously use student assessment data to inform instructional practices and improve student achievement.

The use of various surveys provides another avenue for evaluating system effectiveness and its impact on student

performance. Surveys are administered to administrators, teachers, other staff members, students, parents, and community members to obtain feedback on the system's and schools' operational effectiveness. Results are used to make program adjustments and improvements. Through the completion of the self-assessment rubric, system and school leaders recognize the need to refine the survey process to be more consistent throughout the system and to provide additional methods for seeking input from parents and other stakeholders.

Commendations and recommendations from previous Quality Assurance Reviews and Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS) visits are used to evaluate system effectiveness and the impact on student performance. All administrators have participated in a Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS) analysis visit. The high school had a GAPSS visit in January 2009, JMS had a GAPSS visit in September 2009, and Jefferson Academy was reviewed by a GAPSS team in February 2010. Results from the GAPSS visits have been utilized to implement several new programs and initiatives that have positively impacted student performance (e.g. teacher collaboration, development of curriculum maps and benchmark assessments at the high school level, integration of technology, establishment of a lunch remediation and enrichment program).

The Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program/Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument is used annually to evaluate all teachers. Principals schedule annual end of the year conferences with individual teachers, and student achievement data is used as part of the evaluation process. Administrators and teachers conduct standards-based walkthrough observations on an ongoing basis. Areas of focus during the standards-based walkthrough observations include differentiated instruction, student engagement, depth of knowledge, and technology integration. Informal (standards-based walkthrough observations) and formal observations (GTEP teacher evaluations) provide additional information regarding the system's effectiveness and the impact on student performance.

State assessment results and the Adequate Yearly Progress reports also serve as an evaluation tool to determine system effectiveness and the impact on student performance. The Jefferson City School System takes pride in accomplishments made by students in academics, athletics, and the arts. Jefferson City Schools consistently exceed the State and Northeast Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) averages on all statewide assessments. The system and its schools are frequently recognized for high performance in various content areas and grade levels on state-mandated tests. Jefferson City Schools is 1 out of 8 out of 180 school systems who has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for 7 consecutive years.

3. In what ways are stakeholders, including system and school staff, given opportunities to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process?

System and school leaders support collaborative networks of stakeholders by establishing processes and practices that promote opportunities to provide leadership and contribute to the decision-making process.

Many stakeholders are involved in the staffing process in Jefferson City Schools. Paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders are members of the various school committees that govern the school. In addition, each school has a parent-teacher organization, school council, and athletic foundations that provide support for the schools.

The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce sponsors an Education Committee, comprised of system leaders, business partners, and other representatives from various community agencies and organizations. Participation in this committee allows various stakeholders to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process. Examples of stakeholder involvement include the following: chamber members serve as guest speakers for classes, community members have been part of the strategic planning process including staff allocation, Chamber of Commerce Partners in Education (PIE) members coordinate and provide a new teacher luncheon each year (when applicable).

Parent surveys are administered after specific school activities to determine impact and satisfaction. Parents are invited, and they participate in various instructional committees at each school (e.g. SACS, safety, instructional, literacy, technology, assessment).

There is a school council, comprised of administrators, teachers, parents, business partners, and other community members at each school. The school councils play a vital role in the educational opportunity and outcomes of all students at the school. School council members participate in the development of the school improvement plans, provide feedback relative to budget, and review and update policies. Additionally, school council members work collaboratively with principals to engage the community in system- and school-level activities that lead to improved student performance.

During school council, advisory council, and other school-level committee meetings, stakeholders review data to determine a list of prioritized needs. Action plans are developed or revised to address each of the prioritized needs. Action plans include specific strategies and initiatives, timelines, monitoring process and person(s) responsible for implementation and monitoring of each strategy or initiative.

The following timeline provides a structure for involving various stakeholders in the needs assessment and school improvement planning process.

- July-Instructional services staff meets with school level administrators to review needs assessment, student achievement, Hi-Q and teacher equity data to develop preliminary list of prioritized needs.
- July/August-School level leaders meet with teachers and other staff members to review needs assessment data, student achievement data, and preliminary list of prioritized needs. Information is used to update action plans.
- September/October-School level leaders meet with school councils to review needs assessment data, student achievement data, and preliminary list of prioritized needs aligned to action plans.
- October through December-Action plans are finalized and implemented through grade level/department meetings.
- November/December-School level leaders share School Improvement Plans and Action Plans with broad base of stakeholders through Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings, Partners in Education (PIE) meetings, school council meetings, and other opportunities afforded throughout community relations.
- November through May- School level leaders, teacher leaders, and instructional services staff members monitor the implementation of action plans. Implementation effectiveness is assessed through the use of ongoing qualitative data collection, survey data, and formative student assessment data.
- May/June-Instructional services staff and school level leaders begin data collection process and preparation for upcoming annual data review session.

Each principal has established a leadership team who works in support of the vision, mission, and beliefs and commitments. Leadership meetings are held monthly in addition to regularly scheduled faculty and staff meetings, which provide an additional opportunity for stakeholders to serve in leadership roles and be involved in the decision-making process. The instructional service staff members conduct monthly leadership meetings with principals, assistant principals, and instructional lead teachers to collaboratively review student performance data and policies and procedures relative to system and school operations.

All central office administrators (Superintendent, Associate Superintendent, Director of Special Education, Director of Middle and Secondary Education) collaborate with school administrators (1 principal and 1 assistant principal at each of the four schools) and all other stakeholders, including teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, business partners, Jefferson Foundation advisory board members, school volunteers, school council members, school-level parent-teacher organization members, Jefferson City Schools' Board of Education members, and

Jefferson Booster Club members to accomplish an annual needs assessment, prioritization of needs, and action planning that addresses all equity components in planning. Collaboration includes completing surveys, reviewing survey results, prioritizing needs, identifying resources, creating implementation plans, and establishing an assessment for effectiveness.

Paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators, parents, business leaders, and other community members are involved in the assessment of system needs through the use of surveys and meetings. The administrators meet with instructional services staff to review and analyze the student achievement and teacher equity data in an effort to revise and update school improvement plans. Each school principal facilitates discussions relative to needs assessment, survey data, student achievement data, highly qualified and teacher equity data during school council/leadership and grade level/department meetings.

The instructional services staff members schedule an annual meeting during the summer with parents and other stakeholders to review needs assessment data and to elicit input on the revision of action plans and school improvement initiatives. Feedback from stakeholder groups is used to revise school improvement plans, parent involvement plans, targeted assistance plans, and the system equity plan.

One of the target areas identified in the system's equity plan is to increase stakeholder involvement in the development and monitoring of assessment of school needs, establishment of school goals and action plans, and evaluating action plan implementations. While progress has been made in this area, the following strategies continue to provide guidance to system and school leaders as we strive to give stakeholders more opportunities to provide leadership and to contribute to the decision-making process:

Increase Equity of Stakeholder Involvement:

Strategy 1: Increase system level opportunities for parents and community members to be involved and engaged in data reviews, school improvement planning, and comprehensive system improvement initiatives.

- The Associate Superintendent will establish an advisory council in spring 2012 that includes but is not limited to at least three parents, three teachers, and three community members.
- Each school will increase the level of involvement of community members, parents and other stakeholders through school council and school level committee meetings.
- The Associate Superintendent and/or instructional services staff will meet with the advisory council on a quarterly basis (minimum).
- The system advisory council will be a part of the Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Process.

Strategy 2: Increase system level leadership's participation in community based organizations that will provide feedback and guidance for school improvement.

- Instructional services staff will regularly attend Chamber of Commerce and Partners in Education meetings.
- Each school will work with Partners in Education in order to increase participation in community based activities.
- Each school will utilize guest speakers from the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee list to enhance existing curricular and instructional programs. This will also increase the reciprocity of community and school feedback and involvement to build stronger relationships.

The Jefferson City School System recognizes the impact stakeholder involvement has on producing positive changes in system and school operations, organizational performance, and student achievement.

4. What policies and processes are in place to ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for

innovation?

The Jefferson City School System believes that all children should have an equitable opportunity to receive quality instruction. The system is committed to ensuring that the needs of all students are effectively identified and addressed. One of the Jefferson City School Board of Education goals is to have highly qualified personnel for all students. Jefferson City Schools has maintained 100% highly qualified teachers for the past seven consecutive years. In addition, 100% of all paraprofessionals have been Hi-Q since 2005.

Having four schools makes it easy to ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation is in place. Resources are allocated to the schools based on number of students and its needs as outlined in school improvement plans. Jefferson City Schools are committed to equitable programming and services for all students by monitoring the following: “highly qualified” status of teachers, “highly qualified” status of paraprofessionals, teacher experience, teacher preparation and ability to meet diverse needs of students, class size, recruitment and retention of highly qualified, effective teachers, and stakeholder involvement in school improvement planning.

The needs assessment process in Jefferson City Schools is an on-going process, which begins with an administrative data dig in July of each year. Data collected throughout the previous school year and student achievement data are carefully analyzed as a part of the needs assessment process. Survey data from various sources is also used to determine system and school level needs. Jefferson City Schools utilizes a variety of data sources to conduct the annual needs assessment.

In addition, the instructional services staff members schedule a meeting with the Title II-A program specialist at the beginning of each school year to review with all administrative staff updated information relative to certification and highly qualified and equity data/requirements. Title II-A updates, including certification review, are provided by instructional services staff at monthly administrators' meetings.

System and school leaders carefully review teacher equity data and teacher effectiveness through various methods of evaluation (e.g. ETA data provided by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, teacher evaluations, standards-based walkthrough observations, and student performance data). At the end of each grading period, the superintendent and other central office administrators meet with each school principal to review student performance data to determine if adequate progress is being made toward instructional goals and to determine if there are any barriers to making progress with individual subgroups of students. Other data sources include the review of information included in Adequate Yearly Progress Reports, Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), and Certified/Classified Personnel Information (CPI) reports.

Performance data are examined for all students annually. Teachers meet by grade levels (JES and JA) and by department (JMS & JHS) and disaggregate all student data by the 10 NCLB/ESEA subgroups and domain areas as well as locally identified subgroups (e.g. Title I, gifted, average-ability learners). This information is used for identification of students in need of remediation as well as program support. In addition, teachers use disaggregated data to develop target lists that are used in grade level and department meetings throughout the year to monitor student progress toward achievement goals.

Formative and summative assessment data is carefully monitored throughout the year to determine teacher effectiveness in ensuring that all students are progressing toward meeting and exceeding academic standards. Progress monitoring tools and common assessments provide data for analyzing student growth. Teacher ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners can be analyzed through individual student progress. In the annual needs assessment completed in May 2011, teachers expressed a need for more strategies effective in addressing the instructional needs of students with disabilities, students living in poverty (economically disadvantaged), differentiated instruction, and gifted students as well as providing increased access to technology to increase student performance.

Additional data analysis shows there is a performance gap between males and females in several different grade levels and content areas. Based on these results, professional learning is provided to equip teachers with additional skills and tools to more effectively meet the needs of students within these subgroups.

The system continues to work on a systemic Pyramid of Interventions process. Professional development opportunities have been designed to address areas of need based on disaggregation of student performance data. In the elementary grades, the Pyramid of Interventions process has become very effective. Improvements have been made in the planning and implementation of the Pyramid of Interventions process at the middle and secondary level. Ongoing teacher training and professional learning communities focusing on data analysis and differentiation of instruction are providing a structure for improving the process in the middle and high school, as well as improving instruction to more effectively meet the diverse needs of all students.

Strategies used in professional learning to address the diverse needs of students include the following: Wilson program, additional gifted endorsement, additional ESOL teachers, special education certification, and book studies and article reviews that are based on school- and system-level needs (i.e. technology and project-based learning).

Multiple criteria is used to identify students who receive Title I services. Criteria used are objective, education-related, and uniformly applied to ensure appropriate identification of students needing services in reading and/or mathematics. Performance on diagnostic tests, state-mandated assessments, and other classroom-related measures are used in determining eligibility for Title I services. Criteria for placement are reviewed annually to ensure that students who are most in need are targeted for Title I support. The Early Intervention Program checklist provided by the Georgia Department of Education is used to identify students in need of program support and additional academic assistance in reading, language arts, and mathematics.

To ensure equity of learning opportunities and appropriate instructional placement and services, school personnel interview the parents/guardians as new students enter any one of the four schools. An application is completed by the parent to determine both social service and academic needs. If a student has social service needs, the school counselor works with the family to connect them to the proper agency/service. Academic needs are assessed by looking at prior academic records and current pretests in the areas of mathematics, reading, and language arts. At the high school, student transcripts are reviewed and placement tests are administered to ensure proper services.

Student progress is monitored throughout the year. Student performance goals are related to achievement in reading, writing, mathematics, providing a rigorous academic setting, and technology integration. Scientifically based research strategies are used to address the following areas: data analysis, monthly workshops, classroom observations, curriculum alignment, technology integration training, and upgrades to the network system.

Migrant and formerly migrant, homeless, immigrant, limited English proficient, neglected or delinquent, youth at risk of dropping out, and early childhood program participants are identified for program support through an interview with the parent/guardian when enrolling and during student record review and through testing for language proficiency (WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test - W-APT) for English learners. Funding is provided by local, state, and federal programs when students qualify for service(s). Service is provided for these at-risk populations in the same way as for the other students, including small group instruction, parent involvement support, counseling, and coordination of social service benefits.

The system is in compliance with all McKinney-Vento Act regulations and provides transportation for appropriate students when needed. Title I funds are set aside to provide support to homeless students. Required forms (e.g. Home Language Survey, McKinney-Vento Student Residency Questionnaire, and Migrant Education Form) are distributed to all students returning to Jefferson City Schools or enrolling as new students as part of the

registration process to ensure that appropriate identification and screening measures are in place.

The co-teaching model is implemented in grades K-12 in order to provide students with disabilities greater access to the general education curriculum. This particular program model has led to increased student achievement among students with disabilities as a result of highly qualified special education teachers working collaboratively with regular education content area specialists to deliver instructional content in a learning environment surrounded by high expectations for performance.

Opportunities for acceleration and enrichment are provided to those students who are achieving above the expected rate. For these students, schools have implemented differentiated instructional strategies designed to move students to the next level of learning. Accelerated programs include gifted instruction, technology-based learning, Night at the Museum, Advanced Placement course offerings, academic clubs and competitions, Georgia Virtual High School, and joint enrollment college coursework. Additionally, principals create master schedules to maximize gifted segments for students eligible for these services.

The Jefferson City School System is committed to using technology as a tool to increase student achievement and to prepare all students to be globally, competitive, fully-functioning adults as they exit Jefferson City Schools. All system and school leaders understand the role of technology in providing a 21st Century education designed to support innovation and assist students in acquiring necessary skills to function as productive adults in a rapidly changing, technological society.

The policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities for students and support the development of new ideas for school improvement and increased student achievement.

Overall Assessment:

Highly Functional: The school system has leaders who are advocates for the system's vision and improvement efforts. The leaders provide direction, lend support, and systematically allocate resources for systemic and sustainable implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs that enable students to achieve expectations for their learning. Leaders ensure collaboration and shared responsibility for system and school improvement among stakeholders with clearly defined expectations for each stakeholder group. The leaders provide stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership. The system's policies, procedures, and organizational conditions ensure equity of learning opportunities and support for innovation and are deeply embedded in the way the system and its schools functions.

Standard 3. Teaching & Learning

STANDARD: The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

Impact Statement: Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The system ensures that teachers use proven instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process; provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations; and give students feedback to improve their performance.

Indicators RubricGroup: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators RubricGroup:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly- defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Communication of NCLB performance targets

Curriculum pacing guides

District staff can articulate student learning expectations

District staff/others meet regularly to discuss student progress and remediation

District staff/others meetings highlight discussions of student learning expectations

District-wide master schedule; hours of instruction

Formative assessments: quarterlies, etc.

Graphs, charts, displays of student learning goals

Policies on grading criteria

Policy on credit requirements for program completion

Special program promotion, completion requirements

Staff can articulate curriculum sequencing and grouping

Student Handbook outlines student learning expectations

Students affirm their knowledge of what is expected of them

Syllabi or course catalogues

Textbooks and text selection criteria are aligned to learning goals, curriculum

Other: Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) training; Technology Proposal Process - required as part of the technology professional learning plan; Teacher Collaboration; Participation in Common Core Georgia Department of Education (CCGPS) webinars; GPS posted in classrooms; Pyramid of Interventions process

Other: Curriculum Maps; Benchmark Assessments and Teacher-Developed Probes; System and School Improvement Plans; Data Rooms

3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Course syllabi outlining criteria for student involvement

Samples of student work

Student mentoring programs

Students affirm their involvement in their own learning

Other: Professional learning focuses on technology use and integration; FIRE remediation period; Advanced Placement Courses; SAT Prep; Museum Project and other technology based learning opportunities; Total Person Program; Off-Site Learning Experiences - Scotland Exchange Program, World War II Europe trip, Andersonville, Tybee Island, Washington, D.C.

Other: Georgia Virtual High School; Credit Recovery - e2020;

3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Assessment data

District staff/others meet to analyze data and align instruction

District staff/others meet to review current research

District staff/others meetings regularly include data analysis

Grade reports

Professional development calendar and topics

Other: Flexible grouping to meet diverse needs of students (e.g. Title I, Early Intervention Program, special education, gifted education, and Advanced Placement); implementation of Pyramid of Interventions process; ongoing leadership, grade level, and department meetings to analyze student performance data; Board Retreat; Needs Assessment Process

Other: Data Rooms; Leadership, grade level, and department meetings - agendas and minutes; System and School Improvement Plans; Analysis of system- and school-level state mandated assessment data

3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes of staff/grade level/department/program meetings

District staff/others meet to share best practices

District staff/others meetings regularly include discussions about effective instructional design and delivery

Guidance on lesson plan development

Professional development plans

Professional learning opportunities focus on best practice instruction

Professional organization membership

Student display of project-based learning opportunities

Other: Learning-Focused Schools - strategies employed to enhance instructional practices; Georgia Youth and Science Technology Center (GYSTC) training provided through NE GA RESA - planet literacy, vocabulary

development, etc.; Georgia Performance Standards training - focus on best practices; Standards-Based Walkthrough Observations; Focus on 21st Century Skills

Other: Standards-Based Walkthrough Tool

3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about state and national curriculum standards

Graduation requirements

Master schedule

Policies that reflect attention to issues of equity

Promotion, graduation criteria

Standards-based curriculum: state and national standards

Students affirm that there are opportunities to excel

Other: Support services provided to students based on individual needs - special education, gifted education, Advanced Placement, Early Intervention Program, remedial education, Title I targeted assistance services, SAT prep, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); Implementation of Georgia Performance Standards - common expectations for all students; Credit recovery and online learning opportunities for high school students; Pyramid of Interventions process; Collaboration with Georgia Youth and Science Technology Center (GYSTC) and University of Georgia Educational Technology Center

Other: Title II-A Equity Plan; Professional Learning Plans - focus on differentiated strategies designed to meet the diverse needs of students

3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Instructional calendar: days, hours

Lesson plans are followed during teacher absence

Master schedule

Policies and guidelines that demonstrate that all program requirements are met

Policies demonstrate that substitute teachers are responsible for delivery instruction

Staff affirm that their instructional time is protected

There are few instructional interruptions: PA system, visitors, etc.

Other: Instructional minutes exceed state requirements; school schedules are created to minimize number of interruptions during school hours and maximize instructional time; Teacher Collaboration; Standards-Based Walkthrough Observations

Other: Jefferson City School System Calendar; Standards-Based Walkthrough Tool

3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Articulation agreements between agencies

Content-specific staff are knowledgeable about each other's course syllabus

District staff are knowledgeable about student learning expectations of previous and subsequent grade levels

Policies and guidelines granting dual-credit, transfer of credit

Other: Scheduled transition meetings for students, parents, and teachers (Pre-K to Kindergarten, 2nd to 3rd, 5th to 6th, and 8th to 9th); Career Day activities; College Visitations

Other: Dragon PRIDE Transition

3.8 Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning :

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

After-school programs

Community-based programs

Counseling programs: curriculum, schedules, staffing

District staff affirm that there are multiple opportunities for students to get support

Online support

Policies for student orientation, interventions, remediation

Schedule of opportunities, activities that support special learning needs

Students affirm that they have opportunities to get support for their school experience

Other: Pyramid of Interventions process; Software programs to support student learning (e.g. Classworks, Lexia, e2020, Reading Plus, STAR Reading, STAR Math, Dibels); Test preparation opportunities (e.g. Saturday sessions, FIRE, before and after school tutoring, SAT Prep, Triumph College Admissions Program, USA Test

Prep, Georgia Online Assessment System, Classworks); Lindsay's Legacy and Helping Hands mentoring programs

3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Database of student behavioral incidents

District staff affirm that they are involved in promoting positive school climate

District staff/others meetings provide time for discussions about climate

Guidance on team-teaching is a regular part of the instructional program

Parents/community indicate that the school/district focuses on positive school/district climate

Peer intervention programs; peer counseling

Policies for student behavior, remediation, due process, appeals

Reward system for positive behavior

Stakeholder Compact: adult and student expectations

Stakeholder satisfaction survey data

Students affirm that they are involved in promoting positive school climate

Other: System and School Improvement Plans; System and School Safety Plans

3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas and minutes from school board meetings (they have to approve the curriculum changes)

Calendar of curriculum committee meetings

District staff affirm that they are involved in the curriculum review and revision process

District staff are knowledgeable about the timeline and process for curriculum review

District staff stays informed of curricular changes in other entities (neighboring districts, state, federal, organizations)

Local school staff affirm that they are involved in the curriculum review and revision process

Other: Release time for teacher collaboration to review and revise curriculum maps, instructional units, and formative assessments (e.g. benchmark assessments, teacher-developed probes)

Other: Ongoing grade level and/or department meetings - agendas and minutes; Monthly administrators' and leadership meetings (system and school level leaders) - agendas and minutes

3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Budget allocating appropriate funds for technology - software, hardware, and infrastructure

District staff affirm that technology supports their curriculum and instructional programs

Facilities map indicating technology services/lab

Students and staff affirm that technology is embedded within the teaching and learning process

Technology staff/services demonstrate their involvement in support of student achievement

Other: Professional learning related to technology use and integration; Infinite Campus; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; SPLOST/ELOST funding for technology purchases; Georgia Virtual High School, e2020, and Moodle (learning management system); Georgia Online Assessment System (OAS); Technology Showcase conducted by UGA ETC staff; media specialists and support staff in all four media centers

Other: Curriculum maps and course syllabi posted on website; Technology Inventory - completed by media specialists to evaluate equity among teachers; Technology Audit; 3-Year Technology Plan

Focus Questions:

1. How does the system ensure the alignment and articulation of curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments in support of the expectations for student learning?

As emphasized in the system's vision statement, only through an adequate education can one acquire the skills and abilities demanded by an increasingly sophisticated job market. To assure such an educational experience, the Board of Education and system and school leaders acknowledge the importance of employing highly, qualified staff members who are capable of providing a challenging, rigorous and relevant curriculum in a safe and orderly environment.

The alignment and articulation of curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments in support of maximizing achievement provides the foundation of the system's work in graduating fully functioning adults.

The Jefferson City School System offers the state-approved pre-kindergarten program (four classrooms housed at Jefferson Elementary School). The Georgia's Pre-K program content standards provide the foundation for instruction in these classrooms. The content standards correlate with Kindergarten Georgia Performance Standards. In addition, the standards outline strategies to support inclusive classrooms, provide suggestions for effective classroom practice, and include professional resources for each curriculum domain and tips to support family involvement in the child's education.

The pre-kindergarten content standards lay the foundation for expectations in kindergarten and are closely aligned

to kindergarten performance and content standards outlined in the state approved curriculum. Teachers use the content standards for planning instruction, assessing growth and development, and sharing information with families.

The curriculum for pre-kindergarten takes into consideration the fact that students learn and develop at varying rates; therefore, instruction must be individualized and tailored to meet each child's learning needs. Additionally, the curriculum provides opportunities for critical thinking, reasoning, and communication in an active, supportive environment.

All pre-kindergarten teachers are included in all professional learning activities and provided regular opportunities to collaborate with kindergarten teachers to ensure a seamless transition from one grade level to the next.

The state approved curriculum, the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), is used in grades K-12 in every content area, including fine arts, health and physical education, Spanish, and Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education. All teachers employ research-based instructional best practices to engage all students and prepare them for global competition in a 21st century learning environment.

The instructional services staff, consisting of the Associate Superintendent, Director of Special Education, and Director of Middle and Secondary Education, work closely with schools to ensure a clear understanding of the expectations for grade level standards. Professional learning opportunities and release time is provided for teachers to "unpack" the standards and to establish a common framework and structure for implementing the standards and related elements.

Teachers regularly collaborate to determine what students need to know, should be able to do, and how to assess mastery of content and skills. Curriculum maps have been developed by grade level and content area teachers to promote consistency in instructional delivery and to ensure standards are being taught in every classroom. Instructional services staff members along with principals, assistant principals, instructional lead teachers, grade level and department chairpersons are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards and progress toward meeting expectations for student learning.

Benchmarks, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes enable teachers to determine students' proficiency levels and progress toward learning goals. Teachers use the frameworks and curriculum resources provided by the Georgia Department of Education as a guide for delivery of instructional content.

The Jefferson City School System's instructional learning program is managed by four schools. Each program links together to serve the targeted needs of all children. Teams of teachers work collaboratively to determine the learning needs of students. These needs are based on data from student test scores and daily performance measures. Teachers annually review student achievement and other performance data to adjust or create instructional programs and strategies to meet the diverse needs of all students.

The program strategies are formed into action plans and evaluated regularly to determine effectiveness and identify areas needing improvement. Action plan goals articulate expectations for student learning, and action plan strategies develop the instructional means for achieving goals. Frequent assessment through benchmarks and probes, curriculum map and unit plan review, and state testing ensures students achieve goals, meet curriculum expectations, and fulfill the school mission and commitments.

The schools use research-based best practices, based on principles of differentiated instruction, Learning-Focused Schools, Understanding by Design (GPS), and rigor, relevance, and relationships, to reach learning goals and objectives. Student assessment results enable teachers to determine whether instructional strategies have been effective in meeting the academic needs of students.

Proper procedures are in place to ensure all students are progressing at expected rates. For those students who are not achieving levels of proficiency at expected rates, Jefferson City Schools provides the following opportunities for academic support: after school tutoring, remedial programs, smaller classroom settings, scheduled parent conference and advisement sessions, intensive and specific interventions provided at various tiers (Pyramid of Interventions process), lunch remediation, and summer programs.

Opportunities for acceleration and enrichment are provided to those students who are achieving above the expected rate. For these students, schools have implemented differentiated instructional strategies designed to move students to the next level of learning. Accelerated programs include gifted instruction, technology-based learning, Night at the Museum, Advanced Placement course offerings, academic clubs and competitions, Georgia Virtual High School, and joint enrollment college coursework. Additionally, principals create master schedules to maximize gifted segments for students eligible for these services.

Title II-A funds are used to pay for registration costs for teachers who complete the gifted endorsement program. Advanced Placement (AP) grants offered by the Georgia Department of Education have allowed the high school to expand AP course offerings, thus providing additional opportunities to expose high-ability learners to more challenging, rigorous curriculum.

Each school has established a Pyramid of Interventions (PoI) process that allows school leaders to work with students, parents, and teachers to develop and implement strategies to address specific learning needs of students who are performing below expectations. Procedures associated with the PoI process are reviewed and refined annually to ensure differentiated strategies and interventions are effectively meeting the individual needs of students.

In an effort to communicate the curriculum to all stakeholders, the Georgia Performance Standards and curriculum maps are posted on the system's website. Additionally, copies of grade level standards are distributed to parents at curriculum night. The high school has developed a program of study, which outlines expectations for student learning, course descriptions and sequence, and graduation requirements, as an additional method for communicating with students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders.

Students in grade K-2 receive academic assistance in English/language arts, reading, and mathematics through the Early Intervention Program. In grades 3-5, Early Intervention Program services are coupled with the Title I targeted assistance program, and services are provided through a variety of instructional delivery models and programs that provide individualized and customized learning opportunities based on student needs. Additional paraprofessionals provide support above and beyond what is offered in the regular classroom setting.

In grades 6-8, coaching classes have been established through the Connections program to provide additional opportunities in reading, language arts, and mathematics for students who are eligible for targeted assistance services based on multiple selection criteria. Targeted assistance services are provided in conjunction with remedial education programs to maximize learning opportunities for eligible students. The remedial program is implemented in grades 9-12 to provide academic support to those students who are not meeting expectations in reading, language arts, and mathematics.

The co-teaching model is implemented in grades K-12 in order to provide students with disabilities greater access to the general education curriculum. This particular program model has led to increased student achievement among students with disabilities as a result of highly qualified special education teachers working collaboratively with regular education content area specialists to deliver instructional content in a learning environment surrounded by high expectations for performance.

All students with disabilities have Individualized Education Plans (IEP) in order to establish learning goals and accommodations needed to assist students in achieving grade level and content area standards. All Individualized Education Plans are developed by a team of stakeholders including teachers, administrators, parents, counselors, and other support staff and may be accessed via the secure portal provided through Infinite Campus, which allows all teachers involved in educating students with disabilities to become familiar with goals and accommodations that will enable improved student performance.

The assessment process includes collecting and analyzing student performance data to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and implementing effective strategies and programs to improve achievement levels of all students. Data analysis is a critical component of the continuous improvement cycle. The PRIDE cycle (Plan, Review, Implement, Determine Effectiveness, Examine Results) enables teachers and administrators to continuously use student assessment data to inform instructional practices and improve student achievement.

The data analysis cycle begins with system and school leaders working collaboratively to disaggregate results from state-mandated assessments by subgroups and domain levels to identify strengths and weaknesses in the overall instructional program. This process is replicated at the school level and guides the school improvement planning efforts through the development of action plans that include goals, objectives, and strategies for improving student achievement.

In addition, administrators and teachers use test results to determine professional learning needs. School leaders review all grade level and department action plans and compile information into a comprehensive school improvement plan that is directly aligned to the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP).

Throughout the year, results from diagnostic and formative assessments are analyzed and used to adjust teaching to meet the needs of all students.

The Georgia Department of Education provides access to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) which enables administrators and teachers to track student performance over a period of time. Classroom teachers have immediate access to student achievement data through this program as well as Infinite Campus. State assessment results (CRCT – Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests; GHSGT – Georgia High School Graduation Tests) are imported into the web-based Classworks program in order to create individualized learning plans based on academic strengths and weaknesses. Classworks also provides an online method for universal screening and progress monitoring as part of the Pyramid of Interventions process. Reports are automatically generated and used by teachers to identify interventions to address learning needs of all students.

The Georgia Department of Education's Online Assessment System (OAS) enables administrators and teachers to access tests that consist of the same kinds of questions that appear on state-mandated assessments (CRCT, GHSGT, EOCT, and writing assessments). Access to this program provides an opportunity for teachers to integrate test items into their instructional lessons and ensures that curriculum, instruction, and assessment are aligned through test preparation activities. The Online Assessment System (OAS) provides immediate feedback regarding individual student and group performance. Students and parents have complete access to student tests through the internet and are encouraged to use the program at home in preparation for state-mandated assessments. Login information is sent home several weeks prior to each test administration.

Benefits of using the Online Assessment System (OAS) include the following: students gain valuable experience in learning to evaluate their own academic progress toward learning goals, parents are able to see the types of questions students are asked to answer on state tests and can monitor their child's educational progress, teachers can create customized tests to use at the end of instructional units to monitor student mastery of content and skills, and teachers can administer the tests to individual students and/or groups of students to diagnose strengths and

weaknesses and provide opportunities for enrichment and remediation.

Progress reports and report cards are sent home on a regular basis to inform parents of students' progress toward learning goals and mastery of content standards. The parent portal in Infinite Campus enables parents to monitor their child's academic progress on an ongoing basis. Parent-teacher conferences provide additional opportunities for teachers to communicate learning objectives and progress toward goals.

Classroom observations are conducted both formally and informally on an ongoing basis. Regular visits in the classrooms enable system and school leaders to monitor teacher effectiveness. System and school leaders developed the standard-based walkthrough instrument with feedback from teachers to include components necessary for ensuring the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Teachers are provided release time throughout the year to work collaboratively to review and revise curriculum maps, instructional units, and formative assessments to make sure what is being taught matches what is being assessed. Transition team meetings and peer observations are scheduled to allow teachers across grade levels to meet regularly to collaborate on issues related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment in an effort to establish a seamless transition from one grade level to the next and from one school to the next. School leaders from Jefferson Elementary School and Jefferson Academy meet regularly with instructional services staff members to review curriculum, instruction, and assessment procedures and processes to maintain continuity between schools.

2. In what ways does the system promote and support the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students?

The Jefferson City School System is committed to providing instructional experiences that allow all students to maximize their potential through the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that facilitate achievement for all students. The Georgia Performance Standards provide a framework for establishing expectations and supporting student engagement in the learning process. Multiple opportunities are provided for students to apply knowledge and use higher order thinking skills to complete an assigned task.

Teachers, both individually and with grade level and content area teams, continuously analyze student work to evaluate individual student progress toward meeting standards. Teachers employ proven, research-based strategies that actively engage students in the learning process and encourage self-sufficiency and responsibility for learning. To support student engagement in the learning process, teachers use instructional strategies that are learner-focused and performance-based. Opportunities exist for students to apply knowledge and skills to real world situations.

Jefferson City Schools believes all children should have an equitable opportunity to receive quality instruction. The system is committed to ensuring the needs of all students are effectively identified and addressed. The system's leadership supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation for diversity. Efforts have been made to channel more resources and time to moving students from "meeting expectations" to "exceeding expectations" on state-mandated assessments. To accomplish this goal, administrators and teachers have begun to expand opportunities for students to engage in project-based learning. An emphasis on increasing the use of technology to enhance teaching and learning is prevalent among stakeholders.

Technology is used to provide additional support for all students. Individual and class management reports enable teachers to track student progress based on subgroup and domain analysis. Technology is available to students during academic tutoring periods and during regular class periods. In addition, teachers provide small group instruction for students who might need additional academic support.

Additional software programs have been purchased and training provided that increases diagnostic assessment and placement of students – these programs include Classworks, Lexia, Reading Plus, and e2020. Technology purchases have been made which allow teachers and students to use instructional time more efficiently and effectively. These purchases include inter-write pads, LCD projectors, student response systems, laptops, document cameras, and sound field systems in all JES and JA classrooms. Board of Education members and system and school leaders are committed to increasing the effective use of technology in all PreK-12 classrooms.

Jefferson City Schools provides additional academic assistance to disadvantaged students, migrant students, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and other students not meeting expectations on state tests. Examples include extended day and extended year programs, flexible grouping, lunch remediation, small group setting, computer assisted programs, and tailored instruction for specific groups of students. Students have access to remediation programs offered during and after school.

Software programs are optimized during remediation periods and after school programs. Georgia Virtual High School, Classworks, and e2020 serve as the basis for high school summer remediation. Classworks, Lexia, Reading Plus, and other software programs provide additional support during the regular school day and in after school programs at the elementary and middle school level. Students are identified using Pyramid of Interventions universal screeners and monitored through benchmark assessments and teacher-developed probes.

Students in need of additional support are recommended for remediation periods and after school tutoring programs. Students are monitored and regular progress updates are provided as part of the Pyramid of Interventions process. School improvement and professional learning plans drive the use of funds to support after school programs and school year extension programs. Federal funds are used to provide software for specific groups of students and careful attention has been given to upgrading programs from LAN to web-based versions in order to provide increased home access for students.

Jefferson City Schools has a process to ensure that funds are spent only on those products and services with proven results. Vendors must produce evidence that their product is scientifically proven to be successful. This information is checked with the state program manager to validate program effectiveness. Jefferson City Schools conducts research on the products that are purchased and the consultants that are used to provide services. Professional learning is not a one-day workshop or motivational session. Professional learning is ongoing, classroom-based, coaching and mentoring for teachers.

The Jefferson City School System assesses teachers' ability to differentiate instruction based on the diverse needs of their students, and it plans for and provides continued professional learning in this area. All administrators have participated in a Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS) analysis visit. The high school had a GAPSS visit in January 2009, JMS had a GAPSS visit in September 2009, and Jefferson Academy was reviewed by a GAPSS team in February 2010. All administrators participate in walk-through observations in all classrooms. Areas of focus during standards-based walkthrough observations include differentiated instruction, student engagement, depth of knowledge, and technology integration.

System and school leaders promote and support the implementation of research-based instructional strategies, innovations, and activities by providing quality professional development that facilitates achievement for all students, including differentiated instruction, rigor, relevance, and relationships, meeting the diverse needs of learners based on various learning styles, and effective use of instructional technology to customize student learning through the use of instructional strategies.

The Jefferson City School System utilizes several resources to assess teacher ability to differentiate instruction based on the diverse needs of students. The system-wide walkthrough monitoring tool is used by instructional

services staff, school-level leaders, and teacher leaders. This tool clearly outlines “look-for’s” within a differentiated classroom as aligned to content, process, and product. Teacher reflection upon their knowledge of differentiated instruction is evaluated through feedback obtained during peer observations. Teachers respond to the SAI survey each year. The Standards Assessment Inventory provides a framework for teachers to determine their understanding of using data to drive instruction, professional learning communities as problem-solving teams, and differentiated instruction.

Teachers’ formative and summative assessment data is carefully monitored throughout the year to determine teacher effectiveness in ensuring that all students are progressing. Standard progress monitoring tools and common assessments provide data for analyzing student growth. Teacher ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners can be analyzed through individual student progress. In the annual needs assessment completed in May 2011, teachers expressed a need for more strategies effective in addressing the instructional needs of students with disabilities, boys, students living in poverty, differentiated instruction, and gifted students as well as providing increased access to technology to increase student performance.

The system continues to work on a systemic Pyramid of Interventions process. Professional development opportunities have been designed to address each of these areas. In the elementary grades, the Pyramid of Interventions process has become very effective. Improvements have been made in the planning and implementation of the PoI process at the middle and secondary level. Ongoing teacher training and professional learning communities focusing on data analysis and differentiation of instruction are providing a structure for improving the PoI process in the middle and high school, as well as improving instruction to more effectively meet the diverse needs of all students.

Strategies used in professional learning to address the diverse needs of students include the following: Wilson program, additional gifted endorsement, additional ESOL teachers, special education certification, and book studies and article reviews that are based on school- and system-level needs (i.e. technology and project-based learning). Board members and administrators also engage in book studies as part of the annual board retreat in an effort to more clearly outline goals and vision for future planning.

Professional development plans and timelines match the learning needs of students and the instructional needs of teachers. Technical assistance is provided for schools to ensure that purchased programs are scientifically based and/or evidence-based. Professional learning is aligned with nationally established criteria and helps teachers target their instructional practices towards the effective implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards.

Administrators and teachers participate in webinars and Elluminate sessions hosted by the Georgia Department of Education. In addition, Northeast Georgia RESA consultants have worked with teachers at all grade levels to review learning-focused strategies through vocabulary building and Planet Literacy professional learning sessions. Writing across the curriculum training is provided by consultants from the Georgia Center for Assessment.

Training on Learning-Focused Schools is provided for all teachers new to Jefferson City Schools. In conjunction with a system level professional learning committee, each school has a professional learning committee that screens all building level training requests. Professional learning funds from multiple sources target areas needing improvement or continuation. Areas are identified by looking at student data (e.g. CRCT, GHSGT, ITBS, EOCT, writing assessments, and locally developed benchmarks/common assessments/probes), creating action plans to support identified instructional issues, training, and then assessing student success. This process is used to determine training needs each year. This cycle of renewal is conducted annually and is an important part of the system's school improvement process.

Support programs have been redesigned to better meet the diverse needs of students, with special emphasis on understanding the cultural issues related to meeting the needs of poor and minority students. Learning labs have

been established where students who are experiencing academic difficulty can work on programs designed at their particular skill level before and after school. Remedial education programs have been designed to target students having difficulty with content standards and skills.

The Georgia Virtual High School credit recovery program and e2020 allow students to take courses and attend remediation sessions for the GHSGT on Saturdays and outside the regular instructional day. A curriculum committee at JHS monitors the instructional program of the school. This team serves in an advisory capacity to the principal when making curricular decisions. Jefferson High School has implemented a lunch remediation period. Based on needs assessment data, it was determined that the high school needed a time within the school day to meet the needs of diverse learners. Various instructional software programs and teachers are utilized during the lunch remediation period with the goal of helping all students to be successful.

System and school leaders allocate and protect instructional time to support student learning. Instructional time at each school and within each grade level exceeds state requirements. Additionally, the system calendar maximizes instructional time for teaching and learning. In grades K-5, principals schedule a literacy period that exceeds maximum number of required minutes to provide individualized remediation and enrichment opportunities for students.

Those students who are struggling with mastery of content and skills are provided intense remediation through the use of various software programs designed to diagnose and prescribe lessons based on academic weaknesses. Students who are performing above expectations participate in a project-based literature around the world activity (grade 2) and a museum enrichment project (grades 3-5) during the literacy period. The museum project provides an opportunity for students to actively engage in researching a topic of interest based on a school-wide theme (e.g. disasters, innovations and inventions), preparing a visual aid and display using various forms of technology, and presenting final products in the spring at the Night at the Museum event.

Elementary level administrators and teachers are examining the Renzulli's School-Wide Enrichment Model as a possible framework to enhance existing instructional programs and to expand opportunities to meet the diverse needs of students by focusing on various learning styles.

Enrichment opportunities are provided during Connections at the middle school level and during the FIRE lunch period at the high school level. An outside consultant is used to provide SAT test preparation to students prior to each test administration.

Board members and all JCS staff members participated in a technology showcase hosted by the University of Georgia Educational Technology Center at the beginning of the year to raise awareness among administrators and teachers with regards to various types of technology available to move learning to the next level. Based on feedback from administrators and teachers after participating in the technology showcase, professional learning is being provided on the use of student response systems and using Moodle as a learning management system. The system level technology committee annually reviews the technology plan, and instructional services staff meet regularly with teachers and staff to determine technology needs.

Jefferson City Schools has worked with the UGA ETC staff to conduct an audit of existing technology to develop an updated technology plan that will allow the system to procure state of the art technology equipment and programs designed to directly impact student achievement. The results of the technology audit process are being used to determine technology needs in order to provide increased access for teachers and students. Monthly updates are provided at board meetings to ensure that technology goals are being addressed as well as to provide a structure as the system moves to a *Bring Your Own Technology* initiative. School improvement plans are reviewed and revised annually and include an emphasis on technology.

System and school leaders work collaboratively to maintain articulation among and between schools to facilitate achievement for all students. Local preschool students tour the elementary school in the spring as part of the Kindergarten Roundup registration process. Similarly, transition days are scheduled for students in grades 2, 5, and 8 to ensure a smooth transition from one school to the next. Tours of the school and visits to classrooms are part of this transition activity. Parents attend orientation sessions to obtain information regarding procedures and processes involved in moving from one school to the next. The establishment of the Dragon PRIDE (Promoting Responsibility and Investing in Dragon Excellence) committee has provided a framework for various stakeholders working together to provide a seamless transition between schools.

The Jefferson City School System sustains a system-wide climate that supports student learning. There are challenges in being a small school district. However, the system is fortunate to experience a system-wide climate that supports a continuous tradition of academic excellence. Strong community support enables administrators and teachers to provide quality educational services that align curriculum, instruction, and assessment. *Exposure to Excellence Promotes Excellence* is a favorite motto among community members, system and school leaders, teachers, and other staff members.

As students enter the doors of Jefferson City Schools, it is expected that all will graduate, and graduate on time. Beginning in 2010, all kindergarten students receive a bracelet with the *Exposure to Excellence Promotes Excellence* motto and year of graduation as a reminder that all stakeholders are working collaboratively to ensure that students receive the best education possible and all become fully functioning adults. To emphasize the importance of high school graduation, Jefferson Academy and Jefferson Middle School have posted banners at the front of each hallway listing respective year of graduation (i.e. Class of 20--).

Parent volunteers and community members are welcome in each of the schools and play a vital role in the educational process. Their presence in the schools represents a strong sense of pride among stakeholders as everyone works collectively to increase student achievement. Parents, business leaders, and community members provide invaluable service as guest readers, Helping Hands volunteers, Lindsay's Legacy mentors, guest speakers, and classroom volunteers throughout the year. Board members, parents, business leaders, and other community members are provided with opportunities to support instructional strategies, innovations, and achievement for all students through their involvement on SACS committees, school councils, parent-teacher organization, and other school-level committees.

Instructional services staff members work with school leaders and teachers to ensure the curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals. Annually, the Georgia Department of Education conducts precision reviews of the Georgia Performance Standards. Minor adjustments are often made to the standards; therefore, it is critical that teachers are provided opportunity to review the standards and revise curriculum maps, instructional plans, and assessments regularly to ensure alignment with learning goals and objectives. In preparation for the implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards, training will be provided to ensure teachers have a clear understanding of expectations for teaching and learning that will lead to continued success and increased student achievement.

3. What processes are implemented to ensure that all staff members are well-prepared to support and implement the district's expectations for student learning?

The Jefferson City School System has a process in place to ensure all staff members are well-prepared to support and implement the system's expectations for student learning. All teachers who are new to Jefferson City Schools participate in an orientation training session prior to preplanning where the vision, mission, and goals of the system are shared.

Information regarding teacher quality, characteristics of an effective teacher, and standards-based instruction is

presented along with an overview of the instructional program and academic achievement results. Participants attend sessions at the school level to learn various procedures and operations and receive training on how to use software programs designed to improve student performance. During the last two years, the new teacher orientation has been held at individual schools due to the small number of new employees. New teachers are assigned mentors at the beginning of the year.

The annual community breakfast provides an opportunity to ensure all staff members are fully aware of the system's expectations for student learning. The Board of Education chairman presents an overview of the academics, athletics, and arts programs along with highlights and accomplishments relative to student achievement results. From this presentation, it is clear that all stakeholders share common expectations for high academic achievement.

Multiple opportunities exist for teachers to engage in quality professional learning activities. As part of the needs assessment process, survey data from various sources is used to determine system and school level needs. The system utilizes a variety of data sources to conduct the annual needs assessment (e.g. technology survey, needs assessment survey for administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals, vision project survey for board members and administrators).

Results from the Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) are used to plan and deliver professional learning opportunities at the grade/department, school, and system level aligned to best practices, including but not limited to, differentiation of instruction, professional learning communities, data analysis, and continuous school improvement.

Professional learning is constantly occurring as teachers work collaboratively to evaluate student work, align curriculum, analyze formative and summative assessment data, integrate technology, implement writing strategies across the curriculum, attend off-site workshops and conferences (e.g. Northeast Georgia RESA, UGA ETC), and participate in webinars provided through the Georgia Department of Education. Federal program funds are used to purchase the ParaEducator/PD Now program which allows all paraprofessionals to engage in online professional development tailored to individual, school, and system needs.

The Jefferson City School System has placed an emphasis on increasing the number of teachers who complete gifted endorsements, ESOL endorsements, and Advanced Placement training in order to expand the use of various service delivery models as well as enhance skills in providing differentiated instruction to meet the learning needs of all students.

Regular collaborative planning sessions are organized at each school in order for teachers to plan by grade level and/or content area. This process ensures all teachers are working together to accomplish common goals as outlined in the school improvement plans and vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum exists throughout the system. Standards-based walkthrough observations are conducted regularly to ensure all staff members have the knowledge and skills needed to support and implement the system's expectations for student learning.

Monthly grade level, department, curriculum, and leadership meetings provide an additional opportunity for administrators and teachers to review the system's expectations for student learning.

4. How does the system ensure that all students and staff have access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services?

The mission of Jefferson City Schools is to graduate fully functioning adults by providing a quality educational program designed to assist students in becoming responsible, productive citizens who are able to adapt to the ever-

changing global society. The staff at JCS assists students, parents, staff members, community members, and other stakeholders in accessing, analyzing, and preparing information in order to promote critical thinking and problem solving.

The goal is to provide the teachers and students with the most innovative instructional materials, equipment, sustained support, and training necessary to develop global awareness and the necessary skills to compete in the world marketplace. The instructional technology staff at Jefferson City Schools and other experts facilitate technology related opportunities to improve student achievement and productivity.

The vision of technology use was developed by teachers, instructional technology support personnel, administrators, and other stakeholders and approved by the Jefferson City School System Board of Education. The mission statement of the Jefferson City Schools Technology Plan is “to ensure that all students and teachers will have access to and use technology as a tool for learning, communication, and collaboration.”

Technology provides the tools, supports the tools, and is the tool to create or change information. The purpose of education is to deliver instruction. The vision for technology use is to focus on the classroom and on all areas that support student learning.

Instructional, administrative, and parent/community uses of technology support student achievement with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) now and in the future. The vision of Jefferson City Schools for technology use includes the desire to implement the following:

- In the classroom, teachers and other support staff will use technology to support instruction. Teachers will use technology to refine their diagnostic capacity through testing, benchmarking, and pinpointing the exact areas of student strengths and weaknesses. Technology will be a part of the instructional tool kit as teachers identify supportive software programs, provide opportunities for students to create and demonstrate research skills using the internet, and technology will continue to be used as a teaching tool to explain complex concepts and ideas (e.g. active boards, document cameras, student response systems).
- Administrative uses of technology will include ways to provide more efficient and accurate student information and record keeping. This information will provide support for teachers as they research the capabilities of students (e.g. Individual Education Plans, home information, test score history, attendance issues, etc.) In addition, more accurate information will allow schools to give accurate reporting data to the Georgia Department of Education and other entities requiring information. Record keeping will continue to become more refined as we use technology for direct deposit, paying bills, sending reports, and conducting paperless board meetings.
- Parent/community uses of technology will increase with the addition and future expansion of the Infinite Campus parent portal accessed through the system and school websites. This will allow students, parents, and teachers immediate information exchange regarding daily achievement, attendance, course registrations, and other concerns, which might impact student success. The district webpage will continue to become more advanced in an effort to provide even more information to the community. Information that will inform potential Jefferson City Schools’ families will be included. The webpage will become more interactive as we grow and expand our capabilities. The paperless BOE meetings that are in place now allow the community to keep track of the monthly Board of Education meetings, the system goals and performance objectives, and the actions that take place each month.

The Jefferson City School System's Board of Education has made a considerable investment in technology for its students and staff. The JCS current up-to-date, student networked, modern, computer inventory is 3:1. Additionally, the Jefferson City School System employs a technology support specialist and an assistant to

provide support services throughout the system and its schools.

The technology support specialist and assistant have worked with the Jefferson High School principal and his staff to identify and train qualified high school students to serve on a student tech team. The student tech team provides assistance throughout the system on setting up equipment and labs in preparation for teacher and student use, troubleshooting, and other assigned tasks related to technology.

Highly qualified media specialists provide instruction and training to students and staff members on the use of resources and tools available through media centers. A paraprofessional is placed in each media center to provide additional support to media specialists, students, and staff members. At the elementary level, the media support staff assist the technology support specialist in troubleshooting, managing software programs, and monitoring technology use and implementation in the classrooms and throughout the school. All media specialists are directly involved in providing instructional services to students. Media specialists at Jefferson Elementary School and Jefferson Academy teach a course during specials (JES – research skills course; JA – keyboarding and research skills course). All media specialists play a vital role in the instructional process.

The board of education members are committed to increasing access to technology for teachers and students. Updated information is presented at the annual board of education retreat to ensure proper steps are being taken to continue to explore options for increased accessibility to technology as a way to improve teaching and learning. The board members and local system and school administrators work with the University of Georgia Educational Technology Center staff to determine effective uses of technology and to provide ongoing, job-embedded professional learning opportunities for teachers.

In addition, the UGA ETC staff organized a technology showcase for board members, administrators, and teachers as an effective means for introducing new state-of-the-art technologies and determining which equipment should be procured for improving teaching and learning. The vision is for all students to use technology to support learning and to develop the ability to use technology for communication now and in the future after they exit Jefferson City Schools.

In the coming months, the staff at UGA ETC will conduct *Technology Tuesday* in the schools to allow teachers to continue to explore various technology equipment and tools that positively impact student achievement. Additionally, the system is in the process of exploring the *Bring Your Own Technology* initiative. Results from a recent infrastructure audit and demonstrations from two enterprise wireless vendors are being used to develop a plan for allowing students to bring their own technology as a way to enhance their learning experiences. Board members and system and school leaders recognize the potential this initiative has in transforming what is happening in the classrooms.

Access, training, and support are vital to the successful integration of instructional technology. Hence, the vision of technology use for Jefferson City Schools includes all three components. This systematic approach to technology implementation enables students to incorporate the use of text materials, software, and online resources when completing classroom assignments. The integration of technology equips students with knowledge and skills necessary to make effective decisions regarding the completion of an assignment or mastery of a particular standard.

Teachers have more opportunities to use computers, visual presenters, projectors, and other technology equipment to enhance the delivery of instructional lessons. Differentiation of instruction can be planned so students can complete assignments using a variety of methods through the use of technology. In addition, the use of technology provides students the opportunities to collaboratively produce high quality work that can be shared with a worldwide community of learners via the internet. Instructional content for some high school students is delivered through a virtual, online format (e.g. e2020, Georgia Virtual High School, Moodle).

Teachers participate in ongoing professional development so they can immediately introduce emerging technologies into the classroom. Administrators utilize web-based software to organize, disaggregate, and analyze student information so data-driven decisions can be made regarding student performance. Technology is used to provide stimulating and authentic learning that is connected to the real world. The Jefferson City School System believes that the proficient use of technology supports the development of lifelong learning skills, including flexibility, critical thinking, collaboration, self-reliance, and problem solving. In order to become successful, fully functioning adults in the 21st century, all students need to acquire and apply a wide variety of technological skills.

There is a clear description of technology skills targeted for each grade or band of grades so all students are technologically literate by the end of the 8th grade. The goals and objectives for student technology literacy are clearly articulated by Jefferson City Schools. Instructional technology is a goal at each grade level with specific objectives. Each grade level has specific tools used to assess student technological skills. Jefferson City Schools has grade level expectations at grade 3 (mastery of the keyboarding skills) which provides an estimation of students' school-based experiences or proficiencies with technology skills for each grade or band of grades (K-12).

The 21st Century Learning committee will be working with the UGA ETC staff to develop a scope and sequence of technology application experiences for all students. Media specialists will play an important role in working with administrators and teachers in each school to obtain feedback that will inform the work of the 21st Century Learning committee members. The technology planning committee recognizes that students must be technologically literate to function as successful citizens. A focus in Jefferson City Schools is the acquisition of these basic technology literacy skills by every student.

In order to ensure this mastery, the following requirements for all students are in place:

1. All 3rd grade students are required to take keyboarding.
2. Middle school students are provided an opportunity to take a computer applications course during Connections. All 8th grade students complete a technology literacy assessment developed through the Georgia Department of Education's Online Assessment System upon exiting middle school.
3. All 9th grade students have an opportunity to take a computer applications course as an elective for high school credit.

All students have exposure to basic technology literacy. However, there needs to be more opportunities for direct application of these skills. As the system develops a more comprehensive technology implementation plan, additional opportunities for applying technology literacy skills in a variety of learning environments will be provided in all schools. The use of the state-developed common assessment of 8th grade technology literacy enables JCS to determine if students are making adequate progress and becoming technology literate upon entering high school. Results from the assessment are analyzed to determine specific areas of strengths and weaknesses and to ensure students are making adequate progress in the area of technology skills and development.

Jefferson City Schools utilizes the following data sources to collect valuable data for informed technology planning decisions:

- School improvement grade-level and departmental action plans
 - Identifies instructional goals and needs
 - Identifies instructional basis for technology requests

- Identifies technology support and professional development needs
- Action Plan Review at year-end to analyze success/needs improvement of goals and planning
- Annual technology literacy assessment for all 8th grade students through the Online Assessment System (e.g. 21st Century Skills Assessment)
- Ongoing analysis of equality of technology resources among schools
- Analysis of technology resources and the impact on student achievement
- Annual JCS Needs Assessment Survey (board of education members, administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students) used to determine the quantity and content of technology professional development
- Annual review of the GaDOE consolidated grant application content descriptors and implementation plans
- Consultation with UGA ETC and Northeast Georgia RESA consultants
- Consultation with Virtucom network consultants
- Annual Georgia Educational Technology Consortium for media specialists, technology personnel, and administrators
- Infrastructure audit and teacher interviews conducted by UGA ETC
- Professional learning opportunities (conferences, workshops, job-embedded sessions, GaDOE Elluminate sessions, UGA ETC, and Northeast Georgia RESA)
- Annual technology budget which identifies capital purchases, training, and support expenditures (e.g. ELOST/SPLOST, CTAE capital equipment grant, Department of Defense free hardware distribution)
- New and alternative funding sources
- Annual software/technology utilization report that monitors school use of technology equipment
- Definition of “modern computer specifications” which leads to replacement of dated equipment
- Ratio of student to computers to ensure adequate technology access in all school settings
- Annual technology inventory submitted to the Georgia Department of Education which includes the following:

In reviewing data sources including department/grade-level action plans, needs-assessment surveys, and school and state-level technology inventories, Jefferson City Schools has determined the following target areas for technology access improvement and integration:

- Establish equality in technology access among the schools
 - Increase presentation tools at middle and high school (document readers, Inter-write pads, and projectors)
 - Update average age of machine at each school
 - Middle and high schools need more access to curriculum software programs to provide remediation and enrichment opportunities for students
 - Explore options for providing additional lab access for elementary and academy students
- Provide training for new technologies and software programs (Elementary and Academy teachers have access to numerous software programs but need more training for more effective instructional integration; Middle and High school teachers need training as new presentation technologies become available)
- Improve data access and analysis
 - Need program to integrate various data sources (e.g. standardized test scores, benchmarks, and progress monitoring)
 - Expand the capabilities of Infinite Campus to allow for more options for organizing student data
 - Use of the Longitudinal Data System to identify students’ strengths and weaknesses
 - Need software support for data disaggregation
 - Need professional development in data analysis and utilization

Administrators in Jefferson City Schools use technology in a variety of ways. At the system level, the technology personnel manage the core servers that provide access to email, internet, content filtering, anti-virus software, and all software programs. The student information system, Infinite Campus, is a web-based student data warehouse that allows staff members, students, and parents to access grades, attendance, discipline, and scheduling information from any location at any time. Infinite Campus is used by system and school leaders to maintain all records for state reporting purposes, special education individualized education plans (IEP's), and assessment data. While most administrative departments (student records, bus schedules, lunch accounts, testing information, counseling, certification, etc.) utilize software to manage information, Jefferson City Schools is seeking an integrated software solution that will allow for increased data collaboration.

Although Jefferson City Schools strives to communicate effectively with parents, problems with data access can provide significant barriers to communication. JCS has implemented a new student information system, Infinite Campus, which consists of a parent-connect option, enabling parents to view daily academic progress as well as attendance and discipline information. The use of the new student information system has increased communication among parents, school, and community. Professional development for administrators, teachers, and staff will continue to be provided in order to maximize the use of this particular technology tool as a way to enhance communication which leads to improved student performance.

Jefferson City Schools uses regular press releases, internet articles, and staff newsletters to keep the community informed about school activities and progress toward goals and objectives. System, schools, and department/grade-level websites are used extensively to communicate with parents and the community. The websites contain school start and release times, announcements, assignments, and course syllabi, along with other information. The system website features upcoming events, recent school news, the school calendar, lunch menus, and information for parents, students, business partners, and community members.

Jefferson City Schools currently communicates academic progress, discipline incidents, and attendance through email, mail, telephone, parent portal, and the school messenger system. JCS reports assessment results and school-wide progress via the website (links provided to the Georgia Department of Education and Governor's Office of Student Achievement – System and School Report Cards and Adequate Yearly Progress data). Pertinent news articles and announcements are also published in newsletters from the school and class levels. School related articles regularly appear in the local town newspaper, *The Jackson Herald*.

Because of the growing Hispanic population in Jefferson City Schools, much of the written information is also available in Spanish as well as English through the use of the TransAct program. Phone announcements may be presented in Spanish in an effort to involve as many families as possible in partnering with the school to increase levels of student performance.

Regular and consistent technology planning occurs through collaboration between the Jefferson City School System technology department and system-level professional development, curriculum, media, Title I, special education, and ELL personnel. Regular meetings allow stakeholders to develop successful strategies to insure that all stakeholders have input into a system-level technology plan. A copy of the Jefferson City School System's Three-Year Technology Plan is available on the JCS website.

The Jefferson City School System seeks to provide high-quality professional development programs with follow-up and support that promotes knowledge and enhances skills related to the use of technology for learning, teaching, and productivity. In accomplishing these goals, JCS offers several different professional development opportunities: annual technology conferences, UGA ETC training workshops, Northeast Georgia RESA workshops and courses, GaDOE Illuminate sessions, consultant-facilitated training, and media specialist training sessions for faculty/staff (group and individual).

The JCS system technology committee along with the professional development committee collaborates to develop professional training that is job-embedded, standards-based, results-driven, and aligned with the system-level goals. A 21st Century Learning committee has been established to study and explore options for expanding the use of technology as a tool to enhance teaching and learning. Staff members from the University of Georgia Educational Technology Center, Northeast Georgia RESA, GaDOE, and outside consultants are available to assist JCS with the development and implementation of professional development training.

In addition, any school can request specific training on any and all technology applications available within the classroom. Professional learning courses, offered through the UGA ETC and the local Northeast Georgia RESA system, promote current system initiatives, increase skill and productivity in specific applications, provide strategies for using technology to enable or enhance learning, and provide hands-on training of emerging technology based on the Georgia Performance Standards.

Funding for technology equipment, software, and training comes from a variety of sources including the general fund, Title I, Title III, IDEA, local school fundraisers, and SPLOST/ELOST. Using best practices research, curriculum standards, technology plan documentation, and recommendations from the technology department members, school personnel make decisions about system-level equipment purchasing that will positively impact student achievement.

All K-12 teachers and administrators are committed to providing increased opportunities for students to develop technology literacy skills as they progress through school by integrating technology into instructional lessons and activities. JCS is committed to using technology as a tool to increase student achievement and to prepare all students to be globally, competitive, fully-functioning adults as they exit Jefferson City Schools.

JCS recognizes the importance of technology instruction in the elementary grades in order for students to become technology literate by the end of 8th grade. The focus of professional development over the course of the next few years will be on increasing the use of technology to support teaching and learning as a way of ensuring all students and staff members have access to comprehensive information, instructional technology, and media services.

Overall Assessment:

Highly Functional: The school system implements a curriculum based on clear and measurable expectations for student learning that provides multiple opportunities for all students to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The system has a formalized process to align instructional practices with the curriculum and demonstrates results through systemic and sustainable implementation across the system. Teachers use proven, research-based, instructional practices that actively engage students in the learning process and encourage students to take ownership of their learning. Teachers consistently provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations. Teachers give students frequent feedback using a variety of methods to improve their performance.

Standard 4. Documenting & Using Results

STANDARD: The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and system effectiveness.

Impact Statement: A school system is successful in meeting this standard when it uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly-defined performance measures. The assessment system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, identify gaps between expectations for student learning and student performance, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to system and school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, system and school effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

Indicators RubricGroup: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators RubricGroup:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free :

Operational

Evidence Provided:

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about behavioral standards

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about grading and appeals

All stakeholders are knowledgeable about learning expectations and targets for student performance

Calendar of assessment activities

Database that records graduation, completion, GPA, placement, retention rates

District staff use data to inform policies and practice

Online assessment system

Policies outline administration of multiple assessments and their purpose

Policies that outline targets for behavioral standards: attendance, discipline

Policies that outline targets for student performance and are aligned to state/national standards

Record of multiple assessments administered, including program-specific required assessments

Staff affirm the use of multiple measures for student performance

Stakeholders are familiar with the administration and purpose of multiple assessments

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about the assessment schedule

Stakeholders implement multiple assessment system

Student/Staff Handbook that outlines grading scales, syllabus criteria, and appeal process

The development and administration of multiple assessments consider limited-language learners, students with disabilities, and multiple learning styles

Other: JCS Testing Calendar; Locally developed formative assessments and other diagnostic tests (e.g. benchmark assessments, teacher-developed probes, universal screeners, progress monitoring tools); State-mandated writing assessments, mock writing assessments, CRCT, Mock CRCT Grades 1 and 2, CRCT-M, ITBS, GHSGT, EOCT, GAA, ACCESS, SAT and ACT, and other tests needed for gifted and special education screening

4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of teaching and learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes from staff meetings indicate use of data to drive instructional planning discussions

Agendas, minutes from staff meetings indicate utilization of data systems

Data graphs, charts display student performance expectations

District staff affirm their understanding of how data are used to evaluate their effectiveness

District staff are knowledgeable about how to use student performance data for the purpose of instructional planning

District staff meet regularly to discuss student work

District staff utilize assessment data for the purpose of instructional and program planning

Examples of student work are prominently displayed

Student performance data reports, charts, graphs indicate system-wide use of data for instructional planning

Students affirm knowledge about their learning expectations

Other: Pyramid of Interventions process

Other: Placement criteria for placement in special support programs (e.g. special education, gifted education, Early Intervention Program, Title I, ESOL); SACS, PTO/PATS, school-level committee, school council meetings - agendas and minutes; Data Rooms; System and School Improvement Plans; Formative Assessments - benchmark assessments and teacher-developed probes

4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Data from community/business

Database that records graduation, post-graduate engagement

District staff utilize perception data from surveys to guide program planning

Stakeholders affirm their familiarity with student performance and organizational effectiveness

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in meetings in which the topic of student performance and organizational effectiveness were highlighted

Other: Board Retreat; System and School Level Leadership Teams

Other: Data Rooms; System and School Improvement Plans

4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes from meetings where student performance and school effectiveness were highlighted

Criteria that establishes student performance data as a component of parent-teacher conferences

District staff affirm the use of various communication methods to report student performance

Newsletters demonstrate communication of student performance and school effectiveness

Stakeholders affirm the use of various communication methods to report student performance

Other: School Councils; Infinite Campus Parent Portal; Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson; Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee

Other: Progress reports and report cards; Special Education and Gifted Education Progress Reports; System and School Websites; Newsletters, emails, brochures, and other publications; Individual Student Score Reports - state-mandated assessments

4.5 Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Agenda, minutes of meetings in which comparative data were highlighted

District staff affirm their involvement in meetings in which comparative data were highlighted

Reports that outline comparable data analysis - across programs

Reports that outline comparable data analysis - across schools, districts, states, nationally

Other: Annual Northeast Georgia RESA Data Dig; Comparison of system and school level test scores with RESA and State levels; Comparison of system and school performance with systems and schools of similar size as defined by Georgia School Council Institute; System/school site visits and virtual tours

4.6 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Data reports disaggregate student performance growth

Data reports verify growth in student performance

District staff can identify reasons why student performance has increased/decreased

District staff can identify strategies for increasing student performance

Other: GaDOE System and School Adequate Yearly Progress Reports; Governor's Office of Student Achievement State, System, and School Report Cards; Standardized Testing Reports; Individual Education Plans (IEP's); Pyramid of Interventions - progress monitoring data; Formative Assessments (e.g. benchmark assessments and teacher-developed probes)

4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District staff affirm their comfort with the level of data accuracy and security

Policies that outline the conditions for safeguarding and transferring transcripts

Policies that safeguard accuracy and security of all data

Reports that satisfy local, state, and national requirements

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about the conditions under which transcripts are safeguarded and transferred

Other: Infinite Campus; Statewide Longitudinal Data System

Other: JCS Board Policy - Student Records; FTE Reports

Focus Questions:

1. How is the assessment system currently used throughout the school system and its schools to guide analysis of changes in student performance?

Jefferson City Schools uses a systematic and comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures to ensure the achievement of required standards by individual students, subgroups, and the overall learning organization. Teachers at all grade levels use benchmark assessments, common assessments, or teacher developed probes to determine the success of students in meeting the state's academic achievement standards.

Reports are shared with students, parents, staff, and members of the board of education throughout the school year during parent conferences, school-level committee meetings, board meetings, and school council and other advisory group meetings. Assessment results are used to identify and monitor students for enrichment and remediation programs offered during and after school.

Results of the benchmark assessments, common assessments, and probes, along with student portfolios, are used to assist teachers in diagnosing the success of teaching and learning in the classroom. Multiple measures of student performance are used in diagnosing skill deficits and gaps. Research based interventions are used to address students' needs and to close skill gaps. A multiple criteria selection process that includes state and local assessment data, teacher recommendation, and classroom grades are used in identifying students for the Title I targeted assistance services.

The school improvement cycle ensures that teachers and administrators engage in the continuous process of gathering student achievement data, analyzing the results, and adjusting teaching and learning to guide changes in student performance. The system and its schools use a variety of assessment methods to monitor student progress, and results are used to inform instructional practices. The assessment system is aligned to the system's expectations for continual improvement in student achievement and yields information that is reliable, valid, and non-biased.

As part of the school improvement process, teachers meet regularly, by grade level (Jefferson Elementary School and Jefferson Academy) and department/content area (Jefferson Middle School and Jefferson High School) to disaggregate all student data by subgroup (including the 10 subgroups outlined in the No Child Left Behind/Elementary and Secondary Education Act as well as locally identified subgroups) and domain areas. Disaggregated results are used to identify students in need of academic assistance and program support (e.g. Title I, Early Intervention Program, Special Education, and Gifted Services).

Additionally, teachers use results from state mandated and locally developed assessments to develop target lists that are used in grade level and department meetings throughout the year to monitor student progress toward achievement goals. Benchmark tests, common assessments, and teacher developed probes are revised annually to ensure they are accurate predictors of student success. Performance data from these assessments are analyzed quarterly to determine instructional effectiveness and to monitor student progress. Upon review of formative and summative data, students are identified for remediation and acceleration opportunities as indicated in the Pyramid of Interventions process.

Software programs, including Lexia, STAR Reading and STAR Math, Orchard, Reading Plus, e2020, AimsWeb, Rosetta Stone, and Classworks, provide additional diagnostic feedback to students, teachers, and administrators. Other diagnostic tools include running records and the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test - W-APT (used as the screening instrument for determining services for English learners). The ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) assessment instrument is used to measure English language proficiency. All eighth grade students complete the 21st Century Skills Assessment to determine technology literacy.

The Jefferson City School System adheres to the federal and state requirements regarding standardized testing. State-mandated and locally developed assessments are administered to determine mastery of skills as outlined in the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) is administered to kindergarten students. The Mock CRCT is administered to students in grades one and two.

The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) is administered annually to students enrolled in grades 3 and 6. Students in grades 3 through 8 participate in the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT). The Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) and the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests – Modified (CRCT-M) are administered to a small number of students with disabilities (less than 3%) who have been identified to participate in an alternate form of state mandated testing as outlined in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

The ACCESS (as mentioned previously) is administered to students eligible for ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) program. State mandated writing assessments are administered to students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11. Mock writing assessments developed through the Georgia Center for Assessment (GCA) are administered to students in grades 6, 7, and 10 in order to provide practice opportunities prior to the actual test administration. Results from the mock writing tests are used by teachers to determine students' strengths and weaknesses and to inform instructional practices.

The Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHS GT) is administered to appropriate students in grade 11 in the areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition, the End-of-Course Tests (EOCT) are given to high school students enrolled in one or more of the following courses: Algebra, Geometry, Math I, Math II, 9th Grade Literature, American Literature, Physical Science, Biology, Economics, and U.S. History. Students enrolled in Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education courses participate in End-of-Pathway Assessments for credentialing purposes.

Additional assessment opportunities exist for students enrolled in the high school, including Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Advanced Placement Tests (AP), and American College Test (ACT).

Data collected from state and locally administered assessments are used to guide the development of the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). Individual school improvement plans are established based on information included in the CLIP as well as disaggregated test results. The Jefferson City School System's assessment system provides a balanced approach to monitoring student performance and improvement toward learning goals and objectives outlined in the system and school improvement plans.

2. What are you doing to ensure that assessment results are timely, relevant, and communicated in a way that can be used by the system, its schools, and stakeholders to aid the performance of individual students?

Student assessment results can only be useful in informing teaching and learning if communicated to appropriate stakeholders in a timely and relevant manner. The Jefferson City School System provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system and school effectiveness. The Associate Superintendent, who serves as the system test coordinator, receives notification from the Georgia Department of Education regarding receipt of standardized test results. Immediately upon receiving email notification, the test scores are downloaded and disseminated to appropriate school level administrators.

A score report inventory form is completed by the school level test coordinator and/or principal and the system level test coordinator as documentation that test scores were received in a timely manner. Concurrently, the system's student records coordinator imports test scores into Infinite Campus, the student information system, so teachers and parents may access score reports online. Scores are uploaded in the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) program at the state level, which provides an additional avenue for parents, teachers, and administrators to access student performance results. School registrars file test scores and affix score report labels in permanent records consistent with state and local policies and procedures.

Upon receipt of scores, building level leaders distribute student performance results to teachers and work collaboratively to disaggregate the data to identify strengths and weaknesses by subgroup and domain area. Disaggregated test results are shared with various stakeholders during school events and committee meetings (e.g. curriculum night, Title I Annual Parent Meeting, EL Parent Night, school-level committees, parent-teacher organization meetings, school council meetings). Student performance results are included in the instructional programs report and presented to Board of Education members at monthly board meetings.

System and school leaders are invited to participate in an annual data dig hosted by Northeast Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) to identify academic strengths and weaknesses by subgroup and domain level within the performance data of all thirteen schools within the regional area in comparison with other school systems across the state of Georgia. Comparison and trend data from comparable school systems are utilized to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness. RESA consultants work with system and school leaders to implement strategies and programs designed to meet the teaching and learning needs of teachers and students.

Diagnostic assessments play a large role in the implementation of the Pyramid of Interventions process. Progress monitoring data is shared on an ongoing basis with parents of students who are involved in the PoI process. School leaders and teachers work collectively with students and their parents to immediately interpret results and prescribe specific remediation and acceleration opportunities designed to effectively meet the needs of students. Analyzing diagnostic assessment results allows school leaders and teachers to determine student placement in various academic learning programs (e.g. Early Intervention Program, Title I Reading and/or Math, remedial programs, Special Education, and Gifted Education).

The system and school websites provide an opportunity to share student achievement results with parents. Links to the Georgia Department of Education and Governor's Office of Student Achievement are provided on the website, providing direct access to Adequate Yearly Progress reports. Additionally, parents are able to access student assessment results and classroom performance data via the parent portal provided through Infinite Campus. Parents also receive printed report cards and progress reports on a regular basis. Principals include a schedule for distributing grade reports in the student agenda. State assessment reports are sent to parents as they are received in the system along with information on how to interpret the results.

Performance data are shared with stakeholder groups during the annual community breakfast and through

presentations presented at local community organization meetings and events. The board members work with system- and school-level leaders to review program results and student achievement data at the annual spring board retreat. Most recent student performance data are presented to board members, and areas of concern based on the Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) are highlighted and discussed as part of the school improvement planning process. The superintendent facilitates quarterly Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) update meetings with all school leaders to review student achievement data to ensure all necessary resources are in place to aid the performance of all students.

In addition, each grade level and/or department uses disaggregated student achievement data to conduct a self-evaluation of their successes and areas needing improvement. Professional learning needs are stated and then shaped into a district plan. All system professional learning activities are linked directly to student performance goals. Each school has established a data room to post recent student performance results along with longitudinal data to assist teachers in identifying programmatic strengths and weaknesses.

A leadership retreat is facilitated by instructional services staff to study the data and revise professional learning and school improvement plans each year. Results from test data analysis by subgroup and domain level are used to determine specific areas in which training is needed. Based on disaggregation of the most recent student achievement results, training in the following areas has been or will be provided for all teachers: rigor, relevance, and relationships, using data to drive instruction, collaboration, curriculum mapping and vertical alignment, differentiated learning, increasing stakeholder involvement, and development and implementation of common, formative assessments.

The special education director works with administrators and teachers to ensure appropriate monitoring of students with disabilities. All special education teachers complete progress reports that are sent to parents quarterly to communicate student progress toward mastery of learning goals and objectives. Additionally, parents of students who are eligible for gifted education services receive a gifted program progress report at the end of each grading period. This ensures students and parents are aware of expectations and standards for student performance.

3. How are data used to understand and improve overall effectiveness of the school system and its schools?

The school improvement process is in place to ensure all administrators and instructional personnel use all data sources to maximize student achievement and organizational effectiveness. Instructional services staff conduct a summer leadership institute in which system and school leaders work collaboratively to disaggregate student achievement data by subgroup and domain level to determine instructional and curricular areas for improvement and to identify root causes and barriers to improving student performance. This process is replicated at the school level at the beginning of each school year.

The goal of this collaborative effort is to establish an understanding of student achievement data through the analysis of grade level, school, content, and domain performance results and to identify overall system and school strengths and weaknesses to guide an effective school improvement plan by employing the following strategies: K-12 vertical alignment and understanding of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; effective use of school level data as an ongoing monitoring and improvement tool; and effective use of classroom level data for teachers to understand how it should be used to guide program decisions and the use of daily instructional strategies and practices.

System and school leaders have devised a list of questions to guide teachers through the process of disaggregating student data to ensure efforts are focused on increasing student performance levels.

Guiding Questions for Administrators:

1. Why should we, as administrators, effectively analyze content data drilled down to individual subgroups and domain levels?
2. What role should administrators play in supporting teachers in the data analysis process?
3. How should classroom and school level data be used by teachers on a regular basis in an effort to improve teaching and learning?
4. What is our plan to provide ongoing opportunities (e.g. training and support) for teachers to collaboratively engage in conversations regarding the analysis of data?
5. In looking at our data, what are our points of pride (our strengths)? Points of concern (our weaknesses)?
6. How can we effectively use data to plan for effective and ongoing school improvement?

Guiding Questions for Grade Levels and Departments:

1. What should students know, and how should they be able to use what they know?
2. How well should students perform?
3. What will we do to assess student performance?
4. How well do students actually perform?
5. What will we do to improve student performance?

Guiding Questions for Individual Teacher Reflection:

1. What do I want my students to know and do?
2. Where are my students?
3. What evidence do I have to know that?
4. What do I plan to do about it?

As part of the data analysis process, administrators and teachers compare student achievement results on state-mandated assessments to schools within our regional area as well as to comparable schools as defined by the Georgia School Council Institute. Disaggregated data are used to identify trends and commonalities and differences in performance among students, within the school, and across the school system.

Teachers are able to participate in off-site visits to other high performing schools in order to gather information relevant to effective practices that might be useful in improving effectiveness within their respective grade levels and/or content areas. In addition, some teachers have recently conducted virtual tours of top performing schools to determine factors that might contribute to increased student achievement.

Student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement in teaching and learning. Results from diagnostic assessments and locally developed formative assessments (e.g. benchmarks, common assessments, teacher-developed probes) are used to determine levels of student proficiency and mastery of skills, evaluate instructional effectiveness, and identify interventions for addressing academic needs of individual students.

The Jefferson City School System assesses teachers' ability to differentiate instruction based on the diverse needs of their students in order to continuously improve student performance. System and school leaders plan for and provide ongoing professional development in this particular area. Results from surveys administered annually to teachers are used to determine effectiveness of professional learning opportunities and to identify areas where additional training might be needed. Additional data regarding teacher effectiveness is gathered through the use of the teacher evaluation instrument and standards-based walkthrough tool. Support is provided to teachers when necessary based on results from these observations.

In addition to a professional learning survey, teachers complete a technology survey in order to evaluate proficiency levels and interest in using technology to enhance teaching and learning. Results from this particular survey have been used to provide professional learning and purchase technology equipment. Results from stakeholder surveys are also used by system and school leaders to make program adjustments and formulate improvement plans that lead to increased organizational effectiveness.

All administrators have participated in a Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS) analysis visit to broaden their understanding of the components that are essential in developing and implementing a quality continuous school improvement process based on research-based, data-driven principles. In addition, three of the four schools have hosted an external review in an effort to assess the school's level of performance in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, planning and organization, student, family, and community support, professional learning, leadership, and school culture. Data from these external reviews have been used to make program adjustments as part of the process for improving overall organizational effectiveness.

System and school leaders have worked with teachers and other staff members from each of the schools to establish a Dragon PRIDE (Promoting Responsibility and Investing in Dragon Excellence) transition team as a result of feedback from postsecondary interviews with former students and results from informal student surveys. The purpose of the transition team is to promote a smooth transition between K-12 schools that supports students in their college and career readiness, align the advisement process so students, teachers, and parents understand the requirements for students as they select coursework, pathways, and postsecondary options, ensure all stakeholder understanding of the requirements of the BRIDGE Bill, design and implement career exploration activities for students in grades K-12, and explore and develop an individual student assessment plan to increase opportunities for student success.

4. How are staff members across the system and its schools trained to understand and use data to impact teaching and learning in the classroom?

Training on the effective use of data to impact teaching and learning begins with the system's leadership. Instructional services staff conduct a summer leadership institute in which system and school leaders disaggregate student achievement results to determine strengths and weaknesses by subgroups and domain levels. Disaggregated results are shared with stakeholders during the community breakfast, Annual Title I Parent Night, curriculum night, and school-level committee, parent-teacher organization, and school council meetings.

At the elementary level, a data coordinator is available to provide support to teachers in understanding and using progress monitoring and other student performance data to positively impact teaching and learning. The Director of Middle and Secondary Instruction provides onsite support and training on data analysis at the middle and high school level.

Monthly leadership meetings are held with principals, assistant principals, and instructional lead teachers to examine current student achievement data and determine areas of focus by grade level and content area. During these leadership meetings, instructional staff members work collaboratively with school leaders to understand data and how it impacts teaching and learning. Specific training has been provided on the use of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) so teachers know how to access and utilize past and current student performance data to guide instructional planning and delivery of content.

Data specialists from Northeast Georgia Regional Educational Agency (RESA) have worked with staff members from the University of Georgia Educational Technology Center (UGA ETC) to develop a model for measuring growth and trends using historical data. Northeast Georgia RESA and UGA ETC consultants provide ongoing training for system and school leaders to better understand how to use data to impact teaching and learning in the

classroom.

Teacher representatives have participated in the data teams training provided through Northeast Georgia RESA. In completing the self-assessment rubric, system and school leaders have recognized the need to send additional teachers to this particular training as well as implement a more cohesive system for data analysis across the four schools in order to maximize the benefits of using and understanding data to inform teaching and learning.

School leaders provide release time for teachers to work with grade level or department members to analyze data and use the results to improve instructional practices. Data teams have been established at each school to determine plans for increasing opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively to analyze student performance data. Professional learning communities are in place at each school for the purpose of allowing teachers to engage in professional discourse regarding best practices. Book studies and article reviews are conducted during grade level, department, curriculum, and leadership meetings. One area of focus has been on using student achievement results to improve teaching and learning.

Training is provided to teachers on the use of software programs and how to generate reports and use results to expand learning opportunities and tailor instruction based on individual learning needs.

Title II-A federal program funds and state professional learning funds are used to provide opportunities for administrators and teachers to participate in training related to the use of data to improve teaching and learning. Additional training opportunities need to be provided to help administrators and teachers drill down data to the individual classroom level. Additional resources are needed to enable administrators and teachers to engage in more efficient uses of managing student data in order to effectively understand and use results to improve teaching and learning in the classroom.

Overall Assessment:

Operational: The school system uses a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures that yield valid and reliable results. The assessment system is used to assess student performance on expectations for student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, and determine interventions to improve student performance. The assessment system yields timely and accurate information that is meaningful and useful to system/school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in understanding student performance, school and system effectiveness, and the results of improvement efforts.

Standard 5. Resource & Support Systems

STANDARD: The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that: enables students to achieve expectations for student learning, meets special needs, and complies with applicable regulations. The system employs and allocates staff well-qualified for their assignments. The system provides ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness. The system ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Indicators RubricGroup: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators RubricGroup:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: Human Resources. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes, decisions for district and school level IEP meetings

Appropriate space is provided for special need support programs

District staff can affirm that special needs students receive needed support

IEP: Individualized Education Plans

Personnel policies ensuring appropriate hiring practices

Personnel policies ensuring certification, licensure, evaluation, training

Professional learning opportunities

Program descriptions: Special Needs Populations

Schedules: District, School, Extra-Curricular; Transportation

Staff Handbooks

Staff schedules and assignments

Student Handbook

Other: New Employee Orientation (when applicable); Mentor/Protege Program for new teachers; Job vacancies posted on Teach Georgia and JCS Website (online applications available)

Other: Vision, Mission, Beliefs, and Performance Goals; School Improvement Plans/ Professional Learning Plans; Employee Benefits and Salary Schedule; Title II-A Equity Plan

5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience):

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Labor agreement

Personnel policies ensuring appropriate placement

Personnel policies ensuring certification, licensure, evaluation, training

Policies regarding NCLB highly qualified teachers

Professional learning opportunities

Staff can affirm that they are teaching in their major area of study

Staff Handbook

Staff schedules and assignments

Other: Title II-A Equity Plan; Highly Qualified Data for Teachers and Paraprofessionals (100%); Allotment Formula and Sheet; Certified/Classified Personnel Information (CPI) Report; Online Board Policy Manual (e-board)

5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Budget demonstrates appropriate allocation for PD

Calendar, agenda, summaries of PD opportunities

District monitoring of professional development implementation

District staff are actively engaged in discussions that have resulted from their professional development experience

District staff can affirm their involvement in professional learning opportunities

Personnel policies that stipulate PD requirements

Professional development plan

Staff are aware of the requirements for continuous learning

Staff implement effective strategies based on their professional development experience

Other: Board Member Training; ParaEducator/PDNow; Recertification Process - support from instructional services department; System and School Level Professional Learning Committees

Other: System and School Improvement Plans; Professional Learning Plans; Annual Professional Learning Report; Standards Assessment Inventory and Technology Survey Results; Leadership, grade level, and/or department meetings, and other system and school level committee meetings - agendas and minutes

5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Budget demonstrates appropriate allocation for staffing

Class size indicates appropriate and effective support of student learning

Master schedule

Personnel policies and practices

Policies regarding NCLB highly qualified teachers

Other: Allotment Sheet; SACS Requirements - number of personnel required; Certified/Classified Personnel Information (CPI) Report; Class Size Waiver; Title II-A Equity Plan; ETA Data and CAPS information provided by Georgia Professional Standards Commission

INDICATORS: Financial Resources. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.5 Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Annual budget - current, forecasted, fund-equity

Consolidated Application (federal)

Facilities plan - current, future

Facilities protection documentation: insurance, amortization

Fiscal policies: use of all funding, including donations, reserves, discretionary

Infrastructure plans: short and long range

Practices that support appropriate use of allocated funds

Purchasing/replacement policies: adherence to EEO

School-level budgets

Space is adequate and appropriate to support student learning

State and Federal program budgets for targeted support

Other: Board Retreat

Other: JCS Annual Budget; Federal Programs and State Grants Budgets; 5-Year Facilities Plan; 3-Year Technology Plan; Staff Allotment Sheets; CLIP and Plan Descriptors; Bond Referendum/ELOST PowerPoint presentation

5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Audit reports

Fiscal protection plans: insurance

Organizational oversight of fiscal authority

Payroll and purchasing policies and processes

Practices that support appropriate use of fiscal resources

Refund policies

Secure management of all fiscal processes

Other: Federal and State Audit Process; Internal Audits of School Accounts; Board Retreat

Other: Audit Reports; Cross-Functional Monitoring and Self-Assessment Reports - Federal Programs; Monthly financial reports provided at board meetings and administrators' meetings

INDICATORS: Physical Resources. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.7 Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

All district-wide facilities are properly maintained

Calendar of safety drills: fire, tornado, emergency crisis

Curriculum includes attention to cleanliness and safety

District staff are involved in developing and implementing safety policies

District support staff are knowledgeable about safety policies

District-wide environment is clean and safe

Facilities maintenance reports and plans

Policies and processes regarding safety

Policies and processes related to student/staff injury

Policies regarding dispensing prescription medications

Stakeholder survey data supporting safety

State and Federal regulations regarding special program safety requirements

Other: First Aid and CPR training; Child Restraint Training as outlined in state regulations and JCS Board Policy; AED training and equipment placed in all four schools and other locations in the system; Maintenance Director; Superintendent conducts monthly walkthroughs to monitor facilities; Department of Transportation, School Food Services, and custodial staff participate in ongoing risk management training provided by Georgia School Boards Association; Surveillance equipment in schools and buses; Evacuation drills conducted regularly (schools and buses); Current Bus Inventory - all guidelines and state inspection schedules are followed closely; Random Drug Testing and physical examinations required for all bus drivers

5.8 Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Crisis intervention plan

District staff and students are knowledgeable about emergency procedures

District staff are involved in the crisis intervention team

Emergency procedures

Health support staff are available

Secure record system

Staff Handbook

Student Handbook

Wellness policy

Other: Safety trainings held throughout the year; Evacuation Drills scheduled regularly; Coordination with local agencies (e.g. DFACS, Advantage Behavioral Health Systems)

Other: System and School Emergency/Safety Plans - updated annually and approved by Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and other state and local authorities; System Emergency Flipchart; Red Emergency Bags

5.9 Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Appropriate district staff affirm their knowledge of the plan for physical asset maintenance and replacement

Policies and procedures for maintaining and improving physical assets: site facilities, infrastructure, equipment, etc.

Other: Board members serve on a facilities committee that meets monthly with Superintendent; Maintenance and facilities updates at monthly board meetings; Maintenance Director - work order system; Superintendent conducts monthly facilities walkthroughs; Board Retreat; Routine bus inspections and safety checks

Other: Bond Referendum/ELOST presentation; Capital Projects Budget; Construction plans and budgets

5.10 Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District staff are knowledgeable about the short and long range plans for maintenance and replacement of technology infrastructure

Policies and procedures for maintaining and improving technology infrastructure: hardware and software

Policies and procedures regarding appropriate internet access

Stakeholders are knowledgeable about policies regarding appropriate internet access

Other: 21st Century Learning Committee; Partnership with University of Georgia Educational Technology Center; Wireless access points in schools; E-Rate Funding

Other: Bond Referendum/ELOST community presentations; Technology Audit conducted as part of the process to upgrade infrastructure and install enterprise wireless system to support Bring Your Own Technology initiative; 3-Year Technology Plan

INDICATORS: Support Systems. In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

5.11 Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Alternative Education Program

District monitors instruction for special needs inclusion

District provides guidelines for classroom instruction that demonstrates variety of instructional methodologies to support all students

District provides guidelines for Response To Intervention program and is demonstrated at classroom level

IEP: committee, minutes, calendar, agenda, sign-in sheets

Labor agreements demonstrating appropriate special needs staffing

Master schedules demonstrating support for special needs

Policies and procedures that are ADA and IDEA compliant

Policies regarding use of languages other than English for district communication

Professional development calendar and topics

Special Needs Department/Committee

Staff affirm their use of instructional strategies that support special needs inclusion

Stakeholder survey data supporting special needs programs

Stakeholders affirm their support for the district's special needs programs

Student referral policies and practices

Student referral process and procedures

Students and staff affirm their understanding of special needs populations

Teacher certification, licensure, etc. supporting special needs

Translated materials demonstrate communication to special needs population

Other: 2 full time nurses; health instruction at all levels of schooling (Discovery Health onling curriculum in grades 6-12); K-12 Physical Education; 3 1/2 counselors; background checks required for all employees; 1 full time school psychologist; Shared Services Contract - Northeast Georgia RESA; ESOL, gifted education, special education, Early Intervention Program, Title I services available to meet academic needs of students; Credit recovery; FIRE enrichment and remediation at the high school level; enrichment and remediation opportunities at the elementary and middle school levels; Pyramid of Interventions process; bus monitors; 2 way radio and surveillance system in school and on buses; bus driver training - conducted on a regular basis - classroom available for training in bus shop; student safety and evacuation training; random drug testing for bus drivers

5.12 Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Career Preparation Department/Committee

District staff are knowledgeable in all aspects of appropriate social/emotional support for student learning behavior

Enrollment data - current status, trends

Job Placement program

Master schedule indicates availability of career preparation

Professional development: calendar, topics

Stakeholders are supportive of community-based programs to support student engagement

Other: GaCollege411; School Messenger; Lindsay's Legacy and Helping Hands Mentoring Programs; College Visitations; Curriculum Night; Open House; Other Parent Involvement Activities and Training Sessions; Hospital/Homebound Services; Career Center at JHS; Parent Advisement Sessions

Other: Title I Coordination Plan; Dragon PRIDE Transition Plan - BRIDGE Bill Requirements; Newsletters, emails, brochures, website postings, and other publications

Focus Questions:

1. What is the school system's process for recruitment, induction, placement, development, evaluation, and retention of qualified professional and support staff across the system and its schools?

One of Jefferson City Schools' Board of Education goals is to have highly qualified personnel for all students.

Jefferson City Schools has maintained 100% highly qualified teachers for the past seven consecutive years. In addition, 100% of all paraprofessionals have been Hi-Q since 2005. Jefferson City Schools believes that all children should have an equitable opportunity to receive quality instruction. The system is committed to ensuring that the needs of all students are effectively identified and addressed.

Recruitment - Teacher recruitment is targeted and based on school system level needs. System- and school-level leaders meet in February to determine staffing needs for the upcoming year. When recruiting teachers, variables considered include grade level, maximum class size, subject matter, areas of endorsement (e.g. gifted, ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages, Advanced Placement, special education), level of experience and expertise, continuity, effectiveness based on student success, program changes, and growth. At the annual board retreat held in the spring, board members and system leaders review financial and budget information along with current and projected student enrollment and teacher allotment impact to determine staffing needs. Class size needs are determined through careful monitoring of student enrollment patterns and teacher employment and certifications.

In the past, Jefferson City Schools has hosted a local teacher recruitment fair in February. The hiring process in Jefferson City Schools has dramatically changed in the last few years. Due to limited needs, a local teacher recruitment fair has not been scheduled for the last two years; however, systems leaders have and will continue to participate in the University of Georgia’s Teacher Recruitment Fair.

Jefferson City Schools partner with local universities and colleges to place student teachers in classrooms throughout the system. This partnership allows the system to recruit qualified applicants by providing an opportunity for future teachers to become familiar with the operations of the school and system, and it allows school leaders to observe the potential candidates interacting with teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders. Several student teachers have been hired for teaching positions in the system as a result of their performance during practicum and student teaching assignments.

Job vacancies are posted internally on the website and in each building to allow for possible transfers. All certified positions are posted on the Teach Georgia website. Additionally, Jefferson City Schools has a link to the online application system on their website. This system allows candidates to browse available jobs and complete an application that can be accessed by principals. System and school leaders establish selection committees to conduct interviews. Recommendations are made to the superintendent after careful review of credentials. The superintendent makes the final personnel recommendations for Board approval. All employees must complete and pass a criminal background check prior to employment.

Recruitment of qualified professional and support staff across the system and its school tends to be less difficult in Jefferson City Schools than in some other systems because of the reputation of the schools among stakeholders. The small town, community atmosphere and geographic location of Jefferson attract many candidates from the larger surrounding school systems.

Jefferson City Schools has had a successful track record for employing highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. All staff members in Jefferson City Schools have had the opportunity to maintain their Highly-Qualified status by participating in many professional development opportunities that are imbedded in the school environment. Training opportunities are developed and delivered in the system during the workday and off contract time based on the needs expressed by staff and administrators and as evidenced by student data.

Induction – When applicable, new teachers participate in an orientation training session prior to preplanning where the vision, mission, and goals of the system are shared. Information regarding teacher quality, characteristics of an effective teacher, standards-based instruction is presented along with an overview of the instructional program and academic achievement results. Participants attend sessions at the school level to learn

various procedures and operations and receive training on how to use software programs designed to improve student performance. Business partners provide lunch for all new employees, allowing an opportunity for board members and system- and school- level leaders to meet and greet new staff members. New employees are able to meet individually with the financial director to review important information related to benefits and salary. During the last two years, the new teacher orientation has been held at individual schools due to the small number of new employees. New teachers are assigned mentors at the beginning of the year. Stipends are paid to mentor teachers who meet the time log requirements.

Placement – The instructional services office maintains and monitors all certification records for the district. Each January, all certification records are reviewed to determine certificate renewal needs. Communication goes out to all staff members and their administrators to explain the procedures for updating certification status. Principals are given a spreadsheet showing the teacher assignment and certification status. This update is given several times throughout the year to ensure no one is placed in a position without the proper certificate. In addition, the Certified/Classified Personnel Information (CPI) report is reviewed by building level administrators and instructional services staff to make sure that assignments match certificates.

Jefferson City Schools systematically monitors the Hi-Q assignment of teachers based on student demographics. All subjects, including core academic subjects, are taught by highly qualified teachers. There are no students taught by a non-Hi-Q teacher in Jefferson City Schools. No student is assigned to a teacher without the proper credentials.

A teacher must have at least a non-renewable certificate, and there have been very few of those. These staff members must provide a written statement indicating the timeline of when they will satisfy the requirement(s) for a clear renewable certificate. The instructional services office submits all necessary paperwork to Georgia Professional Standards Commission to make sure all records are up-to-date. The Title II-A consultant assigned to Jefferson City Schools and Georgia Professional Standards Commission specialists are contacted if there is a question about certification requirements.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, instructional services staff provide a certification list for all teachers and paraprofessionals. Teaching assignments are verified and cross referenced using the Certification/Curriculum Assignment Policies System (CAPS) program provided through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Principals carefully analyze Pyramid of Interventions progress monitoring results and other student achievement data to determine individual placement decisions of students and teachers. Jefferson City Schools proudly commits to providing educational opportunities that are tailored to individual student needs.

Teacher equity data is used in making placement decisions as well. Teacher assignments are made each year based on the needs of the students and the strengths of the staff. System leaders schedule and facilitate a meeting with the Title II-A area program specialist each year so school leaders are fully aware of how to access, evaluate, and monitor teacher experience equity data within their school and/or programs. In the event that inequities in teacher experience are identified, adjustments are made in teaching schedules and assignments.

At the elementary level, principals and other instructional support staff review individual student progress monitoring data and place students with a teacher who can effectively meet the diverse needs of individual students. At the middle and high school level, principals and support staff are committed to balancing across teams and in classes based on gender, ethnicity, academic ability, and socioeconomic status.

All principals strategically place teachers so that no grade level or department has more low-level experienced

teachers than another. There is a deliberate attempt to balance successful and experienced teachers in all four schools. New teachers within a grade level and department are paired with more experienced teachers in order to provide an opportunity for collaborative planning and instruction. This is accomplished by strategically optimizing EIP, remedial, gifted, and special education program models.

As part of the annual needs assessment and data analysis process, system- and school level administrators review teacher experience data to ensure equal access to experienced and effective teachers for all students. The student information system provides detailed enrollment history that is used to further monitor placement of individual students with experienced and effective teachers. As a result, all students in all schools and classrooms have teachers with equivalent teaching experience, regardless of the demographics of the students served.

The Jefferson City Schools' Board of Education conducts a study each spring to identify class size equity needs in the system. Each year, a growth projection is mapped out to determine where the staffing needs might be in each school. There is only one school at each grade level band. Each classroom meets class size average. Students are distributed evenly across each school. Jefferson City Schools works with the city planning office to determine where the growth will take place in the community.

Additionally, the Jefferson City School System Board of Education has a retreat each spring to review the needs assessment of the school district in order to set plans for the next year. One of the pieces of data reviewed is the class size as they roll up to the next year. Factors such as state class size limits, potential growth, and retention are considered. Staffing allocations are made after this annual study.

If there are inequities in staffing needs, staff are assigned or added to different teaching assignments to ensure that all students have equitable access to class sizes based on their grade level and teaching assignment. Jefferson City Schools includes class size in its annual needs assessment and has a written plan to ensure continued equity in class sizes for all students. Class sizes are comparable in all schools, regardless of the demographics of the students served.

Development – Jefferson City Schools has had a successful track record for employing highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. All staff members in Jefferson City Schools have had the opportunity to maintain their Hi-Q status by participating in many professional development opportunities that are imbedded in the school environment. Training opportunities are developed and delivered in the system during the workday and off contract time based on the needs expressed by staff and administrators and as evidenced by student data.

Paraprofessionals hired by Jefferson City Schools quite often come with college degrees. Support and encouragement are given to these individuals to return to college to get teaching certificates. This allows Jefferson City Schools to continue to have an above average paraprofessional staff with a potential source for future, quality teachers in the system.

Jefferson City Schools has a systematic process for identifying professional development needs. The professional development plan and timeline match the learning needs of students and the instructional needs of teachers. An annual survey is distributed to all administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals to determine professional learning needs. Student achievement results are utilized in developing school-level professional learning plans that are aligned to school improvement goals. School administrators and teachers work collaboratively to identify professional learning needs and the resources needed to improve instruction and student performance.

All schools conduct a summer institute before preplanning for all new teachers when applicable. The institute is tailored at each school to induct new teachers into the learning community in each building. School improvement plans, which include professional learning activities, are created in grade level teams at the elementary level and

departments at the middle and high school levels, which help teachers to focus on the instructional practices that target the Georgia Performance Standards in specific teaching areas.

Professional learning programs for Jefferson City Schools focus on the training needs of staff in areas linked to student performance. Areas include the implementation of standards-based instruction, strategies for dealing with hard to manage students, assessment strategies for understanding student learning (including the development and refinement of benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes), differentiated learning for students, reading and writing across the curriculum, mathematics content development at the high school, refinement and depth in understanding and delivering the Georgia Performance Standards and the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (to be implemented in Fall 2012), individualized online professional learning modules for paraprofessionals through the ParaEducator/PD Now program, professional learning communities, and technology use and integration.

Jefferson City Schools support the ongoing growth and development of staff members, as outlined in the vision and performance goals, by providing regularly scheduled onsite opportunities for training, release time during the school year, stipends during off-contract time, and allocation of funds from local, state, and federal programs to support system and school initiatives. Professional learning plans include an emphasis on teacher collaboration. Collaborative planning sessions are scheduled at the school level to enable grade level and/or content area teachers to review and revise curriculum maps, analyze student performance data, and develop instructional plans designed to improve student achievement.

Evaluation – Various evaluation tools and methods are used to determine teacher effectiveness. The Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program/Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument is used annually to evaluate all teachers. Principals schedule annual end of the year conferences with individual teachers, and student achievement data is used as part of the evaluation process. Student achievement data is analyzed by administrators annually at the July data analysis session.

Teachers work collaboratively by grade level and/or department to analyze data by subgroup and domain area to determine instructional and curricular strengths and weaknesses. Results from the data analysis are used to develop individual improvement plans, determine professional development needs, and establish goals for professional growth.

All administrators, with feedback from teachers, have worked to develop a standards-based walkthrough tool that is used on a regular basis by school- and system-level administrators to determine teacher effectiveness based on the components outlined on the tool (e.g. student engagement, differentiation, depth of knowledge, technology use and implementation).

System- and school-level administrators are committed to ensuring that all students receive quality instruction by effective teachers. Quarterly Adequate Yearly Progress update meetings are scheduled with the superintendent to discuss any inequities in teacher effectiveness. Specific plans are developed to address any identified inequities. Standards-based walkthrough observations are conducted on a regular basis to identify any inequities in teacher effectiveness. Efforts are made to provide teachers with collaboration time during the school day to ensure that equity exists across and within grade levels and departments.

Teachers' formative and summative assessment data is carefully monitored throughout the year to determine teacher effectiveness in ensuring that all students are progressing. Standard progress monitoring tools and common assessments provide data for analyzing student growth. Teacher ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners can be analyzed through individual student progress.

Retention – Teacher retention is considered a priority for Jefferson City Schools. Several strategies are utilized to

retain teachers. Jefferson City Schools provides teacher professional learning opportunities to support teacher efficacy and student achievement. Local, state, and federal program funds are used to provide teachers opportunities for professional development and growth.

When teachers teach new courses that require additional certifications, Title II-A federal program funds are utilized for teacher training and GACE registration fees. In addition, these funds are used to provide paraprofessionals with access to the ParaEducator/PD Now Network. This on-line learning opportunity is able to be differentiated for individual needs of paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals are involved in all school based professional learning and school improvement initiatives.

Additionally, Jefferson City Schools regularly reevaluates and obtains feedback with regards to system benefits. During 2009-2010, the system participated in a bid and review process to improve employee benefits. An improved benefits plan became available to all system employees.

The system's leadership supports a strong mentoring system. School leaders provide a mentor for new teachers and establish a structure to support collaboration between mentor teachers and protégés. Endorsements and additional certifications are supported through Title II-A funding and monitored as a part of the teacher experience and equity data.

Jefferson City Schools has developed a great sense of pride in offering quality educational programs and experiences to all students. A commitment to excellence and willingness to invest in personnel and programs needed to be a high performing system provides an attraction for employment and increased retention rate.

2. How does the leadership ensure that the allocation of financial resources is supportive of the school system's vision, programs, services, and its plans for continuous improvement?

Each school develops a school improvement plan annually. The plan outlines the professional development strategies needed to address system and school goals. The system's vision and mission serve as the basis for all aspects of continuous improvement. School level plans are used to formulate a system level improvement plan (Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan) that is submitted to the Georgia Department of Education annually. The CLIP includes system goals as well as strategies, resources, and measures of evaluation. The consolidated grant application process ensures Jefferson City Schools is in compliance with all federal, state, and local requirements.

The process of continuous improvement and annual review of program effectiveness ensures maximum resources are generated and allocated in an efficient and effective manner and lead to improved student performance. The budget process is closely aligned to the system vision, mission, values, and beliefs. As outlined in the Jefferson City Schools Performance Goals, the board members and system leaders are committed to generating and managing resources that support a quality instructional program.

The budget process begins in February for the upcoming school year with the review of last year's budget, analysis of personnel information (e.g. benefits, salaries), examination of program effectiveness, resources, and equipment. Assessments are made based on action plans, legislative changes, state and federal requirements, and system and school commitments and goals. Staffing analysis is prepared based on projected student enrollment and instructional needs, determined by reviewing and analyzing financial reports, budget information, teacher allotment and projected enrollment figures, and student achievement data. Budgetary information is presented at the annual spring board retreat in preparation for future planning.

As part of the school improvement planning process, various stakeholders collaborate to identify available federal, state, local, and other financial resources as a measure to ensure all resources are allocated, coordinated, budgeted, distributed, and used to support improved academic outcomes. Budget updates are presented to stakeholders

during school-level committee, leadership, parent-teacher organization, and school council meetings.

Careful and sustained fiscal management is aligned with the continuous improvement process. Consequently, human, financial, technological, physical, and material resources are allocated and distributed to support improved academic outcomes. Jefferson City Schools utilize and manage resources in an efficient and effective manner.

The Board of Education and system leadership are committed to employing principles of sound financial management through careful budgetary analysis and planning. Jefferson City Schools has maintained fiscal discipline and stewardship in light of the recent economic decline through income generated by a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), federal, state, and local funds. The system has maintained a fund equity balance of \$2.5 million, 14% of the \$18 million total budget.

Checks and balances are in place to ensure proper implementation of budgetary processes and procedures and to eliminate fraudulent practices and errors in record keeping. The system has a set of administrative procedures for reporting fraudulent activities that are provided to each school principal and Title I school coordinators at the beginning of the year. The financial director attends monthly administrators' meetings to review procedures and provide updated financial reports to ensure accuracy of records. Additionally, monthly financial reports are provided at board meetings and posted on the website and e-board for stakeholder review.

Jefferson City Schools has developed a set of procedures for the completion of purchase orders to ensure items or services purchased are pre-approved by appropriate administrators, financial director, and superintendent. Consistent with state regulations, all purchases exceeding \$100,000.00 require multiple bids and must be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Board of Education. Announcements for bids are posted on the system website. This process ensures that tax dollars are spent prudently.

The system-level Title I director works with the financial director to review and monitor all expenditure requests to ensure that they are aligned to the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) and that Title I, Part A funds are used only to supplement or increase non-Federal sources used for the education of participating children and not to supplant funds from non-Federal sources.

Procedures for purchasing materials, equipment, and other resources have been established, and proper steps are taken to ensure that Jefferson City Schools is in compliance with the supplement, not supplant requirement. The system-level Title I director and financial director maintain records of all purchase orders and school budgets/expenditure reports.

Annually, the financial director meets with individual principals and program directors to review school improvement goals and obtain requests for equipment, supplies, technology, textbooks, and student services as part of the budget development process. The superintendent meets with the financial director to review requests and finalize a tentative budget to present to the board members for consideration and public review for 30 days prior to board approval. Final budgets are not approved until the system receives the state allotment sheets. All federal program budgets (e.g. CTAE, Title I, Title II-A) are presented to the Board of Education for review and approval.

A financial audit of Jefferson City Schools is conducted on an annual basis by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts (DOAA). The Board chairman, superintendent, and financial director attend the exit interview with the auditors. The Board of Education is presented a copy of the financial audit report at the end of the review. In addition, the financial director meets with school-level bookkeepers on a monthly basis to conduct an internal financial review of school activity accounts.

Budget reports and financial updates are presented at the annual community breakfast and Leadership Jackson

session as part of the process for ensuring appropriate communication with stakeholders and accountability among system leaders with regards to the allocation of resources and alignment to the school system's vision, programs, services, and plans for continuous improvement.

The recent budget reductions have limited the resources available to the district. As a result, the Board of Education, system- and school-level leaders, and staff members exercise caution to ensure financial resources are directly linked to goals and initiatives outlined in school improvement plans.

3. How does the school system ensure, support, and monitor the provision of resource and support services that meet the needs of all students?

The Jefferson City School System believes that part of creating “fully functioning adults” is to support the academic, physical, emotional, and social development of individual students. Jefferson City Schools work to ensure, support, and monitor the provision of resource and support services that meet the needs of students.

Multiple resources and services are used to ensure all students receive a quality education. The following system performance goals established by the Board of Education members and system leaders outline the commitment to providing necessary resources to meet student needs:

- To maintain and upgrade facilities to meet the challenging instructional needs of students and staff and accommodate current and anticipated growth.
- To generate and manage resources that support a quality instructional program.

Physical Resources

Facilities – In accordance with state laws and regulations, the Jefferson City School System maintains a five-year facilities plan under the direction and guidance of the Georgia Department of Education Facilities Division. The superintendent and maintenance staff members work directly with the area field representative from the Georgia Department of Education to ensure the records regarding facilities and site improvements are accurate, current, and meet eligibility requirements for state funding. The five-year facilities plan is scheduled to be reviewed and updated during spring 2012.

The superintendent oversees the construction of new facilities, additions to existing facilities, modifications to sites and buildings, and acquisition of new sites for construction purposes. To ensure compliance with applicable state standards and regulations, all construction projects are submitted to the Georgia Department of Education Facilities Division.

Representatives from the Board of Education and the Director of Maintenance serve on a facilities committee facilitated by the Superintendent. Monthly meetings are held to review facilities and maintenance projects. Update reports are provided at each board meeting. Board meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the system's website.

A work order system has been implemented to allow the maintenance staff and system leaders to monitor and manage maintenance requests. This process ensures that work requests are addressed in a timely and effective manner. The Superintendent conducts monthly walkthroughs at each individual school site.

Local and state authorities regularly inspect existing facilities, sites, and equipment, including inspections related to fire safety, health, food service, and transportation. New construction and modifications to existing sites and

buildings are planned and designed by professional architects and engineers and approved by the Board of Education. Designers are required to meet all applicable building codes and submit all project plans and specifications to appropriate governing authorities.

The following construction projects have been completed within the last five years: addition to Jefferson Middle School instructional wings, construction of Jefferson Academy (grades 3-5), renovation of Jefferson High School media center, and construction of the William Duncan Martin Memorial Performing Arts Center.

Jefferson Elementary and High Schools currently have only 2 classrooms vacant for growth. Jefferson Elementary School was constructed in 1957, and no renovations have been made to the existing kitchen facility. Additionally, the Jefferson High School kitchen was constructed in 1962 with no modifications. The annex building, formerly used as the middle school facility and to house 5th grade students during the construction of Jefferson Academy, is located on the high school campus and serves as an instructional facility for high school students and teachers. The Georgia Department of Education has designated the status of this facility as “phased out”. The existing high school gymnasium was constructed in 1950. Due to the age and condition of these facilities and deflated interest rates and construction costs, the Board of Education initiated the Bond and ELOST referendum proposal.

The Superintendent facilitated several meetings with teachers, parents, community members, and business partners to discuss the Bond and ELOST referendum proposal and construction projects to be completed and how each would be funded. New construction projects, to begin in December 2011, include a new Jefferson High School Gymnasium, Jefferson High School classroom addition, Jefferson Elementary School classroom addition, and Jefferson Elementary School kitchen and cafeteria. These construction projects will be funded as a result of the Bond Issuance and Educational Local Option Sales Tax (ELOST) renewal, which was passed in March 2011.

Bond funding will be used for the elementary school classroom addition (12 new and 3 renovated classrooms) and new kitchen and cafeteria, 18 additional high school classrooms and new kitchen, and the high school gymnasium. ELOST funds will be used to make bond payments, purchase technology and instructional resources, and renovate/modify existing facilities.

Projects completed within the last five years and proposed projects for the future confirm the effectiveness of the system’s facility planning and organization. The Board of Education has approved projects to significantly improve and expand existing facilities and the construction of new buildings, which supports the goal of maintaining and upgrading facilities to meet the challenging instructional needs of students and staff and accommodate current and anticipated growth.

The system operates four schools and a central office. The state of the art facilities reflects the emphasis the Board of Education and system’s leadership places on providing a challenging, rigorous and relevant curriculum in a safe and orderly environment. Jefferson Elementary School serves students in Pre-Kindergarten through 2nd grade, Jefferson Academy serves students in grades 3 through 5, Jefferson Middle School serves students in grades 6 through 8, and Jefferson High School serves students in grades 9-12. In November 2011, the central office was relocated to a facility off-site, which is the first time in the history of the Jefferson City School System that central office personnel have been housed off campus.

School Safety

All facilities, sites, services, and equipment are in order to provide a safe, orderly, healthy environment for students and staff. The Board of Education and system- and school-level leaders acknowledge that a safe, orderly environment is essential to providing quality educational services to all students in order to help them become fully functioning adults. The system has a plan in place to inspect each facility on a regular basis to ensure safety and compliance with state and federal regulations.

As mentioned previously, the superintendent conducts monthly walkthroughs in each of the schools and provides updated information regarding school safety and energy efficiency at monthly administrators' meetings. Local and state authorities regularly inspect existing facilities, sites, and equipment, including inspections related to fire safety, health, food service, and transportation. Each of the four schools has established a written security and crisis management plan, which includes procedures for conducting fire and other safety drills. The principals conduct monthly practice drills with all students to ensure everyone is aware of procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

The Jefferson City Schools Emergency Operations Plan has been developed to help school administrators in compiling their school's emergency operations plans in accordance with school safety laws as outlined in Georgia, O.C.G.A 20-2-11851. School safety and security is an area that everyone takes seriously, and procedures are in place to ensure we are continuously examining ways to improve the safety of our children, our peers, and our community.

It is the goal of Jefferson City Schools to institute proactive measures to stop or reduce any and all dangerous or unsafe measures affecting our schools today. The system- and school-leaders work collaboratively to establish and implement proactive procedures to address safety issues before an incident happens, rather than reactive steps after the fact.

In developing the school emergency plans, system and school leaders worked with various school security and public safety officials, both locally and statewide, to ensure that our students can come to school in a safe, nurturing environment, where we can provide them with the educational tools and learning processes to give them their best opportunity of success. Representatives from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and other local agencies have reviewed the system's plan and observed practice drill exercises in order to provide feedback to system and school leaders regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the procedures and processes outlined in the emergency operations plan.

State Board Policy EBB, Emergency Preparedness Plan and Senate Bill 74 requires that personnel and students in every public school in Georgia be aware of the hazards which threaten their lives and safety, and be prepared to take appropriate action in the event of an imminent or actual disaster. Training is provided to all staff members and practice opportunities exist on a regularly basis to ensure school personnel is fully aware of their roles in working with local emergency responders, parents, students, teachers, community leaders, and other local agencies when planning for or responding to local emergency crises or disasters.

The Jefferson City Schools Board of Education has developed a comprehensive program to be used as a guideline in the event of emergencies. The system protocol is used by every school. A copy of the written plan is kept in the superintendent's office, each principal's office, and other applicable departments (i.e. transportation), and outside agencies where necessary.

A flip chart has been created to serve as a condensed version of the school emergency plan. Copies of the flip chart are distributed to all staff members. Flip charts are posted in each teacher's classroom, and all teachers are assigned a red emergency bag with supplies and materials that might be needed during an evacuation. All clerical staff and nurses have assigned roles and responsibilities to assume during an emergency. School nurses have prepared an emergency kit to be used during an evacuation that includes copies of student medical forms and medical supplies. Additionally, each school secretary has assembled a file box with student rosters and contact information in the event that records cannot be accessed online.

Infinite Campus, the student information system, is web-based and allows appropriate school personnel to access student records from any computer with internet connection. School Messenger, the automated phone calling

system, can also be programmed to notify students, parents, teachers, and other community members of important information and updates regarding emergency situations. Each school has an emergency call list in the event of inclement weather. The Board of Education recently approved the purchase and installation of a state-of-the-art surveillance system on school buses.

The safety of students and staff is a primary responsibility of the school staff and system-wide personnel. The emergency/crisis procedures are implemented to save lives, prevent injuries, safeguard school property, promote fast and effective reactions, and to restore conditions back to normal in the event of an imminent or actual disaster, or on-site emergencies during instruction, non-instructional, and field trip events.

Each school has a safety team whose members are provided training in CPR/First Aid as well as appropriate student restraint procedures based on principles from the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). The Board of Education has adopted a policy relative to seclusion and restraint procedures in compliance with State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1.35. Additional board policies have been adopted to address student safety and discipline. Each principal includes a student code of conduct and list of disciplinary procedures in the student handbook that is distributed to all students annually. All board policies are reviewed by the system's attorneys, Harben, Hartley, and Hawkins, prior to board approval.

Administrative and professional school personnel have the specific task of preparing and implementing an emergency preparedness/crisis plan for each school site. A well thought out and rehearsed disaster plan is an excellent start in raising the consciousness of students, school personnel, and system personnel to the reality of life-threatening hazards, while training them in lifesaving techniques.

Technology

The mission of Jefferson City Schools is to graduate fully functioning adults by providing a quality educational program designed to assist students in becoming responsible, productive citizens who are able to adapt to the ever-changing global society. The staff at JCS assists students, parents, community members, and other stakeholders in accessing, analyzing, and preparing information in order to promote critical thinking and problem solving.

The goal is to provide the teachers and students with the most innovative instructional materials, equipment, sustained support, and training necessary to develop global awareness and the necessary skills to compete in the world marketplace. The instructional technology staff at Jefferson City Schools and other experts facilitate technology related opportunities to improve student achievement and productivity.

The vision of technology use was developed by teachers, instructional technology support personnel, administrators, and other stakeholders and approved by the Jefferson City School System Board of Education. The mission statement of the Jefferson City Schools Technology Plan is "to ensure that all students and teachers will have access to and use technology as a tool for learning, communication, and collaboration."

Technology provides the tools, supports the tools, and is the tool to create or change information. The purpose of education is to deliver instruction. The vision for technology use is to focus on the classroom and on all areas that support student learning.

The Jefferson City School System employs an instructional technology specialist and an assistant to provide support services throughout the system and its schools. The Technology Support Specialist provides communication support and data back-up for email, student information, business, and internet services. Additional support is provided with circuit camera and network security. Network firewall and content fiber are in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (CIPA) regulations and aligned to the school system's Acceptable Use Policy (JCS Board Policy IFBG).

The Board of Education is committed to providing faculty, staff, and students with exceptional facilities and access to technology in order to remain competitive in today's rapidly changing educational environment. A 21st Century Learning committee, comprised of teachers, technology support staff, media specialists, school- and system-level administrators, and UGA ETC staff, has been established to examine components of 21st century learning environments and to determine essential technology standards for students, technology training needs for teachers, and development of a plan for replacing and procuring new technologies in the system. Technology standards for students are based on the 2007 ISTE Nets.

As part of the school improvement planning process, a technology needs assessment survey was distributed to all teachers in spring 2011 to determine levels of technology use in the classroom and professional development needs. The system's leadership has developed a partnership with the University of Georgia's Educational Technology Center (UGA ETC) to examine options for implementing additional technologies and professional development necessary to enhance teaching and learning.

Instructional, administrative, and parent/community uses of technology are designed to support improved student achievement. The system's vision for technology use includes the desire to implement the following:

- In the classroom, teachers and other support staff will use technology to support instruction. Teachers will use technology to refine their diagnostic capacity through testing, benchmarking, and pinpointing the exact areas of student strengths and weaknesses. Technology will be a part of the instructional tool kit as teachers identify supportive software programs, provide opportunities for students to create and demonstrate research skills using the internet, and technology will continue to be used as a teaching tool to explain complex concepts and ideas (e.g. interactive whiteboards, document cameras, student response systems).
- Administrative uses of technology will include ways to provide more efficient and accurate student information and record keeping. This information will provide support for teachers as they research the capabilities of students (e.g., Individual Educational Plans, home information, test score history, attendance issues, etc.) In addition, more accurate information will allow schools to give accurate reporting data to the Georgia Department of Education and other entities requiring our information. Record keeping will continue to become more refined as we use technology for direct deposit, paying bills, sending reports, and conducting paperless board meetings.
- Parent/community uses of technology will increase as we add the "parent to school" link to our website. This will allow students, parents, and teachers immediate information exchange regarding daily achievement, attendance, course registrations, and other concerns, which might impact student success. The district webpage will continue to become more advanced in an effort to provide even more information to the community. Information that will inform potential Jefferson City Schools' families will be included. The webpage will become more interactive as we grow and expand our capabilities. The paperless BOE meetings that are in place now allow the community to keep track of the monthly Board of Education meetings, the system goals and performance objectives, and the actions that take place each month.

The Board of Education has made a considerable investment in technology for its students and staff. The current up-to-date, student networked, modern, computer inventory is the following ratio: 3:1. The board members and system- and school-level leaders are committed to increasing access to technology for teachers and students.

Updated information is presented at the annual board of education retreat to ensure that proper steps are being taken to continue to explore options for increased accessibility to technology as a way to improve teaching and learning. Information regarding technology plans and purchases are communicated with stakeholders at school-level committee, parent-teacher, leadership, and school council meetings as well as during the community

breakfast and other local organizational meetings.

The board members and local system and school administrators have developed a partnership with the University of Georgia Educational Technology Center staff to determine effective uses of technology and to provide ongoing, job-embedded professional learning opportunities for teachers.

The UGA ETC director and his staff completed a technology infrastructure audit in spring 2011 and presented results at the annual board retreat. In addition, interviews with various stakeholder groups were conducted as a means for compiling a list of recommendations to serve as a guide for future technology planning and implementation.

UGA ETC staff members organized a technology showcase for board members, administrators, and teachers as an effective means for introducing new technologies and determining which equipment should be procured for improving teaching and learning. The vision is for all students to use technology to support learning and to develop the ability to use technology for communication now and in the future.

Access, training, and support are vital to the successful integration of instructional technology. Hence, the vision of technology use for Jefferson City Schools includes all three components. This systematic approach to technology implementation will enable students to incorporate the use of text materials, software, and online resources when completing classroom assignments. The integration of technology will equip students with knowledge and skills necessary to make effective decisions regarding the completion of an assignment or mastery of a particular standard.

The goal of technology implementation is for teachers to have expanded opportunities to use computers, visual presenters, projectors, and other technology equipment to enhance the delivery of instructional lessons. The use of technology supports differentiation of instruction by allowing students to complete assignments using a variety of methods through the use of technology. Additionally, the use of technology provides students the opportunities to collaboratively produce high quality work that can be shared with a worldwide community of learners via the internet. Instructional content for some high school students is delivered through a virtual, online format (e.g. e2020, Georgia Virtual High School).

Teachers participate in ongoing professional development so that they can immediately introduce emerging technologies into the classroom. Administrators utilize web-based software to organize, disaggregate, and analyze student information so that data-driven decisions can be made regarding student performance.

Administrative applications are installed and supported at the district level. These applications are available to all schools and include student information management, food services, personnel information, employee attendance and applications, district finances, and purchasing.

All teachers and administrators access web-based data through a high speed data connection. Schools connect through a DS3 line. School personnel are provided web-based programs to access information about professional learning units and training opportunities.

The student information system used in Jefferson City Schools is Infinite Campus. For security purposes, Infinite Campus is hosted on a separate server in our network. Data is uploaded regularly as a backup. Infinite Campus is a widely used student information system and user-friendly for clerical staff and administrators. All teachers in grades 3-12 maintain an electronic grade book through Infinite Campus. Student demographics and schedules are exported by school registrars and counselors to populate the grade book.

Special education teachers use components of Infinite Campus to manage data on special education students and

electronically generate and document required paperwork such as Individual Educational Plans as well as parent contacts. The use of the new student information system to manage special education data has allowed for greater data access and integration.

In order to become successful, fully functioning adults in the 21st century, all students need to acquire and apply a wide variety of technological skills. Technology is used to provide stimulating and authentic learning that is connected to the real world. Jefferson City Schools believes that the proficient use of technology supports the development of lifelong learning skills, including flexibility, critical thinking, collaboration, self-reliance, and problem solving.

To ensure that students are provided with quality opportunities to develop technology skills and expand their knowledge base, specific technology instruction is provided in the elementary grades in order to expand students' abilities and skills in the areas of keyboarding and research. In the middle and high schools, additional opportunities are provided during regular instruction and elective/connections courses for students to use a variety of technology equipment to enhance learning.

Jefferson Elementary School integrates technology with project-based learning during a literacy period. Many Jefferson Academy students participate in an enrichment period in which technology is used to create and display student work at a Night at the Museum event held in the spring. Jefferson Middle School provides opportunities for students who are enrolled in the gifted education program to participate in a project-based course during Connections. In addition, the board members approved the hiring of a computer applications teacher so additional students could have increased access to technology during the Connections block. At the high school level, students are provided an opportunity to complete coursework through online learning (e.g. e2020, Georgia Virtual High School, Moodle).

The use of technology in the classroom is evident, but variable throughout the system. Overall, teachers in Jefferson City Schools have access to a varied selection of technology. Almost all teachers throughout the system have LCD projectors and a computer; however, other technology such as interactive whiteboards and student response devices is much more limited. Most teachers at Jefferson Elementary School and Jefferson Academy have document cameras. Student response systems are provided to teachers who submit a proposal and participate in professional learning on the use of the technology device to support teaching and learning.

All schools in the system are completely networked together with fiber. Network drops are present in all classrooms, computer labs, media centers, offices, conference rooms, auditoriums, cafeterias, and other instructional areas. Classrooms have internet access along with data and video capabilities through the local area network. All of the schools' networks are maintained by the technology department and internet connectivity is through AT&T.

All schools are equipped with server-based Mandarin media software which provides students and teachers easy access to information about all resources available through the library media centers. The middle and high schools are also linked to GALILEO (Georgia Library Learning Online) which provides access to over 100 databases for access to newspapers, magazines, reference sources, and government publications. The media specialist at each school provides support for instructional use of resources.

Jefferson City Schools utilizes e-mail, websites, and newsletters to promote better communication between schools, staff, parents and community members. JCS has taken measures to accommodate parents with limited English skills by providing documents in Spanish as well as English. An automated phone calling system allows schools and district administrators to relay school event notices and emergency information in English and in Spanish. In addition, each of the four schools communicates with parents and community members through a variety of means as outlined in Standard Six – Stakeholder Communication and Relationships.

Jefferson City Schools utilize the following data sources to collect valuable data for informed technology planning decisions:

School improvement grade-level and departmental action plans

- Identifies instructional goals and needs
- Identifies instructional basis for technology requests
- Identifies technology support and professional development needs

Action Plan Review at year-end to analyze success/needs-improvement of goals and planning

Annual technology literacy assessment for all 8th grade students through the Online Assessment System (e.g., 21st Century Skills Assessment)

Ongoing analysis of equality of technology resources among schools (technology inventory sheet completed by media specialists and updated regularly)

Analysis of technology resources and the impact on student achievement

Annual JCS Needs Assessment Survey (board of education members, administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students) used to determine the quantity and content of technology professional development

Annual review of the Georgia Department of Education consolidated grant application content descriptors and implementation plans

Consultation with UGA ETC and Northeast Georgia RESA consultants

Consultation with Virtucom network consultants

Annual Georgia Educational Technology Consortium for media specialists, technology personnel, and administrators

Infrastructure audit and teacher interviews conducted by UGA ETC

Professional learning opportunities (conferences, workshops, job-embedded sessions, GaDOE Elluminate sessions, UGA ETC, and RESA)

Annual technology budget which identifies:

- Capital purchases, training, and support expenditures (e.g., ELOST/SPLOST, CTAE capital equipment grant, E-Rate, Department of Defense free hardware distribution)
- New and alternative funding sources

Annual software/technology utilization report that monitors school use of technology equipment

Annual technology inventory submitted to the Georgia Department of Education which includes:

- Definition of “modern computer specifications” which leads to replacement of dated equipment

- Ratio of student to computers to ensure adequate technology access in all school settings

In reviewing data sources including departmental/grade-level school action plans, needs-assessment surveys, and school and state-level technology inventories and through the SACS self-assessment process, Jefferson City Schools has determined the following target areas for technology access improvement and integration:

Establish equality in technology access among the schools

- Increase presentation tools at middle and high school (document readers, Inter-write pads, and projectors)
- Update average age of machine at each school
- Middle and high schools need more access to curriculum software programs to provide remediation and enrichment opportunities for students
- Explore options for providing additional lab access for elementary and academy students

Provide training for new technologies and software programs

- Elementary and Academy teachers have access to numerous software programs but need more training for more effective instructional integration
- Middle and High school teachers need training as new presentation technologies become available

Improve data access and analysis

- Need program to integrate various data sources (i.e., standardized test scores, benchmarks, and progress monitoring)
- Expand the capabilities of Infinite Campus to allow for more options for organizing student data
- Use of the Longitudinal Data System to identify students' strengths and weaknesses
- Need software support for data disaggregation
- Need professional development in data analysis and utilization

Provide additional technology personnel to provide onsite professional learning and support teachers in technology use and integration

Upgrade existing technology infrastructure to include enterprise wireless and enhanced network features to support bring your own technology device

Regular and consistent technology planning occurs through collaboration between the Jefferson City School System technology department and system-level professional development, curriculum, media, Title I, special education, and ELL personnel. Regular meetings allow stakeholders to develop successful strategies to insure that all stakeholders have input into a system-level technology plan.

Funding for technology equipment, software, and training comes from a variety of sources including the general fund, Title I, Title III, IDEA, local school fundraisers, and SPLOST/BOND. Using best practices research, curriculum standards, technology plan documentation, and recommendations from the technology department members, school personnel make decisions about system-level equipment purchasing that will positively impact student achievement.

All K-12 teachers and administrators are committed to providing increased opportunities for students to develop technology literacy skills as they progress through school by integrating technology into instructional lessons and activities. JCS is committed to using technology as a tool to increase student achievement and to prepare all students to be globally, competitive, fully-functioning adults as they exit Jefferson City Schools.

Support Systems

The foundation for support services in Jefferson City Schools is based on strong school to community relationships and a commitment to continuous school improvement. The philosophical framework for student support services is based on the system's mission, vision, and core beliefs. The Jefferson City School System employs qualified professionals who are trained to work with faculty and staff and students and their families to ensure emotional, cultural, social, and health needs are addressed in support of increased student achievement.

Health Services

Jefferson City Schools employs one registered nurse and one licensed practical nurse who are shared among the four schools. The nurses primarily attend to the needs of students. However, they are also available to provide assistance during emergency situations involving staff members. School nurses provide preventative health services to facilitate students' optimal physical, mental, emotional and social growth and development. Nurses assist health teachers and other staff members in delivering instruction on sex education and other health-related issues. Both nurses serve on the school level safety teams and assist with CPR/First Aid training and training on the use of the Automated External Defibrillators (AED), which are located in each of the schools and other pertinent locations throughout the system.

In addition, the nurses educate staff members on health impairments that may hinder learning and conduct hearing and vision and other mandated health screenings on a regular basis. During student registration, the nurses work with administrators to provide necessary forms for obtaining important health information and monitor status of immunizations for students in conjunction with state requirements. Examples of other job assignments include the following: administer daily medications to students, serve as a liaison between school and home regarding health and wellness and the impact on student performance, manage and treat students with diabetes through blood sugar tests, carbohydrate counts, and insulin administration, assess children based on medical complaints, assist counselors and administrators in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, and promote a healthy school environment by teaching good hand-washing skills and other healthy habits.

Counseling Services

Due to recent budget reductions, the number of school counselors employed by Jefferson City Schools has decreased. There is only one full-time counselor shared by Jefferson Elementary School and Jefferson Academy, one full-time counselor at the middle school, and one full-time and one part-time counselor at the high school.

School counselors work in collaboration with other staff members to implement a comprehensive guidance program in all schools. Counseling services include but are not limited to delivering instructional lessons through classroom guidance, supporting students and parents with academic and career planning and guidance, and facilitating small group sessions based on identified student needs. Counselors collaborate with school leaders on the development and implementation of the master schedule and are responsible for student schedules, printing report cards and progress reports, and assisting teachers with scheduling parent conferences. School counselors play a large role in the Pyramid of Interventions process and serve as an invaluable resource in developing strategies and interventions that lead to improved student outcomes.

The counseling staff members work administrators and teachers to provide resources and materials used in creating successful learning environments for all students. Counselors assist with standardized testing procedures as well as implementing school-wide programs to improve student performance. The counselors organize new student orientation sessions and serve as a liaison between the school and community agencies to identify resources and coordinate services in addressing the needs of students and their families.

School counselors serve on the various advisory boards, including school level leadership and PRIDE transition committees, Lindsay's Legacy Mentoring Program, Family Connection, and Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS). In addition, school counselors organize school-level student recognition programs, character education activities, and community-based events (e.g. Dragon Desserts, Kindness Counts, 3-D, Student Incentive, and Character Education Programs, Celebrate Student Success, Career Fairs, Ag Day, Honors Day).

Jefferson City Schools believe that effective school systems provide a range of developmental, preventative, and supportive services that increase opportunities for all students to achieve maximum levels of success. More and more students are faced with challenges such as poverty, family issues, emotional distress, language barriers, and cultural differences that impede learning and hinder academic and behavioral success. It takes collaborative effort through parent involvement and utilization of community resources to effectively address these challenges and provide learning experiences that enable students to overcome these barriers.

School Nutrition Services

The Jefferson City School System employs 25 school food service staff members and 1 full-time director. The school food service staff members take pride in their products and services by offering a variety of nutritional meals at breakfast and lunch. Each school has a manager who, under the supervision of the system director, coordinates daily food preparation and service.

The system's free and reduced lunch rate is 35%. Parents of students who need financial assistance for meals are provided federal applications to complete so students may be provided daily nutritional meals. If needed, the Director of School Food Services assists parents in completing the application.

The system's Wellness Policy serves as a guide to staff, students, and parents by promoting a healthy lifestyle and healthy choices. The school food services staff members serve an important role in supporting improved student performance by encouraging healthy eating habits and providing nutritious meals in a pleasant and inviting setting.

The Director of School Food Services attends monthly board meetings and administrators' meetings to provide updates relative to the school food services program. Additional responsibilities include processing all free and reduced lunch applications in accordance with federal regulations, reviewing monthly state reports to monitor each school's meal participation counts and financial status, providing technical assistance and training for school food service personnel, and conducting regular onsite reviews at each school to ensure all sanitation, production, and quality control procedures are being followed.

The system director works with appropriate authorities to develop procedures and employee training to ensure that food is prepared and served in a sanitary and safe environment according to state health regulations. Safety training is also provided using Georgia's School Boards Association Risk Management modules to increase safety awareness and reduce the risk of work-related injury.

In addition, the school food services director implements a cost-effective procurement system in conjunction with the Georgia Educational Cooperative Purchasing Group, develops purchasing guidelines to ensure purchased food and supplies reflect product quality, customer preferences, and district needs, and establishes standards for receiving, storing, and inventorying food and non-food supplies based on sound principles of management.

Other duties and responsibilities include the following:

- Develops monthly breakfast and lunch menus aligned to federal nutritional standards

- Assesses customer preferences, industry trends, and current research to plan menus that encourage meal participation
 - Holds “taste testing” and discussion groups with students for potential new menu items for taste acceptability and preferences
 - Interviews and recommends to the Board of Education all school nutrition personnel
 - Conducts annual training for all school nutrition employees to update program information, new procedures, nutritional guidelines, and other job-specific duties
 - Conducts orientation classes for all newly hired school nutrition employees
 - Assists with designing and planning facilities that ensure high quality food production, efficient workflow, and customer satisfaction
 - Determines equipment needs at each school
- Acquires new equipment, when budget allows, by following proper procurement procedures
 - Implements management information systems that increase the productivity and efficiency of the school nutrition operation
 - Trains staff to use computer technology in individual school sites to improve management techniques
 - Plans nutrition themes and activities throughout the school year to promote good nutritional habits for students and to promote the cafeteria as a laboratory for learning about good nutrition

Transportation Services

Jefferson City Schools employs one full-time transportation director, one administrative assistant, one shop supervisor, and sixteen bus drivers. The transportation director is responsible for the system’s transportation needs. Safety is the first priority for the transportation department. All transportation personnel participate in ongoing training to ensure all drivers are implementing safety procedures and following all federal and state guidelines. In addition, bus drivers are required to have annual physicals and participate in random drug testing.

All bus drivers must hold proper licenses and must successfully complete and pass criminal background checks prior to being recommended to and approved by the Board of Education. The transportation director, administrative assistant, and shop supervisor all hold a current Commercial Driver’s License, which enables them to drive routes in the absence of a regular bus driver.

The system maintains an inventory of 23 buses. State inspections are conducted on a regular basis to ensure all buses are operating safely and in compliance with federal and state regulations. The transportation director is responsible for establishing and monitoring bus routes.

Representatives from the transportation department attend student registration sessions held annually at each school in July to provide important information regarding transportation procedures and routes to parents.

The Director of Transportation attends monthly board meetings and provides updated reports regarding maintenance, bus routes, and financial records. In addition, the transportation director attends monthly administrators’ meetings in order to provide important information that directly linked to student performance. The Superintendent meets with the Director of Transportation on an ongoing basis to review reports reflecting transportation mileage and fuel costs.

During preplanning, the Director of Transportation schedules a meeting for all bus drivers to review safety guidelines and procedures. System and school leaders attend this session and provide information relative to school policies and plans. This meeting sets the stage for beginning a new school year and building strong working relationships between transportation personnel and system and school leaders. Bus drivers play an important role in providing quality educational experiences to all students.

Special Learning Needs

Jefferson City Schools provides comprehensive services for students who need specialized instruction. Remedial services are provided to eligible students during the school day through the Early Intervention Program (grades K-5), Title I program (grades 3-8), and remedial language arts and math support classes (grades 9-12). Eligibility for services is based on multiple criteria, including teacher recommendation, performance on state-mandated assessments, and class averages.

Jefferson City Schools have worked diligently to develop and implement a Pyramid of Interventions process (PoI) aligned to federal and state guidelines which provides a conceptual framework for addressing the diverse academic and behavioral needs of students. The process includes the administration of a universal screener and progress monitoring on a regular basis to determine academic strengths and weaknesses. Interventions and strategies are designed based on individual student needs. Results from diagnostic assessments are used to guide teaching and learning. Parents attend regularly scheduled meetings to review student progress toward academic and/or behavioral goals.

Special education services are provided to eligible students. The inclusion model is utilized throughout the system to ensure all students are provided quality educational services. Special education teachers and paraprofessionals are placed in regular education classrooms to provide specific support to students based on goals and strategies identified in Individual Education Program plans (IEP). All federal and state guidelines are closely followed in providing instructional programs to students with disabilities. Students with moderate, severe/profound disabilities are provided support services through self-contained classrooms with a highly qualified teacher and paraprofessional. Students with more severe disabilities receive educational services at Rutland Academy through a cooperative agreement with Northeast Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA).

The system employs one full-time special education director to provide oversight for the special education program. The Director of Special Education works with one full-time school psychologist, 2.75 speech language pathologists, 20 special education teachers, and 31 paraprofessionals to provide special education programs and related services to students with disabilities. These services focus on enhancing student achievement and post-secondary outcomes through the implementation of various activities for students, families, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders.

The school psychologist serves all four schools and conducts comprehensive evaluations and develops eligibility reports for students who are considered for special education services, including gifted education. The school psychologist works directly with the special education director to ensure proper identification and placement of students with disabilities and those eligible for gifted services. All state and federal guidelines are followed relative to evaluations, eligibility requirements, meetings, and notification.

The school psychologist plays a large role in the Pyramid of Interventions process by collecting and interpreting student evaluation data, communicating results to parents during PoI meetings, and working directly with teachers to develop and implement effective, research-based instructional strategies and behavior intervention plans designed to increase student performance.

Special education staff members participate in ongoing professional development including but not limited to curriculum access and alignment, least restrictive environment, positive behavior supports, and transition. The Director of Special Education provides technical assistance to schools to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations for special education, collect and analyze data on educational services and outcomes, provide guidance and oversight of the budgets for state and federal special education funds, and coordinate dispute resolution requirements as required by state and federal guidelines.

Hospital/Homebound Services are provided for students with medical needs and who are not able to attend a regular school setting for a designated period of time. Students eligible for these services receive instruction from a certified teacher which provides continuity in educational services.

The Jefferson City School System works with multiple agencies (e.g. Piedmont Migrant Education Agency, DFACS, Jackson County Family Connections, Department of Juvenile Justice, Jackson County Chamber of Commerce) to ensure coordination efforts on behalf of migrant students, homeless students, immigrant students, English Learners, neglected and delinquent students, at-risk students, and early childhood students. The system has procedures in place to ensure proper identification and monitoring of these students including home language surveys, McKinney-Vento form, and occupational survey.

Among the educational services offered to these students are regular education programs, Early Intervention Program services, Title I and other remedial education services, gifted services, special education services, ESOL services, after school tutoring at all grade levels, and mentoring and counseling services. Teachers report academic achievement to the specific parties and parents on an ongoing basis.

Extra- and Co-Curricular Activities

Students enrolled in Jefferson City Schools are provided multiple opportunities to explore their talents and interests through extra- and co-curricular activities. The Jefferson City School System has a great deal of pride not only in the academic areas but also in their athletics and arts programs.

The Board of Education has committed to providing a K-12 music program by employing one full-time music teacher at each of the elementary schools, a part-time chorus teacher and full-time band teacher at the middle school, and a part-time chorus teacher and one full-time band teacher at the high school. There are plans to expand the chorus position to full time at the middle and high school as enrollment in the program increases. The William Duncan Martin Memorial Performing Arts Center is a state-of-the-art facility that is used by the school and community for rehearsals and performances.

Additionally, Jefferson City Schools provides art instruction to students in grades K-12. The system employs one full-time drama teacher at the high school level, which has increased opportunities for students to participate in the one act play and other drama competitions and performances. The drama instructor and music personnel recognize the importance of integrating components of the various arts programs in order to provide outstanding services to students.

Off-site learning experiences and foreign exchange programs provide opportunities for students to engage in unique educational activities outside of the regular classroom environment. These include the Tybee Island trip for 4th grade students, Washington, D.C. trip for 5th grade students, Andersonville trip for 8th grade students, Scotland Exchange Program and World War II trip for high school students.

Students at the elementary level are able to participate in Math Olympiad, 4-H program, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts. At the middle school, students participate in band, chorus, Stock Market Exchange, academic bowl, Future Farmers of America (FFA), Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), baseball, cheerleading, football, softball, soccer, volley ball, track and field, cross country, wrestling, golf, and basketball. Activities at the high school level include band, chorus, drama, literary and academic clubs, academic bowl, student council, Future Farmers of America (FFA), Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), JROTC, cross country, softball, football, cheerleading, football, basketball, soccer, volley ball, track and field, golf, and tennis.

Overall Assessment:

Highly Functional: The school system effectively uses human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve and exceed expectations for student learning, to meet special needs of all students, and to comply with applicable regulations. The system systematically employs and allocates staff members who are well qualified for their assignments in all content areas. The system provides and fully supports ongoing, job-embedded learning opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness, including both professional and support staff. The system ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Standard 6. Stakeholder Communications & Relationships

STANDARD: The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

Impact Statement: Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it has the understanding, commitment, and support of stakeholders. System and school personnel seek opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts.

Indicators RubricGroup: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators RubricGroup:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Agendas, minutes, calendar of parent meetings

Calendar of events that promote stakeholder involvement

District staff affirm that stakeholders are involved in many aspects of district events, activities, decisions

Internship/partnership agreements with community-based business and agencies

Parents and community members regularly volunteer time in district

Policies regarding suggestions, grievances

Stakeholder survey data

Stakeholders affirm that they are involved in many aspects of district events, activities, decisions

Other: Curriculum Night; Open House; Title I Annual Parent Meeting; English Learner Parent Night; Other Parent Involvement Activities and Training Sessions; Lindsay's Legacy and Helping Hands Mentoring Programs; Parent volunteers in schools on a regular basis; Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson; Partners in Education Workshop

Other: PTO/PATS, school council, and other school-level committee meetings - agendas and minutes; Board of Education meetings - agendas and minutes

6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Calendars, agendas, minutes of parent meetings

District Improvement Committee: agendas, minutes, membership

Emails, phone answering system

Newsletters, brochures, letters, memos

Parent - Teacher conferences schedule

Policies regarding formal inclusion of stakeholder involvement

Stakeholders affirm they have variety of opportunities to be formally involved in life of district

Steering Committee meetings: agendas, minutes, membership

Web page dedicated to parents/community members

Wide variety of stakeholder communication documents/avenues

Other: Parent Involvement and other training sessions (e.g. Homework Help, Test Prep Strategies, Brainy Breakfast, Lunch and Learn); Infinite Campus Parent Portal; School Messenger; Parent-Teacher Conferences; School Councils

Other: Student Handbooks; System and School Websites; Newsletters, emails, brochures, and other publications; Progress reports and report cards; PTO/PATS, school council, and other school-level committee meetings - agendas and minutes; School to Home Correspondence (e.g. teacher notes, phone calls, emails) - contact logs in Infinite Campus; local newspaper; Board of Education meetings - agendas and minutes

6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Advisory Committees

Calendar, agendas, minutes, committee membership

Policies regarding volunteer involvement

Schedule of volunteer activities

Stakeholders affirm that their suggestions and recommendations are acted upon

Stakeholders affirm that they are actively involved in providing expertise

Other: Leadership Jackson; Parent meetings and training sessions; Teacher Collaboration; Board Retreat; Community Breakfast; Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee; Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education Advisory Committees; School Councils

Other: Articulation agreements with Lanier Technical College and other postsecondary institutions; PTO/PATS, SACS, and other school-level committee meetings - agendas and minutes

6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Brochures, pamphlets

Newsletters about student performance

Online calendar, schedule, and news/updates

Parent -teacher conferences: calendar, procedures, participation data

Parent versions of Curriculum Pacing Guides

Parents and students are informed and involved in developing individualized learning plans for students

Parents and students are informed and involved in making course selections

Regularly published newsletters to community

Stakeholders affirm that they are knowledgeable about student learning

Student Handbook

Other: Curriculum night and other parent involvement activities; Parent-Teacher Conferences; Parent Advisement Sessions; School Councils; Board Retreat; Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson

Other: System and School Websites; Newsletters, emails, brochures, and other publications; PTO/PATS, SACS, and other school-level committee meetings - agendas and minutes; Board Meetings - agendas and minutes; Title I Parent Involvement Plans

6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders:*Highly Functional*Evidence Provided:

Parent -teacher conferences: calendar, procedures, participation data

Policies regarding reporting schedule

Report cards

Other: Parent Meetings; School Councils; Infinite Campus Parent Portal; Community Breakfast; Leadership Jackson; Board Retreat; Pyramid of Interventions process

Other: System and School Websites; School newsletters; AYP Reports and System/School Report Cards; Board Meetings - agendas and minutes; Vision, Mission, Beliefs, and Performance Goals; Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP); School Improvement Plans; Data Rooms; PRIDE School Improvement Cycle

Focus Questions:***1. How does the school system's leadership ensure that the system and its schools are responsive to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction?***

The citizenry of Jefferson and its Board of Education enthusiastically pursue the mantle of excellence in all programs and scholastic offerings. The system and school leadership recognize the importance of community involvement in the establishment of programs of excellence. The Jefferson City School System subscribes to the belief that while it is important to be an advocate for quality in public education, it is more important to serve as an example.

The Jefferson City School System has a rich history of community support and involvement. From academics to athletics, JCS partners with community stakeholders to support student achievement. School board members and system- and school-level leaders are committed to increasing opportunities to involve parents, community members, and business leaders in helping achieve the mission of graduating fully functioning adults. The system's leadership understands the importance of building strong relationships with community members in order to maximize learning opportunities for all students.

Traditionally, Jefferson City Schools have experienced strong levels of support from the community. System leaders consider the strong level of support as one factor for continued success within the academics, athletics, and arts programs. The residents of Jefferson take great pride in the Jefferson City School System and have high expectations for academic achievement and stakeholder satisfaction.

An excellent example of the true spirit of cooperation within the community and school environment dates back to 1972 when Mr. Morris Bryan, Jr. presented a proposal on behalf of Jefferson High School and the City of Jefferson to the Georgia High School Association requesting that track and field championships for all five school size classifications be held at the same time at one location. It was guaranteed that recognition of excellence of effort and accomplishments would be effectively done. The proposal was accepted. Cooperatively, it has worked beautifully. Many new records are set every year and All-American performances are becoming more numerous.

Over 200 volunteers from Jefferson City Schools and the Jefferson community work this annual event. In

addition, the City of Jefferson presents awards over and beyond those that are provided by the Georgia High School Association, including the Morris M. Bryan Memorial Trophy, which is presented to the athlete for the most outstanding performance over all sessions and classifications of Georgia Olympics.

The community of Jefferson enjoys sponsoring the meet because it knows the expensive effort benefits young people. This annual community event exemplifies only one example of TRADITION that makes the Jefferson community and system what it is today.

A large number of community members are graduates of Jefferson City Schools. One point of pride for the Jefferson City School System is the fact that many graduates come back to live in the community and/or work in the schools. The Superintendent and Board of Education members proudly support the hiring of individuals who are products of the Jefferson City School System. The reputation of the school system has attracted new families into the community as well as those in surrounding counties who attend as non-resident or out-of-district students.

School and system leaders consistently engage community members, business partners, parents, and other stakeholders in the overall process of school improvement planning. Parents, business partners, and other community members are encouraged to serve on school-level committees, which meet on a regular basis to review programs and develop plans for improvement. Parent representatives, business partners, and other community members actively serve on school councils and other advisory councils (e.g. Career, Technical, and Agricultural Advisory Board, Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, SACS Committees, Lanier Technical College Partnership). These organizational structures and processes ensure that all stakeholders play an active role in school governance, decision-making, and problem-solving.

Feedback is solicited from various groups of stakeholders through the use of surveys and participation in advisory council meetings. Surveys are distributed to parents on an annual basis as part of the Title I federal program requirements. Results from surveys are used to make program adjustments and improvements. In evaluating current processes and procedures for distribution and completion of perception surveys, the system has recognized a need to establish more uniform and consistent procedures among the four schools with regards to completion of perception surveys as an effective way to gather feedback from various stakeholder groups.

Parents are invited to an annual meeting held in the summer to review and revise the school improvement plans, professional learning plans, parent involvement plans, and other instructional program plans. Additionally, parents are provided multiple opportunities throughout the school year to provide feedback and comments regarding effectiveness of programs. School administrators schedule multiple events, including PTO/PATS meetings, curriculum nights, open house, and other activities at the school level to encourage students, families, and community members to serve an active role in school governance and decision-making processes.

Regularly scheduled events and activities ensure a representative sample of stakeholders are involved in improving programs and processes and providing input that leads to positive changes in school operations, organizational performance, and student achievement. Participation in parent-teacher conferences encourages an exchange of information that is critical to improving students' performance by allowing parents to offer suggestions to enhance their child's performance in the school setting and teachers to present information that parents can use to help support increased academic success.

Participation and involvement at monthly meetings enables system- and school-level leaders to increase collaboration and communication among students, parents, teachers, and community members. School improvement goals and other issues related to increasing student achievement become the topic of discussion and ensure all stakeholders are working collaboratively to monitor progress toward goals and to achieve the mission and vision of Jefferson City Schools.

Jefferson City Schools are committed to fostering effective communication and relationships with and among its stakeholders through various activities in support of increased student performance. During preplanning, the system hosts an annual community breakfast, which provides an opportunity for community members, business partners, representatives from local educational agencies, and JCS staff members to partner in kicking off the start of a new school year.

At this event, the Board of Education chairman presents an annual report of the system's progress, highlighting accomplishments within the academics, athletics, and arts programs, and provides information regarding budget and finance and future construction and facility projects.

In addition, the Superintendent provides an overview of system programs, activities, and accomplishments at an annual Leadership Jackson session. Participants include members from the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce and local business leaders.

Parents, community members, and business leaders partner with system- and school-level leaders in providing quality academic, emotional, and social support to students through the Lindsay's Legacy and Helping Hands programs. Financial and human resources are provided through collaboration with Partners in Education. Relationships with community members and business partners are essential in addressing the needs of students.

Schools are fortunate to have parents and other community members serve on a regular basis as guest speakers, volunteers in the classrooms, chaperones on field trips, substitute teachers, and mentors and advisors to students, teachers, and leaders. Community members are involved in service opportunities designed to recognize the needs and accomplishments of students and teachers.

Local businesses work jointly with the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce to provide school supplies to those students in need at the beginning of each year. The school counselors have a strong working relationship with local agencies in the community to provide assistance to needy families during the holiday season.

Additionally, the counselors and administrators work closely with the Department of Family and Children Services and other agencies to coordinate services for those students and families who need additional academic, social, and emotional support throughout the year, including the most recent development of a program that provides children with food during the weekends. Representatives from the schools and outside agencies recognize the importance of meeting the basic needs of students in maximizing student performance.

The system employs two visiting teachers who work with administrators and teachers on an ongoing basis to monitor student attendance. System- and school-level leaders serve on the Jackson County Attendance Review Board, comprised of representatives from local law enforcement, judicial system, and other agencies, to identify community resources needed for providing assistance to students and their families in an effort to reduce absenteeism and increase student learning.

System- and school-level leaders recognize that reciprocal relationships are vital to accomplishing the vision and mission established by the community stakeholders. Jefferson City Schools serve as an invaluable community resource by offering its facilities, personnel, and resources to satisfy community needs. The system partners with the Jefferson City Recreation Department to provide facilities for athletic practices and competitions. The strong relationship between the Jefferson City School System and Jefferson City Council enables the system to benefit from using the Jefferson Civic Center and other facilities for off-site events, such as dances, banquets, and activities sponsored by athletic booster clubs and other organizations. Additionally, the Jefferson City Community Theatre partners with the school system to use the performing arts facility for various performances throughout the year.

The leadership of Jefferson City Schools evaluates, makes, and executes a plan for school improvement based on the following snapshot of evidence: stakeholder surveys, school council input, school committees with stakeholder involvement, parent-teacher organizations, booster clubs, Partners in Education, parent informational sessions, open house and curriculum nights, school newsletters, School Messenger text messaging and call system, and system and school websites.

Jefferson City Schools are committed to ensuring the system and its schools are responsive to community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction. The system- and school-level leaders are committed to increasing stakeholder involvement and satisfaction, which is evident in the system and school commitments and goals. The system's leadership consistently examines current levels and participation and involvement and strives to increase opportunities to obtain and respond to feedback from parents, business leaders, and community members as part of the overall continuous process of school improvement. Increasing stakeholder involvement is included as a target area in the Title II-A Equity Plan because the system- and school-level leaders are never satisfied with current levels of performance.

All stakeholders continuously strive for improvements that lead to increased academic success for all students. The community members and system employees take PRIDE in providing quality opportunities for the students who enter the doors of Jefferson City Schools.

2. What avenues are used to communicate information to stakeholders about the effectiveness of the school system and its schools, including the sharing of student performance results?

Jefferson City Schools use multiple forms of communication to provide information to stakeholders about the effectiveness of the school system and its schools, including the sharing of student performance results. The system recognizes the importance of ongoing, meaningful, two-way communication between school and community as part of its delivery of quality educational services to students. Regular communication enables the system's leadership and its stakeholders to collaboratively achieve the goals outlined in the school improvement plans.

School level newsletters containing information relative to upcoming school events and student performance results are disseminated to students and parents on a regular basis. At the elementary level, teachers send home weekly folders with student performance results and announcements regarding upcoming events. At the middle school level, teachers at each grade level send weekly emails listing assignments and important dates and events to parents who wish to receive electronic communication. At the high school level, course syllabi, listing important information about course content, assignment due dates, and teacher expectations, are distributed to students and posted on the school website at the beginning of each semester.

Student agendas are distributed at the beginning of each year and serve as an effective daily communication tool for students, parents, and teachers. Furthermore, schools use brochures and flyers as other forms of communication with students, parents, community members, and other stakeholders.

Principals send home letters on a regular basis as an additional means of communication. Important announcements and dates are listed on the school marquees. Each school has a broadcast system where school events and information are shared with students on a regular basis.

Important information regarding school policies and procedures is shared with parents at open house, curriculum night, Family Reading Night, Family Science Night, Night at the Museum, parent-teacher conferences, PRIDE transition meetings, and parent advisement sessions.

The use of technology in the school system helps facilitate effective communication among stakeholders. The system hosts a website, www.jeffcityschools.org, with a link to each school's site, which serves as a regular

method of communication for students, parents, and other community members. The system and school websites are widely used to provide important information regarding curriculum and instruction, upcoming events, important reminders, helpful resources, board policies and procedures, and other information relative to system and school operations. The system is currently in the process of updating the system and school websites to provide a more user friendly approach to navigating and accessing information.

All system employees have Jefferson City Schools email accounts. During summer 2011, email accounts were transferred to Google mail to provide enhancements and expand capabilities within the communication system. The Google mail system has increased access to and storage of information as well as enhanced opportunities for teacher collaboration. Administrators and teachers can now access documents from locations outside the school setting.

The calendar feature within the email system enables administrators and teachers throughout the system to coordinate schedules to avoid conflicts with meetings, activities, and other events, which is helpful to those parents who have children in more than one school. Parents can access a calendar of events through the email system or via the website.

System-wide communication is easily facilitated through email. Parents are able to make direct contact with teachers, tremendously increasing the number of parent to teacher contacts over the last several years.

Infinite Campus, a web-based student information system, was implemented during the 2009-2010 school year based on feedback from parents and other stakeholders regarding the desire to have greater access to student information. The use of this system has increased access to information and has improved the efficiency in managing student data. It also has provided real time information for parents regarding their children's academic progress through the parent portal. Parents have immediate access to students' grades, attendance, discipline records, and important announcements from basically any location at any time.

Infinite Campus provides an effective and efficient way for schools to increase communication with parents and others. The system's leadership is cognizant of the fact that some families may not have access to technology; therefore, printed copies of progress reports and report cards are sent home on a regular basis in weekly folders or student agendas.

School messenger, an automatic phone messaging system, functions as another tool for communicating with students, parents, and community members. The notification platform is effectively used by school-level administrators to connect with parents, students, and staff members through voicemail, email, or text messaging. The communication system enables all stakeholders to receive alerts and notifications in a timely manner and can be programmed to send information to small or whole groups of individuals.

Beginning in July 2011, the system has worked with the University of Georgia Educational Technology Center to provide training to interested teachers on the use of Moodle as a learning management system. Teachers are able to submit a proposal to participate in professional development and receive onsite support in developing content to include on the Moodle site.

The use of a learning management system has enhanced communication between teachers and students. Students and parents are able to access course content and assignments via the internet. Teachers are able to create online learning sites, which provides more relevant learning opportunities aligned to 21st century learning goals and initiatives.

The system's leadership recognizes the importance of preparing students to compete globally in society and is

committed to expanding opportunities for teachers and students to engage more in technology-based teaching and learning. Providing additional opportunities in the future for teachers to use technology as an effective tool for communicating with students, teachers, and other stakeholders will help the system more effectively achieve the mission and vision of graduating fully functioning adults.

All central office administrators collaborate with school administrators and all other stakeholders, including teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, business partners, Jefferson Foundation advisory board members, school volunteers, school council members, school-level parent-teacher organization members, Jefferson City Schools' Board of Education members, and Jefferson Booster Club members to accomplish an annual needs assessment, prioritization of needs, and action planning that addresses all equity components in planning. Collaboration includes completing surveys, reviewing survey results, prioritizing needs, identifying resources, creating implementation plans, and establishing an assessment for effectiveness.

This process of collaboration begins in the spring with an annual board retreat in which all Board of Education members and system- and school-level leaders review progress toward student achievement goals, determine resources needed for program improvements as part of the budget review process, and identify areas of strength and weakness in order to set goals for the upcoming year.

A number of forums for stakeholder input exists throughout the system, including but not limited to school councils, parent-teacher organizations, school-level leadership teams, Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Education committee, Career, Technical, and Agricultural Advisory Board, Jefferson City Schools Foundation, school-level committees, partnerships with community organizations and agencies, and Partners in Education.

Parents who have students enrolled in the Title I program are invited to attend a public meeting in the summer to review and revise the school improvement plans, plan descriptors, professional learning plans, targeted assistance plans, and parent involvement plans. An ELL Parent Night is scheduled two times each year and serves as an effective communication tool between the schools and the parents of students who have limited English proficiency. This event allows the schools to partner with outside community agencies to provide resources for students and their families in an effort to increase student performance.

System-level leaders sustain the vision, mission, and school improvement efforts by providing guidance, offering support, and allocating resources to school-level leaders and staff members. The Superintendent communicates with other system- and school-level leaders during monthly administrators' meetings. All system- and school-level leaders, including instructional services staff, transportation director, technology director, school food services director, principals, and assistant principals, attend monthly board meetings, which enables all leaders to stay informed and apprised of policies, procedures, and plans of action. All system- and school-level leaders are responsible for distributing information discussed at these meetings to their department and staff members.

Additionally, the instructional services staff, including the Associate Superintendent, Special Education Director, and Director of Middle and Secondary Education, conduct monthly leadership meetings with principals, assistant principals, and instructional lead teachers as an additional means of communicating information regarding curriculum and instruction, standardized testing, professional learning, and other initiatives aligned to the school improvement plans.

The agendas for these meetings provide the framework for regularly scheduled school-level meetings, such as committee meetings, leadership team meetings, PTO/PATS meetings, advisory councils, community coffee and breakfast events, open house, and curriculum nights, in which information is disseminated and discussed with parents, community members, and other stakeholders.

School-level administrators communicate regularly with staff members through the use of weekly memos

provided electronically through the email system. In addition, teachers and administrators are able to house documents related to curriculum and instruction, minutes from Pyramid of Interventions meetings and grade level/department meetings, and student performance data on a shared drive, which increases efficiency and effectiveness within the operation of the school.

Through leadership and school council meetings, principals are able to work with staff members and other stakeholders to foster a sense of community and cooperation, promote a positive climate, and develop a shared understanding of purpose that drives the work of the school. Principals seek input and provide opportunities for shared decision-making and problem-solving to ensure accountability and achievement of school improvement goals.

Data rooms are set up in each school in an effort to communicate student achievement results with faculty and staff members. Grade level and department meetings are frequently held in the data rooms to encourage the use of data to identify areas of strength and weakness, determine progress toward goals, and establish new school improvement targets.

Postsecondary interviews are scheduled and conducted with graduates of Jefferson High School at the end of each school year. Feedback from the interviews is shared with administrators and teachers and used to make adjustments in the instructional program.

Information regarding student performance is communicated by the teacher, school, district, and state to all stakeholders. The Board of Education chairman presents an overview of programs offered at Jefferson City Schools, provides budget and financial information, discusses new construction and facilities projects, and reviews student performance results and accomplishments from the previous school year during an annual community breakfast.

The Superintendent participates in an annual event, Leadership Jackson, which brings together community members, business leaders, and educational leaders to discuss trends and issues in education and highlights and accomplishments within the academics, athletics, and arts programs. During this event, student representatives from the high school participate in a panel discussion or present a snapshot of their experiences throughout their school career.

Adequate Yearly Progress and student achievement data is included in both presentations, which allows the system leadership to share results with various stakeholder groups.

Monthly board meetings provide another opportunity for information regarding student achievement data to be shared with stakeholders. The Associate Superintendent prepares an instructional program report, which includes federal and state program updates, technology updates, and most recent test results. Board meeting minutes and agendas are posted on the system's website and available through e-board. Local news media representatives attend monthly board meetings and provide information in the local newspaper regarding school improvement initiatives, academic, athletic, and arts events, and student performance.

Jefferson City Schools publicizes information about the system in the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce magazine. A fact sheet including demographics, program overview, and student performance data is available and used at teacher recruitment fairs and other community events. System-level leaders attend monthly Education Committee meetings at the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, which provides an additional opportunity for communicating important information about the system and its schools with business partners and other community leaders.

Student success is celebrated at various school-level events including Kindness Counts luncheons, Dragon

Desserts, Chick-fil-A Character Education ceremonies, and 3-D and Incentive Award activities. Parents and community members are invited to attend in celebration of students' academic and social accomplishments.

Jefferson City Schools takes great pride in the quality of the instructional staff and programs. Student learning and achievement are valued by the school and community. Communication is the key to ensuring all students reach their maximum potential. Although the system has multiple means of communication in place, system- and school-level leaders continue to examine alternate ways of providing information to students, parents, and community members.

Overall Assessment:

Highly Functional: The school system has the understanding, commitment, and support of all stakeholders. System and school personnel actively promote and provide regular, systematic opportunities for collaboration and shared leadership among all stakeholders to help students learn and advance improvement efforts and can demonstrate a high level of meaningful participation by most stakeholder groups.

Standard 7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement

STANDARD: The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance.

Impact Statement: A system is successful in meeting this standard when it implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the system with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are sustained and the system and its schools demonstrate progress in improving student performance. New improvement efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through analysis of student performance, system effectiveness, and assessment of the improvement process.

Indicators RubricGroup: Please indicate the degree to which the noted practices/processes are in place in the school system. The responses to the rubric should help the school system identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement as well as guide and inform the school system's responses to the focus questions.

Indicators Evidence: For each Indicator, click the (Add Evidence) link to provide examples of evidence that support the rubric response.

Definitions of Indicators RubricGroup:

Not Evident	Little or no evidence exists
Emerging	Evidence indicates early or preliminary stages of implementation of practice
Operational	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are actively implemented
Highly Functional	Evidence indicates practices and procedures are fully integrated and effectively and consistently implemented

INDICATORS: In fulfillment of this standard, the system:

7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results):
Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Continuous Improvement Plan - district and individual schools

District staff affirm their involvement in a specific program that supports continuous improvement

District staff affirm their involvement in continuous improvement committees

Graduation and retention rates

Information/Data system

Postsecondary engagement: employment, college

Professional Development Plan: agenda, topics

Specific program initiatives to support continuous improvement

Stakeholder survey (satisfaction) data

State/Federal Accountability Plan

Other: Community Breakfast; Board Retreat; Leadership Jackson; Pyramid of Interventions process

Other: Vision, Mission, Beliefs, and Performance Goals; Comprehensive LEA Implementation Plan (CLIP); School Improvement Plans; Data Rooms; PRIDE School Improvement Cycle

7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Calendar, agendas, minutes, sign-in sheets demonstrating stakeholder involvement in district and school improvement

Parent compact

Policies, procedures for district and school improvement committee work

Stakeholders affirm their involvement in continuous improvement process

Other: School Councils; System and School Level Leadership Teams

Other: SACS, PTO/PATS, and other school-level committee meetings - agendas and minutes; Bond Referendum/ELOST PowerPoint presentation; Title I School Improvement Planning Session

7.3 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Calendar, agendas, minutes of school improvement meetings

Data: student performance, stakeholder opinion are used in development of school improvement plan

District staff affirm their understanding of the impact of programs that support student learning

District staff demonstrate capacity for providing methodologies to increase student performance

School improvement plans demonstrate alignment with district vision, purpose

Staff, students affirm their understanding of student performance targets

Student performance targets are communicated to all stakeholders

Vision, purpose posted in district-wide facilities

Other: Monthly administrators' and leadership meetings to discuss components of continuous improvement

Other: Vision, Mission, Beliefs, and Performance Goals; School Commitment Statements; System and School Improvement Plans

7.4 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District guidelines and professional learning provide strategies for effective instruction for closing achievement gaps

District staff affirm that they regularly use data to inform their practices

District staff affirm their involvement in evaluating the impact of instruction on student growth

District staff meetings regularly use data to inform their discussions and decisions

School improvement plans demonstrate evaluation of goals, objectives, and strategies impact on student growth

Other: Pyramid of Interventions process; Board Retreat; Community Breakfast

Other: System and School Improvement Plans; Professional Learning Plans; Data Analysis Guidance; Agendas and minutes from grade level and department meetings - analysis of student achievement data; Georgia Department of Education Adequate Yearly Progress Reports

7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

Continuous Improvement Plan - district and individual schools

District staff affirm their involvement in professional learning

Personnel Policies that outline staff evaluation process

Professional Development Plan: agenda, topics

Other: Technology Proposal Process; Pyramid of Interventions process

Other: Annual Professional Learning Report; Professional Learning Guidelines; Vision, Mission; Technology and Professional Learning Surveys; System and School Improvement Plans; Agendas and minutes from regularly scheduled administrators', leadership, grade level, and department meetings

7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders:

Operational

Evidence Provided:

Annual Report

District staff and stakeholders affirm the use of performance data during Parent-Teacher conferences

Information/Data system

Newsletters, brochures

Parent-Teacher conferences

Staffing assignments support monitoring and reporting of continuous improvement efforts

Stakeholders affirm receipt of district communication regarding improvement efforts

Other: School Messenger; Infinite Campus Parent Portal; School Councils; Community Breakfast; Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee

Other: System and School Websites; System/School Report Cards; Adequate Yearly Progress Reports

7.7 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement :

Operational

Evidence Provided:

District and School Improvement Committee meetings: calendar, agenda, minutes, dispositions

Evaluation of effectiveness of continuous improvement plan and process

Stakeholders affirm knowledge of an evaluation of the district's improvement efforts

Other: System and School Improvement Plans; Georgia Department of Education Adequate Yearly Progress Reports; Governor's Office of Student Achievement System/School Report Cards; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; CRCT Growth Model

7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District and School Improvement Committee meetings:calendar, agenda, minutes, dispositions

District staff affirm that time is allocated for improvement planning, implementation, and monitoring

Policies and procedures for engaging in district-wide and individual school improvement planning, implementation, and monitoring

Other: JCS System Calendar; Master Schedule; Professional Learning and School Improvement Plans

7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts:

Highly Functional

Evidence Provided:

District and School Improvement Committee meetings:calendar, agenda, minutes, dispositions

District expectations and guidelines for all schools and departments to engage in a continuous improvement process

District staff affirm their knowledge of the district's expectations and guidelines for supporting student performance

Other: Community Breakfast; Board Retreat; Technology Support Staff; Instructional Services Staff

Other: Vision, Mission, Beliefs, and Performance Goals; PRIDE School Improvement Cycle and Description of Process; System and School Improvement Plans; Monthly administrators' and leadership meetings - agendas and minutes

Focus Questions:

1. Describe the process for continuous improvement used by the school system and its schools and the impact of this process on student learning and system effectiveness.

The Jefferson City School System fully implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the system with the expectations for student learning. Improving student achievement is at the forefront of all system and school efforts.

In order for continuous improvement to occur, it is critical for administrators, teachers, parents, community members, and other stakeholders to engage in the process of examining system and school operations on an ongoing basis to ensure alignment of procedures and processes with school improvement goals. The cycle for continuous improvement is reviewed and revised regularly to ensure effectiveness.

In Fall 2005, system- and school-level leaders met with representatives from each of the schools and other stakeholders to examine several models for school improvement. After careful review, the system decided to adopt the "School Improvement Action Plan" model and the "Continuous Improvement Continuums" survey outlined in Victoria Bernhardt's book *The School Portfolio Toolkit* (2002).

In addition, the decision was made to restructure school-level committees to align with the SACS standards in order to fully encompass the process of school improvement review. Restructuring efforts allowed administrators, teachers, parents, students, and other community members to become fully engaged in the school improvement process by increasing communication through planning documents and organized discussions.

In conjunction with this work, administrators, teachers, parents, and community members worked collaboratively to review the goals and beliefs outlined in past school improvement documents and decided to honor the rich history and tradition of Jefferson City Schools by adopting a mission statement and motto throughout all schools in the system, which became a critical part of the process of seeking district accreditation in 2006.

To individualize the mission statement, *To Graduate Fully Functioning Adults*, for each school, a committee comprised of administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, other staff members, parents, and community members worked with principals to develop commitment statements and goals in support of the system vision and mission, commitments and beliefs, and performance goals.

Commitment statements and goals were previewed by all staff members, students, parents, and community members during school council, parent teacher organization, and other school-level committee meetings and through the website and local newspaper. Commitment statements and goals became the central focus of all planning documents. Action plans were written at the system and school level to identify strategies for accomplishing the school improvement goals.

Through this process, the system was able to establish a more comprehensive framework for continuous school improvement that is reviewed and revised regularly.

Adjustments are made to the school improvement process based on feedback from various groups of stakeholders. The most recent adjustment was made to the school improvement cycle based on suggestions from system- and school-level leaders and representatives from school leadership teams. Through the process of reviewing the components of the previously used cycle, it was noted that schools have expanded the use of formative assessments to include common assessments and teacher-developed probes to more effectively assess student's progress toward academic standards and learning goals and the desire existed to establish a framework that would encourage administrators, teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders to engage in a process that is naturally embedded in daily practices and procedures.

Additionally, it was determined that while all stages of the school improvement process existed in each building, there is a need to provide a more consistent and uniform process for addressing each of the phases of the improvement cycle with respect to timeline. Consequently, instructional services staff met with principals during a monthly leadership meeting to review the actual school improvement plan template to ensure all components are addressed at the school level. The SACS oversight committee members worked collaboratively to review the stages of the school improvement cycle and revised the cycle to incorporate components of PRIDE – Plan, Review, Implement, Determine Effectiveness, and Examine Results.

Beginning in summer 2012, schools will use a standard template for completing the school improvement plan that is directly aligned to the Comprehensive Local Education Agency Improvement Plan (CLIP). Goals and strategies based on review of student data will continue to be a main focus of the school improvement plans, and professional development will be embedded in the school improvement plans rather than serving as a separate working document.

While the PRIDE school improvement process is a cycle, initial planning for school improvement begins at the annual board retreat held in the spring. In preparation for this planning session, board members who serve on the instructional committee meet with teachers and students at each school to obtain feedback regarding program strengths and weaknesses and barriers to improving performance. This information is used for future planning and revisions to the school improvement plans.

System- and school-level leaders join with board members to examine budget and financial reports, enrollment projections, facilities updates and proposed projects, technology and other components of the instructional

programs and identify resources needed for program adjustments and improvements based on student achievement and other sources of data. Budget and school improvement plans are reviewed to determine the level of instructional support and resources needed to meet goals and plan for improvement.

At the annual board retreat, board members engage in activities that allow them to continuously review the mission and vision and performance goals. During the last couple of years, specific emphasis has been given to expanding the actual meaning of our mission statement to include a more comprehensive definition of “fully functioning adults”. Board members have worked with system- and school-level leaders to develop a more in-depth understanding of the system’s mission statement and develop a broader definition of “fully functioning adult” to encompass characteristics that would enable students to compete globally in a fast-paced technological world.

Instructional services staff and school-level administrators participate in an onsite summer leadership institute to analyze data, review system and school improvement goals, revise plan descriptors, and identify areas of strength and weakness based on student performance results and other data sources. Parents, community members, and other stakeholders are invited to attend a summer planning session to review student achievement data, plan descriptors, and school improvement plans. Feedback is used to revise action plans and to set goals for the upcoming year.

School-level administrators meet with leadership teams to review research on potential programs and instructional strategies and interventions in order to effectively plan for program improvement for the upcoming year. Principals disseminate information from the board retreat and leadership meetings to staff members and other stakeholders during school-level committee, grade level and content area, parent-teacher organization, leadership, and school council meetings.

The review stage of the school improvement cycle includes school-level administrators and grade level/department chairpersons meeting with teachers to review action plan goals and strategies. Teachers review student performance and progress monitoring data quarterly to determine target lists for classroom accountability.

Additionally, teachers review and revise benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes, which are used to guide instruction and improve student learning. Administrators and teachers reevaluate the continuous improvement model to determine effectiveness and make refinements to the process to ensure progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness.

Providing differentiated instruction designed to meet the diverse needs of all students and implementing programs needed to increase student learning is a critical phase of the school improvement cycle. In order to effectively evaluate the implementation of instructional strategies and programs, measures for assessing student performance and progress toward goals is essential. Teachers administer benchmarks, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes to determine students’ academic strengths and weaknesses and modify instruction based on student performance data.

To determine effectiveness of school improvement initiatives, grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers and administrators to monitor action plans based on student performance on formative and summative assessments (e.g. benchmark assessments, common assessments, teacher-developed probes, end-of-unit assessments, progress monitoring data, and state assessments). Teachers meet regularly to discuss student performance and review data used to measure what has been implemented to determine if specific programs and strategies have positively impacted teacher effectiveness and student performance. Student achievement data is analyzed and disaggregated by subgroup and domain level in order to more effectively identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

Instructional services staff provide updated reports on student achievement and progress toward school improvement goals at monthly board meetings. Principals communicate results and progress toward goals with various groups of stakeholders at monthly school-level committee, leadership, parent-teacher organization, and school council meetings. The annual board retreat enables the system's leadership to review action plan recommendations, student achievement data, and provide yearly progress reports.

Multiple opportunities exist for board members, system- and school-level leaders, teachers, students, parents, and community members to examine program results and determine level of goal attainment. The year-end action plan review provides an opportunity for administrators and teachers to work collaboratively to analyze student performance and other data to determine instructional and program strengths and weaknesses based on goals and strategies outlined in the action plans. The Superintendent meets with principals and instructional services staff quarterly to review progress toward student achievement goals. Release time is provided to teachers in the spring to review curriculum maps and pacing guides, examine student achievement data, evaluate progress toward instructional and programmatic goals, and develop a list of professional learning needs based on results.

System- and school-level leaders work together to establish the school improvement process. Following the process ensures the system's vision, purpose, and goals guide the work of the school system and its schools.

2. What process is used to ensure that the improvement goals reflect student learning needs and are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school system and its schools?

The school improvement plans provide a structure for the continuous improvement process and serve as a communication tool of goals and targets for all stakeholders. School improvement plans prioritize system and school needs relative to student achievement and organizational effectiveness. In addition, school improvement efforts afford an opportunity for all stakeholders to collaboratively identify interventions and strategies to address the needs of all students.

Analysis of student achievement data enables the system's leadership to support school leaders, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders in establishing goals and plans of action aligned to school improvement initiatives. As part of the school improvement planning process, principals work with grade level/content area teachers to establish measurable targets for proficiency and mastery of content and skills. The PRIDE school improvement cycle (Plan, Review, Implement, Determine Effectiveness, Examine Results) ensures that stakeholders are engaged in a quality process that consistently leads to improved student performance.

The process for ensuring that improvement goals reflect student learning needs and are aligned with the vision and purpose of the school system and its schools begins with the strong working relationship between the Board of Education members and the Superintendent. The system's leadership is committed to continuously improving educational opportunities for all students. The Jefferson City Schools Board of Education takes pride in the academic success of students and acknowledges the outstanding reputation of the system is a direct result of all stakeholders working together to support the vision and mission of the system and its schools.

As outlined in the vision statement, only through an adequate education can students acquire the skills and abilities demanded by an increasingly sophisticated job market. To assure such an education experience, the Jefferson City Schools Board of Education members have adopted performance goals that serve as the basis for all school improvement initiatives. These performance goals outline the commitments and beliefs that given highly qualified teachers who engage in lifelong learning, adequate resources, and an orderly and safe learning environment, all students can and will learn.

Annually, board members and system- and school-level leaders review budget and school improvement plans to determine level of instructional support and resources needed to meet goals and plan for improvement.

Instructional services staff conduct a data analysis session with school-level leaders, which is replicated at the schools at the beginning of each year. As part of this process, action plan goals and strategies are reviewed and revised by grade level/department members, professional learning needs are identified, and target lists are developed as a way to ensure academic needs of all subgroups of students are met.

Teachers deliver instruction and administer formative and summative assessments to guide and improve teaching and learning. Administrators and teachers monitor action plans based on data. The system has developed and implemented a comprehensive Pyramid of Interventions process that includes universal screening and progress monitoring to determine specific academic and behavioral interventions and programs needed to address the diverse needs of students. Student progress is communicated to parents during regularly scheduled Pyramid of Interventions meetings.

Instructional updates and progress toward goals are provided at monthly board meetings. The Superintendent meets quarterly with system- and school-level leaders to monitor progress toward learning goals and objectives. In preparation for the Adequate Yearly Progress update meetings, principals meet with teachers to discuss performance levels of each subgroup of students, including locally identified subgroups, such as Title I, EIP, and gifted, and devise a list of strategies employed to provide academic support to students, and identify barriers to improving performance. These work sessions have proven useful in helping to identify resources that may need to be in place in order to improve academic performance of all students. Adjustments are made throughout the year to ensure schools have resources needed to increase student performance.

Teachers meet by grade level and/or department several times each month to review student progress toward learning goals and objectives outlined in school improvement plans. Data rooms located in each school provide a way for teachers to utilize data to make instructional decisions that effectively address the learning needs of students. Teachers are provided release time throughout the year to review curriculum documents and engage in data analysis in order to identify students who need additional academic assistance and plan for instruction designed to help teachers more effectively meet the needs of students. Monthly leadership meetings enable system- and school-level leaders to continuously monitor progress toward school improvement goals.

Standards-based walk-through observations provide an additional opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and to ensure instruction is based on the identified learning needs of students and aligned to school improvement goals. Results from previous Quality Assurance Reviews and Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS) are used to improve programs and procedures.

3. What process is used to ensure that system and school personnel are provided professional development and technical assistance to implement interventions and achieve improvement goals?

The Jefferson City Schools' professional development plan and timeline match the learning needs of students and the instructional needs of teachers. Technical assistance is provided to schools during school improvement planning sessions, summer leadership institutes, and monthly leadership meetings to ensure that professional learning activities support the goals outlined in the school improvement plans and any purchased programs or services are research-based. Professional learning is aligned with nationally established criteria and helps teachers target their instructional practices towards the effective implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards.

An annual survey is distributed to all administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals to determine professional learning needs. Student achievement results are utilized in developing school-level professional learning plans that are aligned to school improvement goals. In conjunction with a system-level professional learning committee,

each school has a professional learning committee that screens all building level training requests. In addition, results from previous Quality Assurance Review and Georgia Assessment of Performance on School Standards (GAPSS) visits are used to identify professional learning needs.

Professional learning funds from multiple sources target areas needing improvement or continuation. Areas are identified by analyzing student achievement data (e.g. CRCT, GHSGT, ITBS, writing assessments, EOCT, locally developed benchmarks/common assessments/probes), creating action plans to support identified instructional issues, training, and then assessing student success. This process is used to determine training needs each year. This cycle of renewal is conducted annually and is an important part of the district's school improvement process. Professional learning plans are written in the spring or summer for the following year once student achievement data is available. In addition, schools have discretionary funds to support professional learning needs as they emerge. These needs are identified as test scores and performance levels are disaggregated by AYP subgroups, domain areas, and grade levels.

All schools conduct a summer institute before preplanning for all new teachers when applicable. The institute is tailored at each school to induct new teachers into the learning community in each building. School improvement plans, which include professional learning activities, are created in grade level teams at the elementary level and departments at the middle and high school levels, which help teachers to focus on the instructional practices that target the Georgia Performance Standards in specific teaching areas. Jefferson City Schools' approach to professional learning is modeled after the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards.

School administrators and teachers work collaboratively to identify professional learning needs and the resources needed to improve instruction and student performance. The Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) survey is administered each spring, and results are used to determine professional development needs for the upcoming year. Process standards are applied in the year-long cycle of data review and strategy planning (which includes professional development and resource identification, implementation, and an annual review of the process). Content standards are aligned with the involvement of parents and other stakeholders as partners in the learning process by communicating learning opportunities in the school community.

Professional learning programs for Jefferson City Schools focus on the training needs of staff in areas linked to student performance. Areas include the implementation of standards-based instruction, strategies for dealing with hard to manage students, assessment strategies for understanding student learning (including the development and refinement of benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes), differentiated learning for students, reading and writing across the curriculum, mathematics content development at the high school, refinement and depth in understanding and delivering the Georgia Performance Standards and the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (to be implemented in Fall 2012), individualized online professional learning modules for paraprofessionals through the ParaEducator/PD Now program, professional learning communities, and technology use and integration.

Those who teach in the Jefferson City School System must never cease to learn or emphasize to students that learning will be a lifelong process. While protecting instructional time is of utmost importance, system- and school-level leaders recognize that quality professional learning leads to improved performance in the classroom setting. Jefferson City Schools' professional development program is tightly linked to student learning needs as evidenced by performance data.

The main accomplishment of our program over the last few years in light of budget reductions is both teaching and support staff are better able to determine their own learning needs based on student performance data. In addition, as we continue to move toward a better understanding of the Pyramid of Interventions process, professional learning efforts are centered on identifying universal screenings followed by the identification of interventions that are effective and research-based. In the elementary grades, the Pyramid of Interventions process

has become very effective. Through professional development, improvements are being made in the planning and implementation of the process in middle and high school. Ongoing teacher training and professional learning communities, which focuses on data analysis and differentiation of instruction, are providing a structure for improving the Pyramid of Interventions process at the middle and secondary level.

The use of technology and professional learning to support its integration in instruction has helped the system to more effectively engage students in learning and provide more authentic educational experiences that are aligned to 21st century learning goals. During the spring 2011 board retreat, board members and system- and school-level leaders participated in a book study in an effort to expand knowledge and understanding of how technology can be used to transform teaching and learning. The Board of Education chairman led the initiative as a result of work done through the development of the Vision for Public Education project, a joint effort led by members of the Georgia School Boards Association and Georgia School Superintendents Association.

Principles from *The Global Achievement Gap* by Tony Wagner, *Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns* by Clayton M. Christensen, Michael B. Horn, and Curtis W. Johnson, and *Teaching Digital Natives: Partnering for Real Learning* by Marc Prensky are being used to help guide professional learning initiatives as the system's leadership partners with The University of Georgia Technology Center (UGA ETC) to provide training for teachers on the integration of technology to support teaching and learning. Staff members from UGA ETC hosted a technology showcase for board members and system- and school-level leaders during the spring 2011 retreat and for all staff members during preplanning. The technology showcase provided an avenue to gain a better understanding of resources available and needed to support technology use and integration.

Teachers may submit proposals to participate in technology-related professional learning (e.g. use of Moodle as a learning management tool, student response system training) provided during the school day and/or summer along with direct follow up support in the classroom setting. The Board of Education members acknowledge the use of technology is an effective way to enhance and enable excellence in teaching and learning; therefore, the Board and system's leadership are committed to providing and allocating necessary resources to enable system- and school-level leaders to procure technology equipment that will help address academic needs and improve performance levels of all students. Professional learning efforts focus on helping all students achieve maximum levels of proficiency while emphasizing moving students from meeting to exceeding expectations on state assessments.

In order for teachers to stay abreast of recent technological development and research, professional learning opportunities are provided, and teacher leaders model innovative uses of technology in each of the schools. Jefferson City Schools ensure all teachers are provided the opportunity to participate in technology training. All teachers and paraprofessionals presently meet the certification requirement for technology literacy.

Teacher training to meet the diverse needs of students is determined through a variety of data collection methods. Student achievement data is analyzed at individual, class, grade/department, school and system level. Subgroup and domain analysis is used to determine areas of need. Strengths and weaknesses within each subgroup and test domain provide important professional learning information as well. Jefferson City Schools utilize several resources to assess teacher ability to differentiate instruction based on diverse needs of students. A system-wide standards-based walk-through instrument is used by instructional services staff, school-level leaders, and teachers as a tool to identify the existence of essential elements within a differentiated classroom as aligned to content, process, and product. Results from the standards-based walkthrough observations are used in developing system and school professional learning plans.

The reduction in professional learning funds has impacted the number of course offerings and off-site opportunities for employees. However, the decreased funding has enabled us to focus more heavily and more

seriously on everyday practices that impact student learning. We are able to more effectively accomplish on-site professional learning that is directly linked to the work that our teachers and paraprofessionals are engaged in on a daily basis. Additionally, we have been able to provide professional learning opportunities that allow teachers to effectively use disaggregated student achievement data to inform instructional practices.

A checks and balances system is in place to allow system- and school-level leaders to monitor the implementation of professional learning plans based on school improvement goals. Plans are modified as necessary based on the analysis of student achievement data. Beginning with the annual spring board retreat, resources are identified and channeled to the schools to enable administrators, teachers, and support staff to participate in professional learning opportunities that are directly linked to instructional goals and embedded in day-to-day operations.

During the 2011-2012 summer leadership institute, system- and school-level leaders worked to examine the system's vision for professional learning by focusing on the essential components and steps necessary to establishing a 21st Century learning environment in order to more effectively achieve the mission of graduating fully functioning adults who are productive citizens in a global society. Based on this review, professional learning opportunities for the current year focus on data driven decision-making, technology-based learning, writing across the curriculum, standards-based teaching and learning, school-wide enrichment model, and college and career readiness through the development of the Dragon PRIDE transition team.

System-level administrators work with consultants from independent organizations (when applicable), Northeast Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), professionals from local colleges and university, and the Georgia Department of Education program specialists to provide technical assistance to school-level leaders in the implementation of professional learning plans.

Jefferson City Schools supports the ongoing growth and development of staff members, as outlined in the vision and performance goals, by providing regularly scheduled onsite opportunities for training, release time during the school year, stipends during off-contract time, and allocation of funds from local, state, and federal programs to support system and school initiatives. Professional learning plans include an emphasis on teacher collaboration. Collaborative planning sessions are scheduled at the school level to enable grade level and/or content area teachers to review and revise curriculum maps, analyze student performance data, and develop instructional plans designed to improve student achievement.

4. How does the leadership ensure that the improvement plan is implemented, monitored, achieved, and communicated to stakeholders?

Continuous school improvement is an ongoing process that helps schools and systems focus their efforts in support of their mission and goals. Stakeholder involvement is critical to the success of any improvement plan. The PRIDE school improvement cycle is comprised of various processes to ensure the improvement plan is implemented, monitored, achieved, and communicated to stakeholders:

Plan – Board of Education members and system- and school-level leaders review budget information to determine instructional support and resources needed to meet program goals; instructional services staff and school leaders participate in an onsite summer leadership institute to analyze data, review system and school improvement goals, revise plan descriptors, and identify areas of strength and weakness based on student performance results and other data sources; school leaders meet with leadership teams to review research on potential programs and instructional strategies and interventions in order to effectively plan for program improvement for the upcoming year;

Review – School leaders and grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers to review action plan goals

and strategies; teachers review student performance and progress monitoring data quarterly to determine target lists for classroom accountability; teachers review and revise benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes, which are used to guide instruction and improve student learning; administrators and teachers reevaluate the continuous improvement model to determine effectiveness and make refinements to the process to ensure progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness;

Implement – Teachers provide differentiated instruction designed to meet the diverse needs of all students and implement programs needed to increase student learning; administer benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes to determine students’ academic strengths and weaknesses and modify instruction based on student performance data;

Determine Effectiveness – Grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers and administrators to monitor action plans based on student performance on formative and summative assessments (e.g. benchmark assessments, common assessments, teacher-developed probes, end-of-unit assessments, progress monitoring data, and state assessments); teachers meet regularly to discuss student performance and review data used to measure what has been implemented to determine if specific programs and strategies have positively impacted teacher effectiveness and student performance; instructional services staff provide updated reports on student achievement and progress toward school improvement goals at monthly board meetings; annual board of education retreat to review action plan recommendations, student achievement data, and provide yearly progress reports;

Examine Results – Year-end action plan review – administrators and teachers work collaboratively to analyze student performance and other data to determine instructional and program strengths and weaknesses based on goals and strategies outlined in the action plans.

Annually, each grade level and/or department conducts a self-evaluation of their successes and areas needing improvement (Action Plan Review Sheet). Professional learning needs are stated and then shaped into a district plan. All professional learning activities are linked directly to student performance goals. The Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) is reviewed and revised annually at the summer leadership institute.

Disaggregated student achievement data is used to establish updated goals for improving student performance. The CLIP and other school improvement planning documents are reviewed with stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents, and community members, during school council and other advisory meetings. Parents are given opportunities to provide additional feedback during the annual Title I meeting.

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Data rooms are located in the Board of Education office and each school. The mission statement and goals and commitments are posted in prominent locations in each school. System- and school-level leaders conduct standards-based walkthroughs on a regular basis, and teachers are provided an opportunity to participate in peer observations as a self-reflection activity and in order to identify effective teaching practices that can be adapted for use in their own classroom setting.

Paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators, parents, business leaders, and other community members are involved in the assessment of system needs through the use of surveys and meetings. The administrators meet with

instructional services staff to review and analyze the student achievement data in an effort to revise and update school improvement plans. Each school principal facilitates discussions relative to needs assessment, survey data, student achievement data, highly qualified and teacher equity data during school council/leadership and grade level/department meetings.

During school council, advisory council, and other school-level committee meetings, stakeholders review data to determine a list of prioritized needs. Action plans are developed or revised to address each of the prioritized needs. Action plans include specific strategies/initiatives, timelines, monitoring process and person(s) responsible for implementation and monitoring of each strategy/initiative.

- July-Instructional services staff meet with school level administrators to review needs assessment, student achievement, Hi-Q and teacher equity data to develop preliminary list of prioritized needs (summer leadership institute)
- July/August-School level leaders meet with teachers and other staff members to review needs assessment data, student achievement data, and preliminary list of prioritized needs; information is used to update action plans
- August-Instructional services staff meet with leadership teams to review preliminary list of prioritized needs and gather feedback; revisions are made based on the feedback from the leadership team members
- September/October-School level leaders meet with school councils to review needs assessment data, student achievement data, and preliminary list of prioritized needs aligned to action plans
- October through December-Action plans are finalized and implemented through grade level/department meetings
- November/December-School level leaders share School Improvement Plans and Action Plans with broad base of stakeholders through PTO meetings, PIE meetings, school council meetings, and other opportunities afforded throughout community relations
- November through May- School level leaders, teacher leaders, and instructional services staff members monitor the implementation of action plans; implementation effectiveness is assessed through the use of on-going qualitative data collection, survey data, and formative student assessment data
- March-Annual Board of Education Retreat – board members and system- and school-level leaders review budget and instructional program updates to determine progress toward school improvement goals and to identify resources needed for program improvement
- May/June-Instructional services staff and school level leaders begin data collection process and preparation for upcoming annual data review session

Overall Assessment:

Highly Functional: The school system fully implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns all functions of the system and its schools with the expectations for student learning. Improvement efforts are systemic, sustained, and fully embedded, and the system demonstrates significant progress in improving student performance, system and school effectiveness. New improvement efforts are clearly informed by the documented results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment of a highly sustained, continuous process of improvement.

QA Methods

1. What processes does the district use to monitor and document improvement?

The Jefferson City School System fully implements a collaborative and ongoing process for improvement that aligns the functions of the system with the expectations for student learning. Improving student achievement is at the forefront of all system and school efforts.

The PRIDE school improvement cycle (**P**lan, **R**eview, **I**mplement, **D**etermine Effectiveness, **E**xamine Results) provides a structure for monitoring and documenting improvement. The following processes are in place to ensure ongoing monitoring and documentation of improvement efforts:

1. Board members who serve on the instructional committee meet with teachers and students at each school to obtain feedback regarding program strengths and weaknesses and barriers to improving performance. Information from these sessions are used for future planning and making revisions to system and school improvement plans.
2. System- and school-level leaders join with board members to examine budget and financial reports, enrollment projections, facilities updates and proposed projects, technology and other components of the instructional programs and identify resources needed for program adjustments and improvements based on student achievement and other sources of data. Budget and school improvement plans are reviewed to determine the level of instructional support and resources needed to meet goals and plan for improvement.
3. Instructional services staff and school administrators participate in an onsite summer leadership institute to analyze data, review system and school improvement goals, revise plan descriptors, and identify areas of strength and weakness based on student performance results and other data sources.
4. Stakeholders are invited to attend a summer planning session to review student achievement data, plan descriptors, and school improvement plans. Feedback is used to revise action plans and to set goals for the upcoming year.
5. School leaders meet with leadership teams to review research on potential programs and instructional strategies and interventions in order to effectively plan for program improvement for the upcoming year.
6. Principals disseminate information from the board retreat and leadership meetings to staff members and other stakeholders during school-level committee, grade level and content area, parent-teacher organization, leadership, and school council meetings.

7. School leaders and grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers to review action plan goals and strategies.

8. Teachers review student performance and progress monitoring data quarterly to determine target lists for classroom accountability. Teachers review and revise formative assessments, which are used to guide instruction and improve student learning.

9. Teachers administer formative assessments on a regular basis to determine academic strengths and weaknesses and modify instruction based on student performance data.

10. Teachers and administrators meet regularly to monitor action plans and discuss student performance and review data used to measure what has been implemented to determine if specific programs and strategies have positively impacted teacher effectiveness and student performance.

11. Student achievement data is analyzed and disaggregated by subgroup and domain level in order to more effectively identify areas of strength and weakness.

12. Instructional services staff provide updated reports on student achievement and progress toward school improvement goals at monthly board meetings.

13. Principals communicate results and progress toward goals with various groups of stakeholders at monthly school-level committee, leadership, parent-teacher organization, and school council meetings.

14. Year-end action plan review provides an opportunity for administrators and teachers to work collaboratively to analyze student performance and other data to determine instructional and program strengths and weaknesses based on goals and strategies outlined in the action plans.

15. The Superintendent meets quarterly with system and school leaders to review progress toward student achievement goals.

16. Release time is provided to teachers in the spring to review curriculum maps and pacing guides, examine student achievement data, evaluate progress toward instructional and programmatic goals, and develop a list of professional learning needs based on results.

2. How does the district provide meaningful feedback and support to its schools and across the district?

The system leadership recognizes the importance of providing meaningful feedback and support to the schools in order for continuous improvement to take place. As part of the quality assurance process, the system provides the following to its schools:

1. Budget support (federal, state, and local funds to meet identified needs in the areas of teaching and learning)
2. Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) provides a framework for the development of school-level improvement plans by aligning the system's goals with school goals
3. Participation in state and RESA level training enables system leaders to stay abreast of important curriculum, instruction, and assessment changes. Information is disseminated to school leaders during monthly board, leadership and administrators' meetings, quarterly AYP update meetings, and work sessions held during the summer and throughout the year as needed.
4. Teaching resources provided through the Georgia Department of Education (Learning Village, Georgia Performance Standards, Common Core Georgia Performance Standards), Northeast Georgia RESA, and other educational agencies and professional organizations.
5. Technology support is provided through a partnership with University of Georgia's Educational Technology Center.
6. Results from GAPSS and SACS reviews
7. Providing funds and resources for schools to carry out professional learning activities (Title II-A, state funds, ParaEducator online program, GYSTC, RESA and other outside consultants)
8. Vertical alignment of schools through regularly scheduled meetings (teachers, counselors, administrators, media specialists, etc. meeting to align procedures and plans)
9. Service on the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee to channel resources to schools from the community (school supply drive organized by local businesses, Partners in Education training, guest speakers list, etc.)
10. Coordinate training opportunities for teachers through various software companies and other vendors
11. Support for teaching and learning (gifted program, Advanced Placement program, special education program, gifted and ESOL endorsements, Pyramid of Interventions, Early Intervention Program, remedial programs, ESOL support, CTAE program, assessment, student information and data collection, food service, transportation, purchasing)
12. Presentation of results at annual community breakfast and board retreat

13. System leaders provide training on standardized testing procedures

14. Standards-based walkthrough observations and regular school visits

3. How does the district ensure that the AdvancED standards are met by all the schools and the district as a whole?

The Jefferson City School System employs several procedures to ensure the AdvancED standards are met by all schools and the system as a whole:

1. System and school leaders review the seven SACS standards at leadership meetings and work sessions.
2. Schools have established committees based on the seven SACS standards. Membership is comprised of administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, business and community leaders, and other stakeholders. Committees meet on a monthly basis.
3. Schools participate in GAPSS reviews.
4. The system implements a continuous school improvement model aligned to the AdvancED accreditation process.
5. System and school representatives attend SACS CASI training.
6. System and school representatives serve on Quality Assurance Review teams outside the system.
7. Adhering to all SACS guidelines regarding Quality Assurance Review recommendations - submitting the two-year progress report based on appropriate timeline.
8. System leaders model quality assurance by providing ongoing, onsite support to administrators and teachers.
9. Involvement of various stakeholder groups on SACS committees.
10. Oversight committee to spearhead the Quality Assurance Review process and to monitor the work of school-level standards committees. Each school has established seven committees - all employees and other stakeholders are required to serve on a committee in preparation for the Quality Assurance Review.

4. How does the district regularly collect, use, and communicate results?

Continuous school improvement is an ongoing process that helps schools and systems focus their efforts in support of their mission and goals. The PRIDE school improvement cycle (Plan, Review, Implement, Determine Effectiveness, Examine Results) is comprised of various processes to ensure the system is regularly collecting, using, and communicating results.

Plan – Board of Education members and system- and school-level leaders review budget information to determine instructional support and resources needed to meet program goals; instructional services staff and school leaders participate in an onsite summer leadership institute to analyze data, review system and school improvement goals, revise plan descriptors, and identify areas of strength and weakness based on student performance results and other data sources; school leaders meet with leadership teams to review research on potential programs and instructional strategies and interventions in order to effectively plan for program improvement for the upcoming year;

Review – School leaders and grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers to review action plan goals and strategies; teachers review student performance and progress monitoring data quarterly to determine target lists for classroom accountability; teachers review and revise benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes, which are used to guide instruction and improve student learning; administrators and teachers reevaluate the continuous improvement model to determine effectiveness and make refinements to the process to ensure progress in improving student performance and school effectiveness;

Implement – Teachers provide differentiated instruction designed to meet the diverse needs of all students and implement programs needed to increase student learning; administer benchmark assessments, common assessments, and teacher-developed probes to determine students' academic strengths and weaknesses and modify instruction based on student performance data;

Determine Effectiveness – Grade level/department chairpersons meet with teachers and administrators to monitor action plans based on student performance on formative and summative assessments (e.g. benchmark assessments, common assessments, teacher-developed probes, end-of-unit assessments, progress monitoring data, and state assessments); teachers meet regularly to discuss student performance and review data used to measure what has been implemented to determine if specific programs and strategies have positively impacted teacher effectiveness and student performance; instructional services staff provide updated reports on student achievement and progress toward school improvement goals at monthly board meetings; annual board of education retreat to review action plan recommendations, student achievement data, and provide yearly progress reports;

Examine Results – Year-end action plan review – administrators and teachers work collaboratively to analyze student performance and other data to determine instructional and program strengths and weaknesses based on goals and strategies outlined in the action plans.

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Conclusion

The following focus questions reflect the school's overall analysis of its internal evaluation of the accreditation standards.

Focus Questions

As you review your responses to the standards, what major trends, themes, or areas of focus emerge that cut across the seven standards?

The internal review and self-assessment process has enabled Jefferson City Schools to identify major trends, themes, or areas of focus that are consistent across all seven standards:

1. There is a strong commitment to providing quality educational services to students.
2. There are high expectations for student learning.
3. There is a need to provide more opportunities for vertical and horizontal alignment and articulation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment across the schools.
4. School improvement planning exists at the system and school level; however, there is a need to establish a structure that is more consistent across the four schools. The framework for school improvement needs to be expanded to include more representation from various stakeholder groups.
5. A technology replacement plan and reservation of funds would enable the system to more effectively and efficiently procure equipment aligned to the system and school needs. Additional personnel is needed to more effectively and efficiently monitor and support the implementation and integration of technology in teaching and learning.
6. Teachers need to be provided with additional training and support on the analysis and use of student performance data to guide instructional decisions. System and school leaders need to establish data teams to assist in this work to ensure alignment within and among schools.
7. There is a need to provide more opportunities to develop teachers as leaders.
8. There needs to be a more systematic and ongoing approach to gathering feedback from stakeholder groups.
9. There is a need to provide planning time for teachers outside of instructional time for collaboration, curriculum development and alignment, instructional planning, technology use and integration, and development of formative and summative assessments to ensure increased levels of student and teacher performance.

Based on your review of these cross-cutting themes/trends and each of the seven standards, what would you consider to be your school system's greatest strengths?

Based on the results of the self-assessment and internal review process, the Jefferson City School System's greatest strengths include the following:

Standard One - Vision and Purpose

The system establishes and communicates a shared purpose and direction for improving the performance of students and the effectiveness of the system. In Jefferson City Schools, there are high expectations for student learning. There is a strong level of community support and involvement in the educational process. The belief that exposure to excellence promotes excellence is evident in all aspects of the system's overall program, including the arts, athletics, and academics.

Standard Two - Governance and Leadership

The system provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and system effectiveness. One of the greatest strengths in this particular area is the tremendous level of support provided to the system and its schools from the Board of Education members. The Jefferson City School System Board of Education is committed to educational excellence and has a strong working relationship with the Superintendent.

The system's leadership strives to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel necessary to deliver rigorous instruction, generate and manage resources that support a quality instructional program, partner with the community to ensure continuous improvement and academic success for all students, and maintain and upgrade facilities to meet the challenging instructional needs of students and staff and accommodate current and anticipated growth.

Administrators, teachers, and support staff are dedicated and possess a strong sense of pride in their role in providing quality services to students.

Standard Three - Teaching and Learning

The system provides research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement of all students. The Jefferson City School System employs a highly qualified professional staff who are knowledgeable of content and best practices and committed to lifelong learning. Teachers have clearly defined expectations for student learning and are knowledgeable of curriculum standards.

There is a comprehensive Pyramid of Interventions process in place that allows administrators, teachers, parents, and students to collaboratively develop and implement strategies to address specific learning and behavioral needs of students who are performing below expectations. Opportunities for acceleration and enrichment are provided to those students who are achieving above the expected rate.

Teachers regularly collaborate to determine what students need to know, should be able to do, and how to assess mastery of content and skills. Parents are an integral part of the learning process. Efforts are made to channel more resources and time to moving students from "meeting expectations" to "exceeding expectations" on state-mandated assessments.

There is a strong commitment to integrating technology to enhance teaching and learning.

Standard Four - Documenting and Using Results

The system enacts a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and system effectiveness. Teachers at all grade levels use formative assessments (benchmark assessments, common assessments, or teacher-developed probes) to determine the success of students in meeting local and state academic achievement standards. Results of the formative

assessments are used to assist teachers in diagnosing the success of teaching and learning in the classroom.

System and school leaders meet regularly to discuss student progress toward academic goals and to identify additional resources needed to ensure increased student performance. Teachers use results from state mandated and locally developed assessments to develop target lists that are used in grade level and department meetings throughout the year to monitor student progress toward achievement goals.

Formative and summative assessment data are used to identify students for remediation and enrichment as outlined in the Pyramid of Interventions process.

Standard Five - Resource and Support Systems

The system has the resources and services necessary to support its vision and purpose and to ensure achievement for all students. The Jefferson City School System has maintained 100% highly qualified teachers for the past seven consecutive years and 100% highly qualified paraprofessionals since 2005. The Board of Education and system leadership are committed to employing principles of sound financial management through careful budgetary analysis and planning. Jefferson City Schools have maintained fiscal discipline and stewardship in light of the recent economic decline, reserving a fund equity balance of \$2.5 million, 14% of the \$18 million total budget.

Standard Six - Stakeholder Communications and Relationships

The system fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders. The Jefferson City School System has a rich history of community support and involvement. From academics to athletics, the system partners with community stakeholders to support student achievement. System leaders consider the strong level of support as one factor for continued success within the academics, athletics, and arts programs. The residents of Jefferson take great pride in the Jefferson City School System and have high expectations for academic achievement and stakeholder satisfaction.

Standard Seven - Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The system establishes, implements, and monitors a continuous process of improvement that focuses on student performance. The Jefferson City School System has built a strong reputation across the state based on past and current performance in the area of academics, athletics, and the arts as a result of the commitment to continuous improvement.

System and school leaders are continuously working with teachers, support staff, and other stakeholders to identify areas needing improvement. While we celebrate our successes, we realize there is always room for improvement in our everyday operations and practices. Administrators and teachers are constantly looking at ways to improve teaching and learning. At Jefferson City Schools, we strive to never be satisfied with current performance levels and keep the question of how we can get better at the forefront of our thinking while holding on to the cherished motto that exposure to excellence promotes excellence.

What would you consider to be your school system's greatest challenges?

The Jefferson City School System is faced with several challenges, many of which result from a lack of funding due to recent budget reductions in federal, state, and local funds.

Since July 2009, the district has implemented a furlough plan that impacts all system employees in an effort to avoid having to eliminate positions. To maximize learning opportunities for students, the furlough plan focuses

more heavily on the reduction of teacher workdays. While this does prove beneficial for students, system and school leaders are faced with the challenge of continuing to provide quality professional learning opportunities without interfering with instructional time.

In order to continuously improve practices, it is critical that teachers have opportunities to develop and refine their knowledge and skills through various professional development activities. The decrease in the number of workdays and professional learning funds makes it challenging to provide professional learning opportunities in the areas of standards-based instruction, common core standards, use of data to inform teaching and learning, differentiated learning to address the diverse needs of students, depth of knowledge, and technology which over time can potentially have a negative impact on teacher and student performance.

Budget reductions have impacted the number of personnel in various departments, including counseling, administration, and technology. Previously, the system employed graduation coaches at the middle and high schools, which provided tremendous support in ensuring the needs of students were being met through intensive monitoring of academic and behavioral progress. The elimination of the graduation coaches has presented challenges for school leaders as they strive to maintain the level of monitoring needed to increase student achievement. Additional counseling or administrative support would enable school leaders to implement various programs and processes that would contribute to overall school effectiveness and student performance.

In addition, the system's leadership recognizes the importance of establishing 21st Century learning environments and expanding opportunities to increase learning through digital content and the integration of technology. Staying abreast of the rapidly changing trends and best practices along with equipment purchases is essential in assisting the Jefferson City School System in accomplishing its mission and vision to graduate fully functioning adults who are competitive in a global society.

Keeping up with changes in technology is a challenge due to limited personnel in the technology department. Instructional technology support staff would enable the system to more effectively and efficiently provide training and classroom support in using technology to enhance teaching and learning. Funding becomes a challenge as the system explores options for expanding the technology infrastructure and providing a wireless environment that supports a bring your own technology initiative.

Additional challenges lie in closing the achievement gaps among various subgroups and continually increasing performance levels of all students based on federal and state accountability measures. Working with teachers to expand their knowledge on the use of differentiated instructional strategies to address the diverse needs of students, articulation among and between all levels of schooling, retention of highly qualified staff, and increasing stakeholder involvement and engagement in the overall school improvement process remain high priorities for system and school leaders. Continuous improvements in these areas will lead to increased student achievement.

How will you use the insights gained from this self-assessment to inform and enhance your quality assurance and continuous improvement efforts?

Insights gained from the self-assessment will be used to strengthen the overall procedures and processes that are currently in place within the system. Recommendations from the Quality Assurance Review Team will be used to refine the system's continuous improvement efforts.

Major trends, themes, and areas of focus that emerge as a result of the internal and external review will serve as a basis for future school improvement planning. The in-depth evaluation of the system's operations and overall effectiveness has provided system and school leaders with a more comprehensive structure for future implementation and monitoring of programs and services.

The self-assessment process has allowed stakeholders to reflect upon practices that have contributed to educational excellence within the system as well as to identify areas for improvement to ensure all students are making progress toward achievement goals and receiving quality educational services that will allow them to compete as *fully functioning adults* in a globally competitive society.

Standards Assessment Report Summary

Standards & Indicators	Not Evident	Emerging	Operational	Highly Functional
1. Vision & Purpose				
1.1 Establishes a vision and purpose for the system in collaboration with its stakeholders				✓
1.2 Communicates the system's vision and purpose to build stakeholder understanding and support				✓
1.3 Identifies system-wide goals and measures to advance the vision				✓
1.4 Develops and continuously maintains a profile of the system, its students, and the community			✓	
1.5 Ensures that the system's vision and purpose guide the teaching and learning process and the strategic direction of schools, departments, and services				✓
1.6 Reviews its vision and purpose systematically and revises them when appropriate				✓
2. Governance & Leadership				
2.1 Establishes and communicates policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the system				✓
2.2 Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership authority of the administrative head of the system				✓
2.3 Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws, standards, and regulations				✓
2.4 Implements policies and procedures that provide for the orientation and training of the governing board				✓
2.5 Builds public support, secures sufficient resources, and acts as a steward of the system's resources				✓
2.6 Maintains access to legal counsel to advise or obtain information about legal requirements and obligations				✓
2.7 Maintains adequate insurance or equivalent resources to protect its financial stability and administrative operations				✓
2.8 Provides for systematic analysis and review of student performance and school and system effectiveness				✓
2.9 Creates and supports collaborative networks of stakeholders to support system programs			✓	
2.10 Provides direction, assistance, and resources to align, support, and enhance all parts of the system in meeting organizational and student performance goals				✓
2.11 Provides internal and external stakeholders meaningful roles in the decision-making process that promote a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership			✓	
2.12 Assesses and addresses community expectations and stakeholder satisfaction				✓
2.13 Implements an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel			✓	
3. Teaching & Learning				
3.1 Develops, articulates, and coordinates curriculum based on clearly- defined expectations for student learning, including essential knowledge and skills				✓
3.2 Establishes expectations and supports student engagement in the learning process, including opportunities for students to explore application of higher order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning			✓	
3.3 Ensures that system-wide curricular and instructional decisions are based on data and research at all levels				✓
3.4 Supports instruction that is research-based and reflective of best practice				✓
3.5 Supports a curriculum that challenges and meets the needs of each student, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity			✓	
3.6 Allocates and protects instructional time to support student learning				✓
3.7 Maintains articulation among and between all levels of schooling to monitor student performance and ensure readiness for future schooling or employment			✓	
3.8 Supports the implementation of interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning				✓
3.9 Maintains a system-wide climate that supports student learning				✓
3.10 Ensures that curriculum is reviewed and revised at regular intervals				✓
3.11 Coordinates and ensures ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials needed for effective instruction			✓	
4. Documenting & Using Results				
4.1 Establishes and implements a comprehensive assessment system, aligned with the system's expectations for student learning, that yields information which is reliable, valid, and bias free			✓	
4.2 Ensures that student assessment data are used to make decisions for continuous improvement of				

teaching and learning				✓
4.3 Conducts a systematic analysis of instructional and organizational effectiveness, including support systems, and uses the results to improve student and system performance			✓	
4.4 Provides a system of communication which uses a variety of methods to report student performance and system effectiveness to all stakeholders			✓	
4.5 Uses comparison and trend data from comparable school systems to evaluate student performance and system effectiveness			✓	
4.6 Demonstrates verifiable growth in student performance that is supported by multiple sources of evidence				✓
4.7 Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations			✓	
5. Resource & Support Systems				
5.1 Establishes and implements processes to recruit, employ, retain, and mentor qualified professional and support staff to fulfill assigned roles and responsibilities				✓
5.2 Establishes and implements a process to assign professional and support staff based on system needs and staff qualifications as may be required by federal and state law and regulations (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience)				✓
5.3 Establishes and implements a process to design, evaluate, and improve professional development and ensures participation by all faculty and staff			✓	
5.4 Ensures that staff are sufficient in number to meet the vision and purpose of the school system and to meet federal and state law and regulations, if applicable			✓	
5.5 Engages in long-range budgetary planning and annually budgets sufficient resources to support its educational programs and to implement its plans for improvement				✓
5.6 Ensures that all financial transactions are safeguarded through proper budgetary procedures and audited accounting measures				✓
5.7 Maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment				✓
5.8 Establishes and implements written security and crisis management plans with appropriate training for stakeholders				✓
5.9 Implements processes and plans for maintaining and improving sites, facilities, and equipment				✓
5.10 Provides technology infrastructure and equipment that is up-to-date and sufficient to accomplish the system's goals				✓
5.11 Provides and coordinates support services that meet the health, counseling, nutrition, safety, co-curricular, transportation, and special learning needs of all students			✓	
5.12 Provides student support services coordinated with the school, home, and community				✓
6. Stakeholder Communications & Relationships				
6.1 Fosters collaboration with community stakeholders to support student learning				✓
6.2 Uses system-wide strategies to listen to and communicate with stakeholders				✓
6.3 Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the system			✓	
6.4 Communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders				✓
6.5 Provides information that is meaningful and useful to stakeholders				✓
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement				
7.1 Engages in a continuous process of improvement that articulates the vision and purpose the system is pursuing (Vision); maintains a rich and current description of students, their performance, system effectiveness, and the community (Profile); employs goals and interventions to improve student performance (Plan); and documents and uses the results to inform future improvement efforts (Results)				✓
7.2 Engages stakeholders in the processes of continuous improvement			✓	
7.3 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement is aligned with the system's vision and expectations for student learning				✓
7.4 Ensures that each school's plan for continuous improvement includes a focus on increasing learning for all students and closing gaps between current and expected student performance levels				✓
7.5 Provides research-based professional development for system and school personnel to help them achieve improvement goals				✓
7.6 Monitors and communicates the results of improvement efforts to stakeholders			✓	
7.7 Evaluates and documents the effectiveness and impact of its continuous process of improvement			✓	
7.8 Allocates and protects time for planning and engaging in continuous improvement efforts system-wide				✓
7.9 Provides direction and assistance to its schools and operational units to support their continuous improvement efforts				✓