

**MUNCIE
COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS**

STRATEGIC PLAN

Update 10/10/23

MCS Vision: Placing Learners First

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



A Letter from Dr. K.

It's wonderful to look back on the first couple of years of implementation of our Strategic Plan and seeing the progress made, and it's even more exciting thinking about what's left to accomplish. As we enter year three of the plan, we have a clear path forward to accomplish the goals charted at the outset, but let's take a look at some of the achievements to date:

- Savings of over \$166,000 in Pre-K costs through On My Way Preschool Grants and Child Care and Development Fund awards. (p. 8)
- Full accreditation achieved by all Pre-K teachers and assistants in early childhood education. (p. 9)
- Highest teacher retention rates received. (p. 19)
- Competitive salaries for teachers and administrators that meet or exceed those of other area school districts. (p. 18)
- Major building upgrades in four schools through federal funding with no costs to local taxpayers. (p. 24)
- Community pride in the new MCHS stadium and sports facility, which played a role in attracting a record 70 boys participating on the high school football team. (p. 24)
- Early adopter of the science of reading research and an adoption of a new reading curriculum. (p. 29-30)
- An outstanding Early College program. (p. 61)
- A steady rise in student participation in after-school and summer programs provided by MCS and other community partners with enrollment over 550. (p. 68)
- Over 100 high school students employed in part-time jobs through MCS partner TeenWorks Leadership. (p.71)
- An increase of students earning post-secondary certificates and participating in internships. (p. 55-57)
- Approval of over 875 volunteers to assist in Muncie schools – a new record.

Sincerely,

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



A Note to the Reader

Our Intention

The purpose of this report is to provide our students, staff, families, community, and partners with a description of our accomplishments this past year, including the challenges we faced and the lessons we learned, including the “dashboard” which provides visual tracking of our progress. The State of Indiana requires this report in accordance with the State’s statutory directive (I.C. 20-23-18-10) of MCS forming its partnership with Ball State University. This report is to specifically include innovative methods of instruction in our schools.

Our Presentation

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

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

Within each pillar, the report presents each strategy and key action step(s) from the *MCS Innovation Plan* with four areas that describe our progress and next year’s plan.

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

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

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------|-----------|
| Not Yet Begun | Early Stages | On Track | Completed |
|---------------|--------------|----------|-----------|

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

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

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

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



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Pillar I: High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education

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

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

Rationale: Early childhood education is critical to the development of the young child’s cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development. Decades of research clearly indicates the profound differences between children that receive early education and those that do not. Early educational opportunities not only prepare children for first grade, but studies demonstrate effects into adulthood with higher completion rates of post high school education and training and increased yearly incomes. When additional factors such as poverty or trauma enter into the young child’s life, the need for early intervention and education is paramount. Thus, the provision of pre-kindergarten classrooms, for 3- and 4-year-olds in all elementary schools, is a high priority for MCS.

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed SY 2020-21

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed SY 2021-22

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In School Year 2022-23, the seven Pre-K classrooms reached 98 percent enrollment to capacity, approximately 20 students per classroom (Table 1.1).



Table 1.1. Pre-K Classroom Enrollment by Year

| Elementary School | 2018-19 Baseline | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|----------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1. East Washington Academy | 20 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| 2. Grissom | 17 | 20 | 20 | 38 | 38 |
| 3. Longfellow | -- | 10 | 12 | 19 | 20 |
| 5. North View | --- | --- | 19 | 21 | 20 |
| 4. South View | 13 | 18 | 20 | 38 | 40 |
| 6. West View | --- | --- | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Total | 50 | 67 | 111 | 156 | 158 |

However, the number of preschoolers attending, 158, represents only 50 percent of the young learners eligible to attend. As a new approach to improve the awareness of the Pre-K program, MCS began to mail informational postcards to all families of 3-4 year olds within the district’s boundaries in Spring 2023. Other approaches continued from prior years with all schools promoting Pre-K enrollment on their weekly communications and at school events, and through the use of social media with audience-specific video messaging. MCS continued to list its program on the state’s website for families to “Find Childcare” (<https://www.in.gov/fssa/childcarefinder/>).

Additionally, MCS leads the preschool special education cooperative for Delaware County and provides a language group and a developmental preschool classroom with specific services, such as physical and speech therapy. This year, 70 young children participated, an increase from 50 participants the prior year.

Next Steps: Following its commitment to increasing Pre-K classrooms as the need and resources allow, MCS plans to open four new classrooms in SY 2023-24 at:

- East Washington Academy
- Grissom Elementary
- South View Elementary
- Longfellow Elementary (directed by Huffner)

This will bring the total number of Pre-K classrooms to twelve – an increase of nine classrooms from when the MCS Strategic Plan began in 2018-19 (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Pre-K Classrooms in MCS Elementary Schools

| Elementary School | 2018-19 Baseline | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | Proposed 2023-24 |
|--------------------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------------|
| 1. East Washington | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 2. Grissom | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. Longfellow | --- | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 5. North View | --- | --- | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 4. South View | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. West View | --- | --- | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 3 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 12 |



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

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

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS strove to improve communication about the On My Way (OMW) preschool funding in SY 2022-23 in ways similar to prior years: distributing flyers for various audiences and at multiple sites (e.g., at MACC; through DCS caseworkers); using social media; and registering families at the Pre-K and Kindergarten registration events held at all elementary schools in the Spring.

This school year, MCS met regularly with the Delaware County OMW regional manager to determine ways to assist families in obtaining Pre-K funding, including: the OMW Pre-K application provided in the family school enrollment package; holding events to assist families in completing the forms; and offering incentives. The second funding source, *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)*, helps low-income families pay for childcare costs, with the requirements that the families use the funds to allow parents to work, attend training, or continue their education. To increase the number of families receiving this funding, MCS staff reviewed applications and assisted families in completing the forms.

The results of these efforts led to increased family use of both financial programs – OMW and CCDF – with an increase of 40 families in 2022-23 from 27 in 2021-22 (Table 1.3). The number of families using state-provided tuition payments increased from 17 percent to 25 percent this year.

Table 1.3. Children Receiving OMW Grants and CCDF

| Elementary Schools | 2018-19 Baseline | | 2019-20 | | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | OMW | CCDF | OMW | CCDF | OMW | CCDF | OMW | CCDF | OMW | CCDF |
| 1. East Wash. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| 2. Grissom | 3 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 0 |
| 3. Longfellow | --- | --- | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 19 | 0 |
| 4. North View | --- | --- | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| 5. South View | --- | --- | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| 6. West View | --- | --- | -- | -- | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Subtotal | 3 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 18 | 0 | 19 | 8 | 39 | 1 |
| Families Receiving Funds | 3 | | 10 | | 18 | | 27 (17%) | | 40 (25%) | |



The increased number of Pre-K families using state-provided preschool funding brings in substantial monetary support for the district’s preschools. This amount increased from 17 percent of families in 2021-22 to 40 percent in SY 2022-23 (Table 1.3), reaching a total of total of \$164,344 (Table 1.4).

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

| Elementary Schools* | 2018-19 Baseline | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. East Washington | --- | \$ 1,939 | \$ 3,698 | \$ 14,290 | \$ 28,827 |
| 2. Grissom | \$ 9,038 | \$ 29,411 | \$ 60,087 | \$ 26,671 | \$ 57,017 |
| 3. North View | --- | --- | --- | \$ 25,084 | \$ 27,268 |
| 4. South View | --- | \$ 13,937 | \$ 24,393 | \$ 38,739 | \$ 23,275 |
| 5. West View | --- | --- | --- | \$ 27,467 | \$ 30,957 |
| Total | \$ 9,038 | \$ 45,287 | \$ 88,178 | \$ 132,251 | \$ 167,344 |

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

Next Steps: MCS believes that up to 75 percent more families are eligible for OMW grants and CCDF awards. To increase the number of families receiving financial support, which will allow MCS to sustain and increase the number of Pre-K classrooms, the district will, in SY 2023-24:

- Hire a Pre-K coordinator to assist caregivers with the On My Way PreK application process.
- Include the OMW application for parents to complete as part of Pre-K registration.

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

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Accreditation for Pre-K classrooms occurs at both the state and national levels. In Indiana, the *Paths to Quality* (PTQ) serves as the accrediting organization with national accreditation through the National Association of Early Childhood Education or NAEYC. MCS’ goal is to provide high-



quality education for its young students, seeking accreditation at both the state and the national levels. As each new Pre-K classroom began, MCS sought and received the state’s PTQ accreditation with a rating of Level 3 (Table 1.5). All Pre-K sites completed their annual visit from the state agency in SY 2022-23 receiving Level 3 ratings with Longfellow, the initial program in the district and administered by Huffer, receiving Level 4.

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

| Pre-K Programs | 2018-19 Baseline | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | Desired Level |
|--------------------|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|
| 1. East Washington | --- | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Grissom | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Longfellow | --- | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 4. South View | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. North View | --- | --- | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. West View | --- | --- | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |

The MCS goal is for all Pre-K sites to achieve the rating of “4” (or “Excellent”) which requires multiple additional components to be completed and observed – a high bar for all early childhood programs. The NAEYC requirements at Level 4 are rigorous and culminate with a state agency on-site visit to determine the level achieved.

One of the requirements for Level 4 is the hiring of staff with the appropriate degrees and certifications. In Indiana, lead Pre-K teachers must hold an associate degree (AA) in early childhood education and assistant teachers a certificate as a Child Development Associate (CDA). In the prior years, all lead teachers held an AA but only half of the assistants held CDAs. To provide opportunities for the assistant teachers to receive their certificates, in Summer 2022, MCS launched a new program offering an accelerated course leading to a CDA through the MACC’s Adult Education Program. Professional development specialists from the state CDA council served as the instructors. With this training, all MCS Pre-K lead teachers and assistant teachers now hold the appropriate, required certification or degrees (Table 1.5).

Table 1.5 Pre-K Staff with Required Associate Degrees

| Pre-K Staff | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Lead Teachers: holding Early Childhood Associate Degree | 100% | 100% |
| Assistant Teachers: holding Child Development Associate Certificate | 50% | 100% |

Other accreditation requirements addressed in SY 2022-23 included assembling a portfolio of information and documentation; reviewing, editing, and developing current and new MCS Pre-K guidelines; and revising the preschool orientation process for both staff and families.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, Pre-K staff and district leadership will continue to complete the requirements to obtain the Level 4 Paths to Quality certification alongside the national NAEYC accreditation. Attention will continue to focus on staffing as locally and nationally the low pay for daycare workers and childcare



staff and educators results in continual turnover. The courses taught through MACC’s Adult Education program are critical to MCS’s ability to hire qualified, local staff to maintain and further increase the number of Pre-K classrooms. Towards implementing this strategy, MCS will:

- Continue to address the requirements for accreditation of the Pre-K classrooms.
 - Continue to provide local training through MACC in an “grow-your-own” approach to Pre-K staffing shortages.
 - Continue to provide raises to preschool teachers and assistants as funding allows.
-

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: As a requirement of Level 4 accreditation, MCS adopted a comprehensive early childhood curriculum in SY 2021-22, selecting *Creative Curriculum*, published by Learning Strategies. Implementation of the curriculum similarly across all Pre-K classrooms served as the key goal for SY 2022-23. Goal achievement occurred through the development of monthly themes taught by all Pre-K teachers. Materials purchased for the classroom learning centers allowed all classrooms to implement the theme-based curriculum. Training during early release times for staff included the topics of teaching students with special needs in the classroom; implementation of the *Creative Curriculum*; and social and emotional learning.

Next Steps: Aligned and rigorous Implementation of the preschool curriculum will continue to be the focus in SY 2023-24 to:

- Increase the rigor and consistency of the taught curriculum through multiple staff trainings as provided by Learning Strategies.
 - Select a PreK language arts program including reviewing the district’s newly adopted language arts program, Amplify’s *Core Knowledge Language Arts* (CKLA) as a possibility.
 - Purchase the selected ELA program and prepare for implementation in SY 2024-25.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 1.3 c.** Apply best instructional practices for young learners in the Pre-K classrooms.

Progress Toward the Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In Summer 2022, MCS utilized consultants from Teaching Strategies, the publishers of the *Creative Curriculum* used in all Pre-K classrooms. The consultants led several trainings for all Pre-K staff to increase their knowledge of and use of evidence-based instructional practices for young learners in alignment with the implementation of the *Creative Curriculum*.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will observe and improve evidence-based instructional practices in the PreK classrooms through the PreK consultant:



- Observing classrooms during the morning extended blocks of time.
 - Developing a report on the status of teaching, classroom management, student engagement, and the use of/need for resources.
 - Providing professional development for teachers and assistants in areas needed as determined in the report.
-

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: The adopted Pre-K curriculum, *Creative Curriculum*, includes a corresponding formative assessment called “GOLD,” which MCS adopted for SY 2022-23. GOLD, as a formative assessment, is embedded within the daily, implemented curriculum. Pre-K teachers assess students through observing students’ learning and social, and physical development in daily lessons and activities. Teachers received training and practiced implementing GOLD this school year. The assessment functions through an online portal, allowing teachers to enter observation data on a daily basis and create numerous types of reports of student growth to determine students’ gains and needs for additional support.

Next Steps: During this past school year, Pre-K staff learned to use the portal-based assessment to enter student growth and to recognize student needs. In SY 2023-24, MCS will provide training and opportunities for Pre-K teachers to:

- Produce and interpret various reports, including disaggregating student data, to determine student growth and needs.
 - Determine and provide appropriate and effective instructional practices for student remediation based on the GOLD assessment data.
-



Pillar II: Recruitment, Development and Retention of Educational Leaders

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

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

A. Development of Teachers and Leaders

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

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, Muncie Community Schools continued its three-year partnership with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) providing support in the development of school leadership, especially in the area of teachers’ use of evidence-based instructional practices. To this end, district leaders and the Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) attended the NIET national conference in July 2022 and again in March 2023, concentrating on their role in ILT development.

In addition, NIET provided monthly principal and master teacher training, including topics such as, monitoring teacher and student goals; supporting teachers in student work analysis using standards-aligned criteria; and increasing the use and impact of the mentor teachers. This past school year, NIET continued to provide onsite coaching and support to ILTs and to principals to increase school leadership capacity in anticipation of reduced NIET onsite support in the coming years.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the MCS directors for elementary and secondary school will continue to develop their roles in overseeing ILTs and PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) with NIET providing support, as needed. The directors’ focus will be to:

- Continue regular building-level cluster meetings, PLCs, to support effective instructional leadership practices in all schools.
- Improve the ILTs’ ability to (a) identify students’ and teachers’ needs; (b) provide evidence-based supports to address the determined needs; and (c) increase the quantity and quality of school communication internally and externally.
- Increase the ability and effectiveness of mentor teachers to support classroom teachers in their instructional practices through modeling and coaching.



- Implement a field-testing process to validate the use of specific evidence-based instructional practices: (a) PLCs or other small groups of teachers study a specific practice or strategy, (b) teachers volunteer to implement the practice in their classrooms, (c) teachers present the results of using the instructional practice, (d) additional teachers implement the practice, and (e) teachers discuss the results and, if positive, may model the practice to all teachers for school- or district-wide adoption.
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, master and mentor teachers led the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in each school. To improve their knowledge and skills, they received training from NIET regarding: (a) planning and facilitating high quality professional learning sessions; (b) demonstrating or modeling best practices instruction for classroom teachers; and (c) coaching teachers to improve their instructional practices.

Next Steps: With several years of training and preparation behind them, master and mentor teachers will receive support from NIET in SY 2023-24 to hone and deepen their abilities to lead, model, and coach through:

- Continued regular classroom observations of teacher instruction based on areas of weakness as determined by the PLCs.
 - Conducting field testing of mentor/master teachers' implementation of high-impact classroom instructional strategies, followed by reflection and discussion (a) to deepen their planning for professional learning meetings and aligned coaching; (b) to support the district directors as they observe instruction and provide critical feedback; and (c) to co-plan and observe cluster meetings, providing feedback to master teachers in leading professional development.
 - Continued modeling to ensure teacher progression through regularly conducting instructional observation rounds with a focus on teacher ability to (a) integrate success criteria into lessons as a means of assessing student mastery and (b) provide differentiation of activities to increase student engagement.
 - Modeling of best instructional practices to strengthen the ITLs by demonstrating effective leadership and participation.
 - Leading observations of NIET-trained, strong PLTs in other school districts to increase their knowledge, skills, and practices.
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: The PDS liaisons continued to provide teacher support in the elementary and middle schools in SY 2022-23, collaborating with the teachers on school goals that would impact



instructional strategies. After beginning the year with four liaisons, the district increased this number to six at the start of the second semester, resulting in a liaison at each elementary school. The secondary schools worked with two liaisons with the focus remaining on English language arts (ELA) and mathematics.

To determine the needed focus areas, the PDS liaisons and school principals reviewed the school's yearly goals to determine the liaison's focus areas as related to instruction. For example, one elementary school liaison provided professional development on writing.

Next Steps: The PDS liaisons will continue to provide teacher support for SY 2023-24 in the following areas:

- In elementary schools: Math instruction; student behavior; and teaching students with special needs.
- In middle schools: Math instruction and English Language Arts instruction.

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, NIET continued to increase the skills of school leaders to effectively analyze instructional practices in alignment with the 2022 updated NIET rubric and evaluation process. Training and practice allowed principals to deepen their skills and knowledge of high-quality evaluation and feedback processes. Master and mentor teachers received continued support through weekly professional learning meetings and instructional coaching activities led by NIET and district directors.

To ensure valid evaluations, district elementary and secondary directors and building level administrators completed NIET training through observing videos of classroom instruction, followed by rating the instructional practices used. MCS requires passing scores in the observation testing before administrators may rate classroom instruction in their own schools. District and school level administrators conducted paired walkthroughs and observations to increase interrater reliability.

The NIET Evaluation holds high expectations for teachers with the rating of "highly effective" now indicating an exceptional educator. In SY 2022-23, an appropriate percentage, about one-third of the teaching staff, received "highly effective" ratings (Table 2.1).



Table 2.1 MCS Yearly Teacher Evaluation Ratings

| Rating | MCS-created Evaluation Tool | | | | MCS-adopted NIET Evaluation Tool | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----|---------|-----|----------------------------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | |
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Highly Effective | 175 | 59% | 141 | 57% | 137 | 38% | 95 | 33% | 99 | 32% |
| Effective | 118 | 39% | 107 | 43% | 217 | 59% | 186 | 64% | 194 | 62% |
| Improvement Necessary | 5 | 2% | 0 | 0% | 11 | 3% | 7 | 3% | 19 | 6% |
| Ineffective | 0 | -- | 0 | -- | 0 | -- | 0 | -- | 0 | |
| Total Evaluated | 298 | -- | 248 | -- | 365 | -- | 281 | -- | 312 | |

Next Steps: Ensuring the consistent and valid implementation of teacher evaluation is critical to improving student learning. Thus, in SY 2023-24, the district directors, with NIET support will:

- Improve principals and school leaders’ abilities to conduct objective and valid observations and ratings of teacher evaluation components.

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Similar to the teacher evaluations, school leaders, principals and assistant principals also receive evaluations. The directors of elementary and secondary schools complete the NIET Principal Standards Rubric and evaluation process with support from NIET on a yearly basis. In analyzing the SY 2021-22 principal evaluations, MCS identified the high priority needs of school leaders and provided training in those areas. As with the teacher evaluation, district and school leaders continued to receive NIET training and practice to calibrate district and school leaders’ ratings in the domains, indicators, and descriptors of the Principal Standards Rubric.

Next Steps: MCS, with NIET support, will continue to improve district and school leaders’ ability to conduct observations and discussions, leading to valid ratings on the Principal Standards Rubric. For SY 2023-23, improving directors’ and principals’ observation and ratings in specific teaching areas will be the focus:

- Instructional Needs: Instruction, instructional focus, curriculum and assessment, and teacher effectiveness.
- Student learning and content level mastery.
- Adjusting instruction and assessments to ensure student mastery.
- Implementation of specific instructional strategies to engage students in learning and to meet individualized student needs.



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

Progress Toward the Goal: Completed, SY 2020-21

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

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

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: MCS desires all staff members to develop an awareness of poverty and its implications for Muncie students and families. To this end, MCS utilizes Poverty Simulation Training which consists of a 3-hour role-playing experience that demonstrates what life is like during a given month for families experiencing poverty. Participants examine poverty through a different lens, discovering biases, exploring barriers in the community, and discussing solutions. The training occurs each summer for School Equity Teams (SETs), including teachers and principals and district-level administrators. For SY 2022, 41 staff members participated in the simulation training.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will

- Provide Poverty Simulation Training in Summer 2023 and will include MCS family navigators, student assistant coordinators, behavior coaches and specialists, counselors, and teachers.
 - Provide a training session for the school equity teams in Summer 2023 to be led by the director of diversity and a BSU faculty member.
-

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

Progress Toward the Goal: Not Yet Started



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

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: *Completed, SY 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: MCS established the master and mentor teacher program in SY 2019-20, with SY 2022-23 representing the fourth year of the career ladder initiative. Over this period of time, MCS selected a mentor and master teacher for each school and provided extensive training through NIET. NIET also provided training to the elementary and secondary directors on building master and mentor teachers' knowledge and skills.

***Completed Note:** This Action Step is completed as (a) mentor and master teachers are employed in every school; (b) the positions are now a district "norm," and (c) the position and use of these teachers is embedded in improving the instructional culture of all schools.

B. Recruitment and Retention of Teachers and Educational Leaders

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

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: With school districts across the country facing teaching shortages, MCS seeks various ways to employ and maintain a solid base of effective and highly effective teachers. In SY 2022-23, MCS created a \$500 bonus incentive to MCS employees who referred a licensed teacher that is rated as "highly effective" as determined by their former school district. The referred teacher must be



hired by MCS and serve for a full academic school year in order for the employee to receive the bonus. This is a first-year initiative and MCS will closely monitor results in the upcoming years.

MCS offers a second incentive for teachers at Grissom and South View elementaries as these schools are often difficult to staff. To address this challenge, MCS initiated a \$5,000 stipend to new or returning teachers to Grissom and South View if the teachers receive a highly effective evaluation from the administration.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the MCS Office of Human Resources will:

- Monitor the number of teachers receiving additional monies
 - For referring highly effective teachers to the district and MCS hiring the teacher.
 - For being evaluated and determined to be a highly effective teacher - either new or returning to the district and teaching at Grissom or South View schools.
- Evaluate the success of these initiatives and, if successful, develop additional types of incentives.

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress. From 2007-2017, MCS’ financial struggles precluded salary increases of any kind. This led to a continual downward spiral of end-of-the-year teacher exodus from MCS to local school districts with higher salaries. With the appointment of Dr. Lee Ann Kwiatkowski as MCS CEO and the development of the [Muncie Community Schools Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#), the district’s board and administrative leadership determined that increasing salaries was a critical need. Since SY 2018-19, each year, including SY 2022-23, salaries increased for teachers, support staff, and administrators.

As of SY 2020-21, MCS salaries matched those of area schools with similar increases occurring in the past three years to meet or exceed the salaries of other area school districts, (Table 2.2).

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

| Staff | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 Stipends | 2019-20 | % | 2020-21 | % |
|----------------|---------|---------|-------------------------|------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|
| Teachers | 0 | 0 | \$ 700 each | \$ 701,000 | 4.8 | \$ 645,000 | 4.4 |
| Support Staff | 0 | 0 | \$ 500 each | \$ 73,000 | 2.8 | \$ 99,000 | 2.6 |
| Administrators | 0 | 0 | \$ 700 each | \$ 30,000 | 1.0 | \$ 59,000 | 2.1 |
| Total | 0 | 0 | \$ 344,750 ¹ | \$ 804,000 | 2.9 | \$ 803,000 ² | 3.7 |

Table 2.2, continued

| Staff | 2021-22 | % | 2022-23 | % | Projected 2023-24 | % |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----|--------------|------|-------------------|-----|
| Teachers | \$1,300,000 | 8.1 | \$ 2,400,000 | 14.7 | \$ 1,496,000 | 7.8 |
| Support Staff | \$209,000 | 4.9 | \$ 279,000 | 6.7 | \$ 219,237 | 4.1 |
| Administrators | \$120,000 | 4.0 | \$ 117,000 | 3.4 | 4 | 4 |
| Total | \$ 1,629,000 ³ | 7.1 | \$2,796,000 | 11.6 | 4 | 4 |



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

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

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

⁴ Not yet available.

A second initiative that serves as evidence of progress in compensation began in SY 2021-22 with MCS' introduction of a monetary incentive program. Teachers in hard-to-staff areas receive an additional \$1,000 per semester (\$2,000 per year) incentive. This includes teachers of mathematics, science, special education, world languages, dual languages, dual certification courses (higher level courses providing both high school and college credits) and Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses.

To measure the impact of teacher monetary initiatives, the district analyzed teacher retention data. Steady increases in teacher retention rates from SY 2016-17 to this current year (Table 2.3) indicate the importance of and teachers' response to salary increases. MCS reached its highest level of teacher retention at 84 percent in SY 2022-23.

Table 2.3: Retention Rates of Teachers

| | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Teacher Count | 423 | 364 | 347 | 361 | 362 | 362 | 381 |
| Teacher Resignations | 140 | 90 | 63 | 60 | 68 | 72 | 40 |
| Retention Percent | 67% | 75% | 82% | 83% | 81% | 79% | 84% |

Next Steps: The MCS CEO and Board remain committed to providing all staff with competitive salaries. Their intention is to address salaries on a yearly basis while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Through the BSU/MCS partnership, the university provides a 50 percent tuition discount for up to six credit hours per semester for teachers. This incentive serves educators well who wish to obtain a masters' degree or an endorsement. In SY 2022-23, MCS and BSU improved the process by placing it online, thus reducing the burden of paperwork for everyone involved. In addition, MCS developed an online staff portal for employee benefits information. This school year, 27 staff members utilized the Ball State reduced tuition program, which serves as an important incentive for hiring and retaining educators (Table 2.4).

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

| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of staff participating | 33 | 28 | 34 | 22 | 27 |



Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS's Human Resources will continue to promote the BSU/MCS partnerships tuition and other discounts to new and returning teachers. They will investigate additional media sources to share this information.

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Professional learning opportunities for both educators and school leaders occurred in Summer 2022 and throughout SY 2022-23 and is reported in each individual pillar section. Some examples of professional learning opportunities included:

- Academic areas of math, reading, and science through BSU liaisons.
- Evidence-based instructional strategies through NEIT and master and mentor teachers and weekly PLTs.
- School leadership through attending the NIET National Conference.
- Project Lead the Way.
- Cultural competency.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to determine needed professional learning opportunities and retain experts in those areas to conduct the training. New training topics for SY 2023-24 include but are not limited to:

- The science of reading and the new reading program (*CKLA*) for elementary teachers.
 - Teaching civics for secondary teachers.
 - Further skill development for master and mentor teachers.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 2.5 e.** Provide highly qualified **bilingual educators** for dual language Spanish/English immersion classrooms.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: The dual language Spanish/English program at West View added another classroom as the program expands one grade level each year. MCS hired one bilingual teacher this past year for a new bilingual Grade 5 classroom at West View.

Next Steps: In SY 2022-23, MCS will hire certified bilingual Spanish/English teachers as the district is financially able to do so, including for the new 6th grade classroom at Northside Middle School.

- ◆ **New Action Step 2.5 f.** Attract and hire highly qualified and certified **educators of English language learners**, using specific methods for recruiting these difficult-to-find teachers.

Rationale: MCS' population of English language learners continues to grow, especially with the addition of Afghani refugee students in SY 2021-22. In recognition of the growth, MCS will hire additional certified teachers of English learners (ELs) to serve in the elementary school and in the new MCS Global Academy (see Pillar III, page 46).



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

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: The Minority Educators Council (MEC) - comprised of MCS teachers, counselors, and administrators of color – met three times during SY 2022-23 to discuss ways to recruit and retain teachers of color. Ideas presented included creating a mentorship program for new minority teachers with support from MEC teachers and administrators and establishing a formal partnership with the BSU Black Faculty and Staff Association. Activities included the director speaking to IUPUI (Indianapolis Campus) and BSU students to recruit Minority Teaching majors and the creation of the Minority Educators Choral Ensemble.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the director will continue to determine and implement ways to reflect cultural responsiveness in recruiting and retaining minority teachers.



Pillar III: Student-Centered Teaching and Learning

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

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

A. LEARNER-CENTERED CLASSROOMS and SCHOOLS

Rationale: MCS strongly believes that the environment in which learners learn and teachers teach is critical to the success of both; that students need to “see themselves” in the people in the schools and in the public messaging that the district sends; and that the district’s responsibility is to secure funding, as is possible, to update and upgrade buildings and classrooms to provide the best learning and working environments possible.

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

- ◆ **Action Step 3.1 a.** Enhance school-wide visual images and language to reflect the diversity of the student population in its signage and displays and in all aspects of marketing and communications.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS took a step forward in SY 2022-23 as the directors of communications and diversity collaborated to ensure the representation of various student groups in the districts’ social media sites and in community communications. The administrators intentionally selected students to photograph that fairly represented the races and ethnicities of the MCS student body. In addition, principals shared a monthly diversity quote in their daily announcements throughout the year and in Spring 2023, community-wide banners promoted school enrollment with photos of students from all minority groups.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the MCS administration will:

- Continue to intentionally work towards student representation in all areas of marketing and communications to reflect the diversity of the district.

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



Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MCS held meetings with The Mind Trust to learn of their curriculum development efforts for students in middle and high schools. A group of curriculum experts, teachers, and students reviewed and approved the new Mind Trust curriculum. The curriculum is alignment to the Indiana State ELA Academic Standards and offers students and teachers literacy readings and activities based on famous diverse Hoosiers.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, middle and high school ELA teachers will:

- Embed The Mind Trust curriculum within the currently adopted ELA curriculum to strengthen students' awareness of the accomplishments of a diverse group of Hoosiers.

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

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS seeks to update its school buildings to serve as optimal learning environments for all students. While COVID-19 resulted in negative effects in student learning, it positively offered funding to improve the structures of schools through new federal funding. The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (*ESSER Fund*) created a new source of funding with “school construction” as an allowable expense.

In 2019-21, MCS conducted structural and educational reviews of all buildings and determined that three schools needed remodeling or restructuring to improve the learning environment, including improvements in safety and security, air quality, and acoustics. Over the past three years, MCS buildings received major construction updates through the ESSERS funds with two other major projects—the high school cafeteria and the sports facilities project—paid for from other sources (Table 3.1).



Table 3.1. MCS School Building Construction Projects

| School and Funding Source | Purpose | Changes Made | Timeline |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------|
| East Washington - Built in 1972 - Funds: ESSERS | All classrooms needed changing from “open concept” design to individual classrooms with four walls | Walls for each classroom; reconfigured lobby; upgrades to HVAC and IT; new plumbing and toilets; new flooring | 2021-22 completed |
| Muncie High - Built in 1974 - Funds: Food Service Account | Lunchroom needed change from “cafeteria style” to modern “bistro-style” | New varied seats and tables and groupings; new paint with school logos; new flooring & countertops | 2022-23 completed |
| South View - Built in 1980 - Funds: ESSERS | Follows same open-concept structure as EWA; will undergo similar redesign and updates | To be completed school opening SY 2023-24 | 2022-23 In progress |
| West View Elementary - Built in 1953 - Funds: ESSERS | Extension needed as student enrollment increased, resulting in overcrowding | Construction of a new wing with multiple student classrooms | 2023-24 In progress |
| MCHS Sports Facilities project - Built in 1950 (72 years old) - Funds: Bonds (no change in tax rate) | <u>Project I:</u> Demolishing and replacement of current cement stadium and natural grass field (which created mud and puddles) <u>Project II:</u> Demolishing and replacement of concessions stand and restrooms housed under the stadium, which led to continual water and plumbing problems | <u>Project I:</u> New steel & aluminum stadium structure; installation of artificial turf; field striped for football & soccer; seating 4 ft. higher for better viewing; new 8-lane track for field & track events; new LED lighting & goal posts <u>Project II:</u> New building containing restrooms and concessions, near south end of field; locker rooms with restrooms | 2023-24 (August) In progress |

MCS board and administration appreciate this unique opportunity to modernize the school buildings through a variety of funding sources.

Next Steps: ESSER funding and a bond project allows for the completion of several MCS construction projects in Summer/Fall 2023 and Spring 2023 as noted in Table 3.1:

- South View Elementary redesign with classroom walls and other updates, Summer/Fall 2023.
- West View Elementary addition of new wing to reduce overcrowding, Spring 2024.
- MCHS sports facilities, locker rooms with restrooms, Fall 2023.



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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Traditionally, schools use desks, chairs, and tables aligned in rows. Educational research shows flexible seating is beneficial to both students and teachers. Teachers are able to easily form smaller groupings of students and locate them in different areas of the classroom, utilizing all available space. Changing the placement and groupings of students throughout the week or day may improve attention, allow for physical movement, and provide choices for places to work. In SY 2023-24, MCS adopted guidelines to replace unrepairable furniture (desks, tables, chairs) with new flexible furniture, as funding allows.

However, federal, state, and local grants rarely include “school furniture” as an allowable expense. Thus, MCS cannot obtain outside funding for furniture and can only make limited purchases at any given time, which the district is committed to doing.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, and in all following years, district staff will:

- Replace unrepairable classroom furniture with flexible seating as the budget allows.

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

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed* SY 2022-23

***Completed Note:** The IT Department will continue to review and addresses improvements and changes needed in technology and e-learning programs, systems, and processes to address changing student, teacher, and staff needs. At the beginning of each school year, the district will provide new staff and students with training on MCS’ *Schoology* (the LMS).

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed* SY 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: Over the past three years, MCS initiated an e-learning program for long-term instruction and assignments that allowed students to view and interact with their teachers and other students. While originally developed as a blended learning model, with students receiving instruction in the classroom and on the computer on e-learning days, with the arrival of COVID-19, e-learning became the only method for students to receive instruction. Although a difficult process, it temporarily solved a critical need.



In SY 2022-23, MCS utilized the e-learning program for only a few days during inclement weather when school could not be conducted in person. While teachers transitioned well to synchronous e-learning during these times, families and students struggled to participate for various reasons. Based on teacher and parent feedback, MCS will return to traditional “snow days,” eliminating the use of e-learning for school-day instruction. Built-in days will be added to the district calendar if make-up days are needed in order to adhere to the 180-day school year requirements.

***Completed Note:** *Schoology* will continue to be used daily for posting assignments, uploading completed assignments and other uses and newly hired teachers will receive training, as needed.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.3 c.** Establish a consistent and rigorous e-Learning program for grades K–12 to meet short and long-term educational needs, including a virtual program that, as of 2022, is separate from MCS and named the “Muncie Virtual Academy.”

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: As required by the Indiana State Board of Education, MCS moved its original virtual e-learning program into a stand-alone school in SY 2022-23 to become the Muncie Virtual Academy (MVA). During this year, approximately 200 students enrolled – a significant decrease from the number attending during the pandemic. MCS continued its agreement with *Stride Learning* as the provider of the virtual student course instruction. Improvements made in the program this past year included the additions of student academic counseling, extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities, IT support and additional administrative and secretarial support to improve the engagement of students and families.

Next Steps: MCS will continue in SY 2023-24:

- To partner with *Stride Learning* to offer the Muncie Virtual Academy as an additional educational choice for students and families.
-

Strategy 3.4 Foster educator-created innovative projects.

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

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

B-1a. LITERACY, K-8 grades - School Years 2019-2023

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



Rationale and History: The English language arts curriculum is the most important of all curricula as learners' ability to read and write affects their success in all other subjects and later, in life. In 2018, BSU Teachers College and MCS teachers and administrators chose to adopt the literacy curriculum *Fountas and Pinnell Literacy K-5 Literacy Continuum (FPC)* with implementation in SY 2019-20. After three years of implementation, MCS determined that the program did not align well to the state's newly established criteria based on the "science of reading." This MCS Strategic Plan update reports the progress on the Action Steps for this third and final year of the FPC curriculum. This is followed by Action Step 3.6 which introduces the newly selected K-5 reading literacy curriculum.

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, SY 2021-22

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, SY 2019-20

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

Evidence of Progress: During the SY 2022-23, the director of elementary monitored classroom instruction of FPC across the district.

***Completed Note:** MCS is replacing the FPC literacy program with a new literacy curriculum aligned to the science of reading for SY 2023-24.

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

Evidence of Progress: During the SY 2022-23, the director of elementary monitored classroom instruction of FPC across the district.

***Completed Note:** MCS is replacing the FPC literacy program with a new literacy curriculum aligned to the science of reading.



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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed, SY 2020-21

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed* SY 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, teachers and administrators received professional development on the *i-Ready* data Formative Assessment Cycle to improve their ability to interpret student data. During regularly scheduled data meetings, principals and master teachers led the review of student data and the discussion of the appropriate instructional practices, corresponding to student literacy needs.

***Completed Note:** This action step was specific to the assessments used alongside of the FPC literacy program. With a change in the literacy curriculum in 2023-24, a new action step will reflect the continued use of *i-Ready* and the addition of *DIBELS* as the two formative assessments (see Action Step 3.6 c).

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Support from *Curriculum Associates* (CA) in SY 2022-23 included professional development for administrators and master teachers on leading data meetings, utilizing *i-Ready* data and suggested resources in the meetings, and practices for leading this initiative. Leaders practiced conducting student data chats and goal setting. CA continued its check-in meetings to monitor progress and provide support through the following meetings:

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

Teachers received three days of professional development during the school year to support the continued implementation of the Formative Assessment Cycle.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24:

- Contract with Curriculum Associates to provide professional development regarding the use of *i-Ready* formative assessment data to inform teacher instruction.
-



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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

Evidence of Progress: MCS utilized OG as an important supplemental phonics literacy program to support the Fountas and Pinnell literacy curriculum with some teachers electing to receive training on the program at Marian University in Summer 2022.

***Completed Note:** With the implementation of the new K-5 reading curriculum, the Orton Gillingham Approach will no longer be needed as phonics is built into the newly adopted curriculum. The curriculum includes daily phonics lessons for teachers to implement with corresponding phonics-based spelling lists each week.

B-1b. LITERACY, K-8 grades: School Years beginning 2023-24

Strategy 3.6 Develop and implement with fidelity a K-5 core reading (English language arts) curriculum with best-practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments that adhere to the Science of Reading.

MCS Adoption of a New K-5 Reading Curriculum

School districts examine their subject-area curricula routinely and determine changes needed based on numerous factors. In Fall 2022, MCS reviewed its current K-8 reading curriculum, *Fountas & Pinnell*, as selected four years prior by MCS and Ball State. Since the appointment of the MCS school board by Ball State and the subsequent hiring of the current superintendent, improving student reading levels emerged as a major priority for the district. School and district staff routinely disaggregated student reading data over the years, and while recognizing and appreciating the teachers’ and staffs’ hard work in implementing the Fountas & Pinnell reading curriculum, determined the need to adopt a new curriculum to increase student reading growth.

At the same time, calls for a change in the teaching of reading arose across the country, and in Indiana through the state legislature. Findings from research and best practices determined that a student’s ability to understand and master five specific components of English was the determining factor in becoming a successful reader. Recent studies include those from neuroscience of struggling readers with the studies corroborating the earlier findings – successful readers master the five components that combine to form English as a language. The teaching and learning of the five foundational reading skills, called “The Science of Reading,” is not new; what is *new* is the school district’s commitment to ensure that all educators rigorously teach the five components (Table 3.2):

Table 3.2 Foundational Skills for Learning to Read

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Phonemic awareness | 4. Vocabulary |
| 2. Phonics | 5. Comprehension |
| 3. Fluency | |



Indiana solidified its promise for the teaching of reading using the science of reading when the state legislature passed Indiana House Bill 1558 in May 2023. The bill requires school districts to (a) adopt a reading curriculum that adheres to the science of reading and (b) ensure that K-5 teachers focus on student learning of the five foundational skills of the science of reading. MCS, having reached a similar conclusion six months earlier, began exploring science of reading curriculum and selected *Core Knowledge Language Arts* (CKLA) in Spring 2023 – thus becoming an early-adopter of the science of reading for Fall 2023.

- ◆ **NEW Action Step 3.6 a. ELA curriculum, K-5:** Evaluate, select, and purchase a K-5 literacy curriculum aligned to the science of reading, which focuses on the teaching and learning of five reading foundational skills: phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed SY 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: MCS began the process of determining a new science-based literacy curriculum in Fall 2022 as three of the elementary schools became recipients of an Indiana School Improvement Grant (SIG). A requirement of the funding was district establishment of an Education Transformation Team (ETT) with district and school staff and the community as members. The purpose of the ETT was to create goals per the SIG requirements and to monitor the school’s implementation of the goals.

In Fall 2023, the ETT conducted online searches of reading curricula with claims of alignment to the science of reading. In evaluating the curricula, the team’s selection criteria included: a continual focus on teaching and learning of the five foundational reading skills; student readings and books with content that is of interest to and appropriate for Muncie learners; ample teacher resources and supports; and online and digital learning opportunities. Once the team determined a probable “best choice” for the curriculum, they interviewed numerous reading experts across the country and spoke with school districts currently implementing the best choice curricula.

With additional input from MCS teachers, district administrators and the ETT selected the reading curriculum produced by *Amplify: Core Knowledge Language Arts* (CKLA). CKLA adhered to the selection criteria in multiple areas:

- Built on the science of reading.
- Connects deep content knowledge learning with the five reading foundational skills.
- Develops topic background knowledge to make connections across content areas.
- Includes digital features, multimedia resources, and educational games to increase engagement and flexibility.
- Contains a library of 300 pre-loaded books, with national recognition for diversity content.

The team presented information about *CKLA* to the Muncie Board of Trustees on April 11, 2023, and received approval for adoption. MCS ordered the curriculum materials immediately with scheduled arrival in Summer 2023 for use in SY 2023-24.

Next Steps: *Amplify CKLA* includes a Pre-K program for MCS to consider in SY 2023-24 by:

- Organizing a curriculum-adoption team with knowledge of early childhood development and/or early literacy as well as K and 1st grade teachers.
- Reviewing the team’s analysis of the *CKLA* in its appropriateness for PreK students,
- Purchasing the selected curriculum and planning future training for teachers.



- ◆ **NEW Action Step 3.6.b ELA curriculum, K-5, District-based:** Implement the philosophy and the five foundational reading skills as presented in the *Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)* reading curriculum with fidelity, and as based on the science of reading and provide on-going teacher professional training supports.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

Next Steps:

1) MCS-Provided Supports for Teachers and Principals

As this Action Step is critical to the academic success of Muncie learners, MCS began planning the new reading curriculum launch in SY 2022-23. In Summer 2023 K-5 teachers and principals will attend a two-day training to understand and explore the basics of the *CKLA* curriculum. Staff will learn (or relearn) the five evidenced-based skills that learners must acquire to become proficient readers and learners.

To provide high-quality teacher support, MCS sought an educator with extensive experience in the science of reading; a deep understanding of evidence-based, best-practices reading instruction and ideally, personal experience with the *CKLA* curriculum. MCS found their new reading expert in a nearby East Central Indiana school district. She is a long-time educator, serving as a teacher, instructional leader, and principal. She introduced the *CKLA* curriculum to the schools in her district and directed the implementation of the curriculum. Her knowledge and experience with *CKLA* will provide much-needed support in the first semester's launch of the program in Fall 2023.

Additional professional support during the school year will include:

- Early release times within grade-levels to receive specific training on each of the five skills by the *CKLA* expert.
- Individual classroom job-embedded teacher support by the *CKLA* expert through modeling and coaching.
- Training for mentor and master teachers to align their modeling and coaching practices to reflect the philosophy and components of *CKLA* with support from the Literacy Cadre and the *CKLA* expert.
- Training at the Fall 2023 MCS Innovation Summit with specific break-out sessions on the science of reading.

2) State-Provided Supports for Teachers and Principals

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) will offer several types of supports to schools and districts. One such support is the new Indiana Literacy Cadre, with MCS being selected as one of the participants. With several prior successful partnerships with Marian University, the district is eager to receive support from Marian for the literacy cadre.

The two-year commitment, funded by IDOE and the Lilly Foundation, includes multiple MCS participants: master teachers, who will serve as the literacy coaches; elementary school principals; and the Director of Elementary Education. Their participation will (a) deepen understanding of the act of learning to read, (b) increase their knowledge of the five foundational literacy skills and the stages of development for young readers, (c) and improve and allow them to utilize best coaching practices with the classroom teachers. These skills will support a strong launch of the new reading curriculum through the perspective of research and science.



- ◆ **NEW Action Step 3.6 c.1 ELA Assessments, K-5:** Utilize two formative reading assessments to routinely evaluate student progress by comparing current levels to past levels: *i-Ready* and *DIBELS*.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

- ◆ **NEW Action Step 3.6 c.2 ELA Assessments, K-5:** Identify student needs, followed by determination of appropriate instructional practices to be implemented through routinely analyzing (a) the *CLKA* curriculum-based assessment data with assistance and professional development for teachers from the *CLKA* expert and (b) the *i-Ready* and *DIBELS* formative assessment data with assistance and professional development from Curriculum Associates to identify student needs and determine appropriate instructional practices to be implemented.

Progress Toward Goal: Formative Assessments: *CLKA* and *DIBELS* - **Not Yet Begun**

Formative Assessment: *i-Ready* – **On Track** (see Action Step 3.5 e-2)

Strategy 3.7. Develop and implement with fidelity grades 6-8 core literacy (English language arts) curriculum with best practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.7 a. ELA instruction, middle school:** Increase teachers' knowledge and skills of the teaching and learning of literacy through (a) professional learning opportunities and (b) school-based master and mentor teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, MCS master teachers led professional development clusters with teachers that focused on instructional practices to teach high priority, middle school literacy standards, such as recognizing the main idea, providing details, and citing textual evidence. During the cluster meetings, teachers unpacked foundational state literacy strategies and practiced creating lessons specific to student mastery of those standards. BSU PDS liaison Dr. Susanna Benko attended the cluster meetings, providing professional development in reading, and on early release days, she discussed writing strategies for informational text.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will support ELA middle-school teachers through:

- Training in the teaching of writing through the National Writing Project during Summer 2023 (if available).
 - Training in (a) the high priority literacy standards and (b) evidence-based instructional practices during weekly professional development time at the building level.
-



- ◆ **Action Step 3.7 b. ELA assessment, middle school:** Utilize the ELA formative assessment, *i-Ready*, for middle school students with teachers routinely analyzing data to determine student strengths and areas of weakness and use that information to plan and implement best instructional practices for teaching to the learning gaps.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2022-23, Curriculum Associate's *i-Ready* specialists met with middle school administrators and building leaders to examine and interpret student data from the writing formative assessment. Master teachers and classroom ELA teachers created high priority standard assessment calendars to increase the intentionality of teaching lessons that correspond to the state standards. In addition, in collaboration with NIET, educators used *i-Ready* assessments as monthly benchmark assessments to monitor student mastery of the standards.

In June 2023, school leadership teams in partnership with Ball State and consultants from NIET and *i-Ready* reviewed and analyzed student results from ILEARN and *i-Ready*. They determined areas of student writing strengths and areas of weakness, from which they developed middle school literacy goals and corresponding instructional strategies to be implemented in SY 2023-24.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, ELA teachers and principals will:

- Continue to receive training from the MCS director of secondary education and consultants from NIET and *i-Ready* on examining and disaggregating student data on formative assessments followed by identifying the corresponding state standards that most need further instruction.
- Continue to receive training on identifying corresponding remediation and instructional practices to assist the learners.
- Conduct monthly check-ins with the district administrative team and the *i-Ready* staff to review areas of student needs and areas of growth.

B-2. MATHEMATICS

Strategy 3.8. Develop and implement with fidelity the K-5 mathematics core curriculum with best practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments.

Rationale: Along with English language arts, mathematics is a foundational content area and one that all students need to master to be successful learners at school and well-prepared for college and careers. To improve student knowledge in math, MCS will select a rigorous curriculum and materials, ensure teachers use research-based practices for teaching math, and utilize formative assessments to determine student learning, growth, and areas of improvement needed.

-
- ◆ **Action Step 3.8 a. Math curriculum, K-5:** Adopt a mathematics curriculum that aligns to Indiana Academic Standards and indicates ILEARN Blueprints and create a district-wide curriculum map.



Progress Toward Goal: *Completed SY 2022-23

***Completed Note:** MCS adopted Curriculum Associate's *Ready Mathematics* curriculum for grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.8 b. Math instruction, K-5:** Increase teacher and administrator knowledge of and skills in teaching mathematics through professional learning opportunities provided by *I-Ready* experts from Curriculum Associates and school-based mentor and master teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Next Step: For SY 2023-24, MCS will provide:

- Professional development for K-5 teachers in the teaching of math from *i-Ready/Ready Math* curriculum experts from Curriculum Associates and from MCS school-based mentor and master teachers.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 3.8 c. Math assessments, K-5:** Analyze results of *i-Ready* formative assessment with K-5 teachers implementing changes in instruction and content depending on data results of students' mathematics learning gaps with assistance in training from MCS mentor and master teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, PreK-5 teachers received professional development from MCS mentor and master teachers and from the *i-Ready* consultant. Grade-level teachers reviewed formative assessment data and, with the math experts, determined findings and trends in the data which led to discussions about and decisions on the appropriate student learning groups and the best instructional practices for teaching/reteaching the math content.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will continue to provide support to K-5 teachers regarding the teaching of math through:

- Professional development from *i-Ready/Ready Math* curriculum experts from Curriculum Associates and from MCS school-based mentor and master teachers.
-

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

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



- ◆ **Action Step 3.9 a. Math curriculum, middle school:** Adopt a mathematics curriculum that is aligned to Indiana Academic Standards with indication of the ILEARN Blueprints and create a district-wide curriculum map.

Progress Toward Goal: *Completed SY 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2021-22, BSU and MCS staff reviewed middle school math curriculum and selected *Reveal Math™* published by McGraw-Hill as the new curriculum. *Reveal Math™* aligns with the Indiana Math State Standards to prepare students in 7th grade to be successful in 8th grade Algebra.

In SY 2022-23, Ball State PDS liaison Dr. Andrew Gatza created curriculum maps for both grades, outlining the timing for presenting the chapters, sections, or lessons in the textbook and listing the corresponding state standards. Dr. Gatza met regularly with the middle school math teachers during cluster meetings, math department meetings, and early release time, to guide them in using the map and determining changes needed in the map.

***Completed Note:** In Summer 2023, the math department staff worked alongside Dr. Gatza to make final revisions to the curriculum map. The map will be updated to correspond with new or edited math state standards in the future, as needed.

Action Step 3.9 b. Math instruction, middle school: Increase teacher and administrator knowledge of and skills in teaching and learning mathematics through professional learning opportunities.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2022-23, the middle school math department continued professional development through cluster meetings with a focus on National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) eight effective math instructional strategies, in relation to the newly adopted math curriculum. In addition, a team of math teachers, the mentor and master teachers and Dr. Gatza shared their process for learning about best instructional strategies at the Indiana Council of Teachers of Mathematics State Math Conference.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the use of best instructional practices by the math teachers will continue through:

- Training on effective mathematical instructional strategies by the Ball State math liaison and MCS master teachers.
 - Field-testing of instructional strategies by mentor teachers followed by sharing of the results during the ILT team meetings and the weekly math cluster meetings.
 - Implementation of the field-tested instructional strategies by the classroom math teachers with the sharing of the results in the ILTs meetings and with math department staff and middle school staff members.
 - Utilization of the recently developed instructional calendars in determining which math topics, concepts, and standards to teach each week by the math classroom teachers.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 3.9 c. Math assessments, middle school:** Analyze results of formative assessments followed by grades 6-8 math teachers implementing changes in instruction and content depending on data results of students' learning gaps in math.



Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: The new math curriculum, *Reveal Math™*, provides summative assessments at the end of each module which the teachers instituted in SY 2022-23. Math department meetings included discussions on the assessment data, overall areas of strength and need, and determination of appropriate instructional strategies for re-teaching skills not yet mastered.

Next Steps: For SY 2023-24, MCS 6-8 grade math teachers will:

- Continue to use monthly *Reveal Math™* module assessments to measure student performance on high priority standards and student mastery of the curriculum.
- Continue to receive support in data interpretation from the MCS director of secondary instruction, the instructional leadership teams, the BSU PDS Liaison, and NIET consultants.

Strategy 3.10 Develop and implement with fidelity the high school core mathematics curriculum with best practices instruction and valid and reliable assessments.

Action Step 3.10 a. Math curriculum, high school: Develop a district-wide mathematics curriculum map for high school, aligned to Indiana Academic Standards.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In Spring 2022, MCS adopted the McGraw Hill *Reveal Math™* textbook series for high school. To establish a teaching alignment between the textbook and the Indiana State Standards, the math department with support from Dr. Gatza, BSU professor, developed curriculum maps. The team also created a curriculum guide to be shared with students and families. Professional development for the high school teachers occurred through weekly professional clusters and monthly early release days.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24 the high school math department, with the assistance of Ball State, will:

- Further implement the curriculum map for high school mathematics.
- Revise/update the map in Summer 2024 based on a full year of teaching the curriculum.
- Increase students' and families' understanding of what will be taught and when by sharing the math curriculum guide with them.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.10 b. Math instruction, high school:** Increase teacher and administrator knowledge of and skills in teaching and learning mathematics through professional learning opportunities from Ball State and from school-based master and mentor teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MCS focused on the development of curriculum maps with Dr. Gatzka, Ball State professor and Central's master math teacher as the first step in attending to the teachers' instructional practices to teach math. Math teachers also received monthly professional



development during early release days. With the maps in place, the focus in SY 2023-24 will become evidence-based instructional practices for teaching math.

Next Steps: MCS will continue to focus on best practices for teaching math and for assessing students at the high school level with the following occurring in SY 2023-24:

- Modeling of best instructional practices for teaching math by master teachers with continuous support for teacher implementation of the practices through coaching.
- Development of common, formative assessments by teachers in cluster groups as led by master teachers.
- Implementation of the common, formative assessments by all math teachers including informal methods such as asking each student the same math question when they enter the classroom.
- Enhancement of the math curriculum maps through the addition of resources from the publishers for *Infinite Algebra* and *Reveal* with assistance from the BSU PDS Liaison.
- Development of a schedule for teachers to introduce the Khan Academy website to support students' learning Algebra and for students that are juniors to prepare for the SATs.

B-3. SOCIAL STUDIES

Strategy 3.11. Generate curriculum and teaching methods that promote history through multiple perspectives, promote civic engagement, and honor and represent the diversity and the cultures of the learners.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.11** Ensure curricula and resources represent the history, culture, and experiences of the learners to encourage growth and understanding about self and others.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed SY 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2020-21 MCS and Ball State proposed actions to review the social studies curriculum and instruction, which included the high school social studies teachers and the director of diversity conducting the review.

In SY 2022-23, the group made additions to the curricula and resources to present history through multiple perspectives including authors from diverse groups, especially those that represent the race, ethnicity, and cultures of these students. A major focus was teaching students the use of primary sources, both in images and in writing, to represent multiple and first-account views. To extend the learning to all teachers, a capstone project resulted in a presentation of the groups' curriculum additions, including a resource library, to social studies teachers.

***Completed Note:** Funding for this action step allowed MCS and BSU to work together to review social studies textbooks, curricula, and resources, with the work being completed in SY 2021-22. As the district's administrators and teachers review subject-area curricula on a rotating basis every five years, MCS recognizes that social studies curricula and resources, especially history and government, should reflect changes and/or "current events" that occur within the 5-year adoption cycle and therefore, will review the curriculum on a regular basis, adding to or editing the curriculum as deemed necessary.



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

Rationale: “STEAM” is a commonly used acronym for five connected areas of study: science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics. These fields of study share theories and practices to guide student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. Jobs worldwide are moving towards requiring STEAM skills as a basis for hiring personnel. As MCS prepares learners for the future, the district accepts their responsibility to provide students with STEAM-based thinking, skills, and experiences.

Strategy 3.12. Ensure high-quality science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) education.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 a.** For science, review and align the middle school curriculum to the state standards and ensure that teaching is “hands-on” and adheres to evidence-based best instructional practices.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2022-23, the middle school science teachers and administrators collaborated with BSU’s Department of Educational Studies to (a) review the current science curriculum maps; (b) determine evidence-based instructional practices/strategies for teaching science; and (c) examine the new instructional resources (textbook and lab supplies) in preparation for teaching science in SY 2023-24.

During the past school year, Game-Based Learning (GBL)—which engages students through immersive learning experiences—continued to develop as an appropriate instructional practice with teacher support provided by Ball State. Professional development occurred for teachers and administrators through Ball State, with Dr. Ding and Mrs. Debois presenting at the monthly, early-release days. In May 2023, the science teachers and administrators selected McGraw-Hill’s *Inspire Science* textbooks and companion laboratory experiment kits as the new middle school science curriculum.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, a successful and robust implementation of the new science curriculum will be the major focus with GBL expanded to additional classrooms. For next year, MCS will:

- Provide 2-days of training in the summer on the new science curriculum to all middle school science teachers as presented by experts from McGraw-Hill, the publisher of *Inspire Science*.
 - Ensure that middle school science teachers understand and implement with integrity the hands-on lab learning experiences at least once a week, as monitored/supported by the master teacher and building principal.
 - Provide set-aside time for teachers to meet during early release days and to attend the MCS Educational Summit to discuss and determine the teaching of the new science curriculum.
 - Implement strategies to increase student engagement (a) in middle school science through the development of customized GBL Strategies and (b) by expanding GBL in non-science middle school courses with training co-led by MCS middle school science teachers and Ball State faculty.
-



- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 b-1.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by providing training for at least two middle school PLTW teachers to lead Innovators and Makers, App Creators, and Medical Detective courses.

Progress Toward Goal: *Completed SY 2022-23

***Completed Note:** Middle school PLTW teachers received training in SY 2022-23 to teach the three PLTW courses. MCS will ensure training for PLTW teachers in the future as new courses are added.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 b-2.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by providing training for at least two high school PLTW teachers to lead two courses: Engineering and Computer Science.

Progress Toward Goal: *Completed SY 2022-23

***Completed Note:** Two high school PLTW teachers received training to teach Engineering and Computer Science in SY 2022-23. MCS will ensure training for PLTW teachers in the future as new teachers or courses are added.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 b-3.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by training additional PLTW elementary teachers to model the implementation of PLTW lessons with classroom teachers assisting in the PLTW classes.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, each elementary school hired one PLTW-trained teacher to serve as the lead in the instruction of PLTW classes. In addition, all classroom teachers received the same training to be able to co-teach the lessons alongside the PLTW teacher as the hands-on approach of the activities requires at least two adults for each classroom lesson.

MCS established a rotating schedule with a goal of all elementary students completing at least two PLTW 3-week modules during the school year. Two of the elementary schools met this goal while four did not, demonstrating the need for more attention and support in this area. To provide additional support, MCS developed pacing guides outlining a schedule of the various activities with the goals and the time allowed for each step of the activity. A chart pairing each classroom with each module serves as a rotation schedule for teacher use.

Next Steps: To assist teachers in SY 2023-24 in completing the PLTW STEM modules, MCS will:

- Establish and meet the goal of all PLTW teachers and classroom teachers co-teaching at least three PLTW modules during the school year.
 - Hold K-5 teachers responsible for completing at least three PLTW modules as overseen by the associate superintendent.
 - Provide PLTW lead teachers – as certified to conduct teacher training – with monthly early release days (a) to determine and develop plans to implement best PLTW instructional strategies and (b) to monitor progress toward meeting the three module goal and communicate progress with school administration.
-



- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 b-4.** For STEAM, increase teacher expertise by providing training using an internal train-the-trainers model in all schools with MCS PLTW teachers conducting the training.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, the six elementary PLTW teachers participated in and completed the training to become certified PLTW Lead Launch teachers. With the certification, the PLTW teachers may train new hires and current teachers. This is a time and cost saving effort for MCS as the PLTW trainers are “in-house” and available to classroom teachers, as needed.

Next Steps: For SY 2023-24, the PLTW Lead Launch Teachers will:

- Conduct in-house training of MCS elementary teachers in Summer 2023, during weekends and breaks, and in Summer 2024.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 3.12 c.** For art and music, increase the level of teacher expertise by (a) hiring licensed teachers for all elementary schools, with preference to music teachers with instrumental experience; (b) providing collaboration time for teachers to meet across schools to plan and learn; and (c) utilizing mentor teachers in elementary schools to provide professional learning opportunities and coaching.

Progress Toward Goal: *Completed, SY 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MCS hired licensed art teachers and licensed music teachers for all schools for the first time, demonstrating the value the district places on the fine arts. Collaboration time continued for the art teachers and music teachers, occurring bi-weekly in two districtwide groups. Positive comments emerged from the teachers again this year. To lead the groups, the district identified a music and an art mentor teacher. Outcomes of these district-wide teacher collaborations included the district-wide Muncie Community Sing and the Arts Fair Show at the fieldhouse.

***Completed Note:** Fully implemented this year, MCS affirms to continue to meet this goal as music and art teachers resign or retire.

Strategy 3.13. Extend students’ STEAM learning opportunities and increase the number of students enrolling in classes and courses.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.13 a.** For STEAM, implement additional, specific career path courses for the middle schools: Innovators and Makers, App Creators, and Medical Detectives; and at the high school: Engineering and Computer Science.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress #1, Middle School: During SY 2020-21, the middle schools added three mandatory PLTW career path courses: for 6th grade - App Creators; for 7th grade - Innovators and Makers; and for 8th grade - Medical Detectives. In SY 2022-23, the district developed a rotation schedule for all students to complete the three courses. Thus, the student numbers in Table 3.3 represent this year’s student enrollment by grade level, using the adopted rotation system.



Table 3.3. PLTW Student Enrollment: Northside and Southside Middle Schools

| PLTW Courses | 2019 - 20 | 2020 - 21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| 6th - App Creators | 85 | 215 | 364 | 322 |
| 7th - Innovators & Makers | 181 | 257 | 262 | 317 |
| 8th - Medical Detectives | 128 | 249 | 290 | 281 |
| Total | 394 | 721 | 916 | 920 |

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Continue to require middle school students that attend school in-person to complete the three PLTW courses.

Evidence of Progress #2, High School: In SY 2020-21, Central High School added a new career pathways PLTW course, *Introduction to Computer Science*, to the two previously offered courses - *Biomedical* and *An Introduction to Engineering and Design*. MCS' goal is to continue to provide significant and appropriate courses for high school students to prepare for college and careers, which should be demonstrated with increased enrollment over time. In 2022-23 student enrollment rates revealed increased significantly in *An Introduction to Engineering and Design* and *An Introduction to Computer Science* (Table 3.4). Enrollment decreased significantly for the course *Biomedical* to a level that the course was not offered.

Table 3.4. PLTW Student Enrollment: Muncie Central High School

| PLTW Course | 2019 - 20 | 2020 - 21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| Biomedical | 25 | 30 | 32 | Not offered |
| Engineering & Design | 26 | 28 | 54 | 76 |
| Computer Science | Not offered | 32 | 125 | 160 |
| Total Enrollment | 51 | 90 | 211 | 236 |

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, student learning opportunities in STEAM will continue to expand as MCS will:

- Continue offering three PLTW high school courses, as enrollment allows.
- Hire a PLTW high school teacher certified to teach Engineering & Design and Computer Science.
- Increase enrollment in the PLTW Biomedical course by transitioning from the course occurring in a double-period to occurring in one period.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.13 b.** Extend interest in K-5 music and art by: (a) introducing band instruments and classes in all elementary schools in Grade 5; (b) extending the partnership with BSU School of Music for courses and practicums; and (c) organizing external performances and showings.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: The first band programs began in the elementary schools in SY 2021-22 with the music directors distributing MCS-purchased band instruments to interested students. However,



scheduling a time for band during the school day became an issue in the first two years, 2021-22 and 2022-23, with band being offered at different times at the schools – before, during, or after school. Enrollment varied from 11 to 30 students in the elementary schools with Ball State music education majors volunteering in the classes. In May, a combined 5th grade band from all MCS elementary schools performed several selections at the district-wide Band-a-Rama concert.

Next Steps: For SY 2023-24, MCS will support music and art teachers by:

- Establishing an extra-curricular activities stipend for band teachers that hold their band class before or after school.
- Providing additional professional development opportunities for music and art teachers specific to best instructional practices in their fields of study to occur on early-release days and during the MCS Educational Summit.

D. LEARNING SPANISH AND ENGLISH AS NEW LANGAUGES

Rationale: MCS understands the importance of children learning languages other than their home languages – the earlier the better. Moving beyond the traditional high school foreign languages courses, MCS offers opportunities to learn Spanish through its Dual Language Program and to learn English through its English Learner Program. The dual language, English/Spanish immersion program at West View Elementary School now exists from K-5 and will expand to the middle school next year. The English Learners (EL) Programs provides K-12 services for multilingual students learning English. The programs include a research-based Newcomers Program that targets students identified as refugees and immigrants, and students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE).

Strategy 3.14: Extend opportunities for learners to obtain dual language proficiency in Spanish and English.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.14.** Determine and provide curricula, space, materials, and staffing to extend the dual language classrooms beyond the original K-2 grade levels at West View Elementary School by one additional grade level each academic year: SY 2020-21 Grade 3; SY 2021-22 Grade 4; SY 2022-23 Grade 5; and SY 2023-24 Grade 6 at Northside Middle School.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Similar to the past two years, in SY 2022-23, MCS added an additional Spanish-English dual language immersion classroom at West View Elementary – this year for fifth grade. This completes six levels of immersive classroom experience from K-5. To prepare for next year’s introduction of the immersion program in seventh grade, a team of elementary and secondary stakeholders regularly met to plan the program at Northside Middle School.

Enrollment in the Dual Language Program continues to grow each year as native Spanish-language speakers move into the Muncie area with Newcomer families from Chile, Columbia, Mexico, and Honduras. This increase in diversity provides a new learning experience for the native English speakers as well as an increase in equitable access to educational opportunities for newcomer students.



Next Steps: To prepare for Grade 6 expansion in SY 2023-24, MCS hired three licensed teachers, two of whom are fluent in Spanish, to teach immersive Spanish Language Arts and Spanish 6th Grade Math classes at Northside. The third teacher brings experience in teaching emergent bilingual students and will provide support as the 6th grade Dual Language teacher facilitates instruction in English for the other core academic classes. Also, in SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Orient new staff to the MCS dual language program.
- Secure teachers, materials, and curricula for the Northside program extension.

Strategy 3.15 Develop and implement with fidelity dual-language English-Spanish curricula across the content areas; utilize evidence-based instructional strategies for language and learning; and implement formative and summative assessments to determine students' areas of growth and need.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.15 a. Curriculum:** Select, adopt, and implement learner-centered dual language curricula for core subjects: English language arts, Spanish language arts, Spanish mathematics, and Project Lead the Way, Spanish.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, dual language staff piloted a new Spanish Language Arts (SLA) program, *Amplify's Caminos*, for grades K-2 and 3-5. A major criterion of the curriculum was its adherence to the science of reading research specific to the instruction of emergent bilingual students. As presented earlier in *Pillar III, B-1. Literacy K-8*, the State of Indiana recently adopted requirements that school districts must focus on the five foundational skills of reading English proficiency: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Readers, writers, listeners, and speakers of Spanish need to develop these same skills to be successful readers. The foundation of these languages are the phonemes that, when grouped together, create words. For example, Spanish has 22 phonemes represented by 27 symbols, and English has 44 phonemes and 26 symbols (letters). It was imperative to find a curriculum that leveraged knowledge of the phonemes that exist in both languages for students to make the metalinguistic connections necessary for their developing bilingual brains.

The new SLA curriculum, *Caminos*, divides the foundational reading skills into a Skills section and a Knowledge section for all grade levels. Utilizing high interest topics, *Caminos* integrates science and social studies standards, allowing students to apply their reading skills into real-world contexts, making it relevant and applicable to their lives. To increase dual language classroom teachers' knowledge of and ability to teach these foundational principles, MCS provides multiple opportunities for professional development.

In SY 2022-23, the MCS Director of EL visited classrooms throughout the week to co-teach, to identify student development needs, and to create a scope and sequence for professional development that was targeted and specific to the needs of the Dual Language program teachers. Teacher development occurred through weekly professional learning communities (PLCs) led by the MCS Director of EL and from support of the NIET Dual Language Mentor Teacher who helped teachers implement their new



knowledge and skills. Amplify's *Caminos* team provided teachers with full access to virtual resources for all K-5 materials to increase understanding of the scope and sequence across and within the grade levels and provided a multi-day training on the implementation of the English portion of Amplify's district-wide reading curriculum, *CKLA*. This allowed dual language teachers to analyze the connections between the Spanish and English portions of the curriculum.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Continue implementation of *Caminos* SLA curriculum with teacher support from the director of EL and the program publishers, *Amplify*.
 - Prepare for the implementation of PLTW in Spanish K-6 in school year 2023-24.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 3.15 b. Instruction:** Implement best instructional practices for (a) language development and acquisition and (b) the content areas, for dual language learners.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MCS utilized training from Global Education Initiatives at Indiana University (a) at a week-long summer institute; (b) through three on-site professional development sessions; and (c) by accessing a catalog of recorded professional development sessions.

Next Steps: MCS will continue, in SY 2023-24 to:

- Provide professional development for the teachers of dual language from Global Education Initiatives.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 3.15 c. Assessment:** Utilize two formative assessments and one summative assessment to routinely evaluate student ability in Spanish language arts, English language arts, and mathematics.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Best practices instruction relies on ongoing formative assessments to determine student growth and areas of need followed by teacher's utilizing differentiated instruction. Formative assessments completed by K-6 dual language students included *i-Ready*, *mCLASS* (English) and *mCLASS Lectura* (Spanish) (Table 3.5). Subject areas assessed are: (a) math – in English and in Spanish; (b) English language arts; and (c) Spanish language arts; thus, ensuring students achieve academically in both languages.

This SY 2021-22, the district determined the need for a summative assessment—that is, at the end of the school year— to measure students' language growth in one year's time. MCS adopted the *Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL): Spanish* as developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). The assessment allows annual progress determination through content that is appropriate for the age of the learners and corresponding to various levels of Spanish language proficiency. The test, as currently implemented, adheres to the *Indiana State Standards: Spanish* at the third and fifth grade levels.



Table 3.5. Dual Language Program: Formative and Summative Assessments

| Assessment Type | Assessment | Subject Areas | Grades |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Formative | <i>i-Ready</i> | English Language Arts | K-6 |
| | | Math - in English | K-6 |
| | | Math – in Spanish | K-6 |
| | <i>mCLASS/Lectura</i> | Spanish Language Arts | K-6 |
| | | English Language Arts | K-6 |
| Summative | <i>ACTFL</i> | Spanish Language Arts | K-6 |

As the dual language program continues to grow through middle school to high school, the long-term goal for all enrolled students will be to achieve a high level of Spanish-language proficiency, leading to their earning of the [Indiana Certificate of Biliteracy](#).

Next Steps: For SY 2023-24, the dual-language program leaders and teachers will:

- Administer the adopted formative assessments.
- Analyze student results to determine gaps and areas of weakness with the school-based support team in order to provide reteaching and remediation.
- Determine and implement instructional and programmatic needs and changes at three critical points in the school year (BOY, MOY, EOY).

◆ **Action Step 3.15 d.** Establish a student learning community that values multicultural engagement.

Progress Toward Goal: Not Yet Begun

Next Steps: MCS will begin to address this action step in 2023-24 as it initiates several actions to recognize the value of international and local cultures through:

- Offering a “World Language” course for 6th grade students at Northside Middle School.
- Establishing a Multilingual Student Advisory Board at the middle and high schools.
- Creating a “Cricket League” to support increased family engagement from a diverse array of multicultural families for whom cricket is a popular sport.

Strategy 3.16: Ensure opportunities for learners of English to obtain English language proficiency, leading to school and life success.

Action Step 3.16 a. Ensure middle and high school students that are English-learning newcomers receive support through the MCS Global Academy (newcomer program) to create a safe learning environment until they are prepared to enter general education classrooms.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track



Evidence of Progress: MCS has long provided for its English learners (ELs). Traditionally, the number of EL students enrolled at MCS has remained low. However, in SY 2021-22, international events led to a significant increase in the number of English learners with multiple Afghan families relocating from Afghanistan to Camp Atterbury, in south-central Indiana, and then settling in Muncie. A total of 46 PreK-12 learners from Afghanistan enrolled in SY 2021-22 with an additional 16 Afghan students enrolling this past school year.

To serve the needs of refugee middle and high school students, MCS established a “newcomer program” in SY 2021-22. The program grew exponentially in 2022-23 with over 100 students enrolled that were recent immigrants, refugees, and “Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education” (SLIFE). The program is full-day and occurs in a self-contained classroom, until a student’s progression allows for “pushing-out” into the general education classes with the goal of increasing the number of hours each week in those classrooms.

The rapid growth in the newcomer program brought to the director’s attention the need for a guiding document to support students and families. Together, the director, the EL team and other stakeholders created a family/student handbook with district/school policy outlines, best-practices, and a concrete system of support to incentivize students to “push-out” into the general education classrooms earlier. The team also created a name for the newcomer program—the MCS Global Academy— reflecting its mission and goals.

In an effort to celebrate the monumental success of Afghan students that completed high school credits to earn a Core 40 high school diploma, MCS hosted a graduation recognition event in May 2023. The event celebrated the high school graduates and those that received CTE certification through MACC. This combined recognition event included experiences such as a family photo booth, live Afghan music and dancing, and a take-home library of English books for each family. The celebration served as an educational opportunity for all MCS Afghan PreK-12 students and families.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the EL director and staff will:

- Launch the MCS Global Academy with an initial cohort of 10 secondary students.
- Prepare for the arrival of additional Afghan families and other refugee and immigrant families to the Muncie community.

-
- ◆ **Action Step 3.16 b.** Establish appropriate staffing and supports for English learners.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: An additional goal set for this past school year was the creation of a new position – director of English learners. The hiring of a well-qualified, highly experienced professional for this position with dedicated time to serve the EL program led to an increase in the registration and placement of students from non-English speaking families. This, then, led to two important outcomes: (a) the district’s eligibility to apply for and receive federal grant funding for ELs (Title III) and (b) an increase in newcomer families moving into the area as they learned of the positive MCS experiences from current families.

The EL director and staff collaborated with teachers from Fort Wayne Community School’s long-established EL program to select a curriculum package that aligned with the unique needs of the MCS EL student population. This led to MCS’ adoption of (a) *Amplify’s CKLA* (reading and ELA program) to



support SLIFE students that have the lowest level of English proficiency; (b) National Geographic's *Perspectives* for secondary students approaching English proficiency; and (c) National Geographic's *Global Issues* for secondary students with the highest levels of English proficiency.

Next Steps: Having selected the curriculum for elementary and secondary English learners, in SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Implement the EL curriculum with guidance and oversight from the EL director.
 - Provide teacher supports for implementation through training, modeling, and coaching.
-

- ◆ **New Action Step 3.16 c.** Attract and hire highly qualified and certified teachers of English language learners, utilizing specific methods for recruiting and development of these hard-to-find teachers.

Rationale: With the enrollment of English learners (ELs) annually increasing, the district added this new Action Step to the MCS Strategic Plan for SY 2022-23.

Progress Toward the Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: The program for learners of English as a new language or English Learners (ELs) experienced increased growth in enrollment in the past two years, requiring additional teachers of English as a new language. In SY 2022-23, MCS hired two additional bilingual teachers specifically for students from Afghanistan. However, a nationwide shortage exist in teachers with licenses for teaching ELs. Thus, in summer 2022, the director of EL programs surveyed all MCS teachers to determine fluency in languages other than English. The results showed teachers and staff fluent in five languages: Spanish, Arabic, French, Pashto¹ and Dari, and Urdu².

Acknowledging the invaluable resource of MCS teachers fluent in languages other than English, the director created a new support for middle and high school English language learners. The director and principals revised daily teaching schedules to create times for teachers and students that spoke the same languages to meet together for one period. The schools clustered the classrooms to enable the students to function as a community within the school. The director provided training on teaching English as an additional language, including learning materials and activities. She also observed the classrooms and provided feedback to the teachers.

To ensure teachers of ELs are available 5-10 years from now, the director participated in meeting and recruiting several students into a new program, to begin SY 2023-24, that serves as a “grow-our-own” model for current MCS students to become teachers of ELs in the future (see “Next Steps”).

Next Steps: The first steps of the “Grow-your-own” bilingual and EL teachers’ program will begin in Summer 2023. The director of English learners and the director of diversity will select and approach families of 8th and 9th grade students that bring cultural and linguistic diversity to the district and describe the program to them. As sophomores and juniors, the students will enroll in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) course, “Exploring Education Professions.” This course will be newly offered in SY 2023-24 and is based on a pilot course developed by the Indiana Department of Education.

¹Parhto and Dari are the two official languages of Afghanistan.

²Urdu is the national language of Pakistan.



Completion of the course will lead students into the Ivy Tech or BSU program for high school juniors and seniors, focusing on elementary and secondary education. Students will experience various educational professions including that of bilingual teachers and teachers of ELs. Hopefully, four years later, former MCS students will return to Muncie to serve as the next generation of language educators in the bilingual Spanish-English immersion classrooms and in the English learner classrooms. In addition, in SY 2023-24, MCS will create part-time instructional aide positions for the Spanish-English language immersion program. The district will seek out university students majoring in bilingual education to fill these part-time roles, allowing them to receive an early start on teaching in their native languages and the language of instruction.

The EL Program in SY 2023-24 will:

- Continue to utilize classroom teachers that are fluent in other languages to support non-English speaking students.
- Create a “Welcome Center” to be housed at Northside for newly arrived students from other countries to serve (a) as a hub for new arrivals to the US that are non/limited English-speaking students and families; (b) as a “safe space” for one or more weeks for students to learn basic English and become familiar with American school routines and customs; (c) as a place for MCS to complete testing to determine academic and language abilities; and (d) as a site to learn about school and community services.

E. PHYSICAL AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

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

Strategy 3.17. Improve K-5 learners’ nutritional and physical health through physical education classroom and extended opportunities for Grades K-5.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.17 a.** Utilize the district-wide physical education mentor teacher to provide professional learning, mentoring, and coaching to physical education teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

***Completed Note:** The BSU grant affiliated with this action step ended in June 2023.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.17 b.** Develop the In-School Physical Activity Program with BSU and IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital to improve MCS students’ physical health with BSU students creating and implementing age-appropriate physical health activities in the elementary schools.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

Evidence of Progress: In partnership with IU Health and Ball Memorial Hospital, Ball State faculty created the “MCS Child Health, Physical Activity, and Nutrition Education Initiative” in 2020. In this third year of the grant, BSU implemented the program at South View, Grissom, and East Washington



Elementary Schools occurring weekly for 10-12 weeks. A Ball State graduate student led several undergraduate students in physical education lessons.

To increase students' physical movement throughout the day, Ball State posted daily activity suggestions at the beginning of the week on *Schoolology* for teachers. At South View and Grissom, BSU students provided organized recess activities. The grant provided the three participating schools with \$15,000 in playground equipment to promote recess time activities in the future.

***Completed Note:** The BSU grant affiliated with this action step ended in June 2023.

Strategy 3.18 Improve learners' nutritional health through extended opportunities for families of students in Grades K-5.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.18 a.** Develop the In-School Nutritional Program to improve learners' health in partnership with Ball State, including age-appropriate, nutritional educational lessons integrated into the curricula.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

Evidence of Progress: A second goal of the health initiative was the infusion of nutrition education into the curriculum. In SY 2022-23, the program continued at Grissom and South View elementary schools for 10-12 weeks. A Ball State graduate student led several undergraduate students in teaching the biweekly lessons. The nutrition lessons included the basic food groups, application to children's daily eating practices, healthy snacks, and gardening and growing.

***Completed Note:** The BSU grant affiliated with this action step ended in June 2023.

Strategy 3.19 Improve the health of community members through physical and nutritional health opportunities for families of students.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.19 a.** Design and implement an After School/Evening Community Physical Health Program in partnership with Ball State and in collaboration with school principals, community stakeholders, and neighborhood associations.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

***Completed Note:** The BSU grant affiliated with this action step ended in June 2023.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.19 b.** Determine the specific and unique needs of the community in the target locale in partnership with Ball state and in collaboration with school principals, community stakeholders, and neighborhood associations.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

***Completed Note:** The BSU grant affiliated with this action step ended in June 2023.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.19 c.** Based on the determined needs, develop, and launch an after-school and evening program through the Healthy Lifestyle Center to focus on healthy lifestyle choices and adoption of healthy behaviors.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed*

Evidence of Progress: The third aim of the initiative was to improve nutritional and physical health for the school staff, families, and the community. To meet this goal, BSU created a weekly *Heathy Lifestyle Center* newsletter for teachers, with such district-wide challenges as increasing the number of steps walked each day. For families, Ball State created newsletters which were available through Schoology, and which contained home activities, healthy recipes, and nutrition advice. BSU students also volunteered at Food Pantry nights as established by MCS in each of the schools.

***Completed Note:** The BSU grant affiliated with this action step ended in June 2023.

F. PREPARING FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

Rationale: For all learners to succeed, in both school and life, MCS offers a broad array of opportunities for students to achieve academically and to gain the skills needed to pursue college and careers.

Strategy 3.20 Increase the number of learners that enroll in the Indiana 21st Century Scholars program to improve the number of MCS graduates that attend college or university.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.20.** Increase the number of learners that enroll in the Indiana 21st Century Scholars program to improve the number of MCS graduates that attend college or university.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Indiana’s 21st Century Scholars program can change the trajectory of a Muncie student’s life by providing up to four years of undergraduate tuition to income-eligible students at participating Indiana colleges and universities. Students must enroll in the program prior to the end of 8th grade and complete yearly requirements through high school, with MCS providing numerous levels of support and step-by-step guidance to assist the students.

To increase the enrollment in the program this past school year, MCS utilized the IDOE state grant received, *Explore, Engage, and Experience (3E) Grant: Establishing Meaningful PK-12 Pathways and Opportunities for All*. MCS’ partner, Project Leadership, provided in-person sessions to assist students in enrolling in the program including family enrollment activities (e.g., family nights at the high school; social media). Project Leadership also reserved sessions in the computer lab to assist students in enrolling with technical support for school administrators. Despite these efforts, student enrollment decreased in both middle schools this past year: Northside decreased from 98 percent to 88 percent of students enrolling and Southside decreased from 73 percent to 60 percent (Table 3.6).



Table 3.6. Indiana 21st Century Scholars: Enrollment

| | 2020-21 | | | 2021-22 | | | 2022-23 | | |
|------------------|----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
| | Eligible | Enrolled | Percent | Eligible | Enrolled | Percent | Eligible | Enrolled | Percent |
| Northside Middle | 93 | 82 | 85% | 110 | 108 | 98% | 126 | 111 | 88% |
| Southside Middle | 134 | 101 | 75% | 109 | 80 | 73% | 121 | 73 | 60% |

Next Steps: MCS’ difficulty in encouraging students and their families to enroll in the 21st Century Scholars program is not an uncommon experience across the state. Parents, teachers, administrators, as well as businesses, recognized the difficulties and worked with the Indiana State Legislature to create and adopt House Bill 1449 on May 29, 2023. Under the law, all eligible students will automatically be enrolled in the 21st Century Scholars program. With this burden lifted, MCS in SY 2023-24 will turn its attention to assisting students in completing the various requirements to remain an eligible scholar throughout high school.

Strategy 3.21 Establish career exploration opportunities for high school students.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.21** For Grades 9–12, MCS will discuss Graduation Pathway diploma plans with high school students during advisory period with classroom teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: During the SY 2022-23, MCS began year one of the awarded IDOE *Explore, Engage, and Experience grant*. Through this grant, community partner Project Leadership hired a career coach to work with Muncie Central High School students. With an initial task of developing the college and career curriculum to be taught during advisory period, the career coach met throughout the Spring semester with a student advisory group and with school administrators and Project Leadership to create the curriculum and particularly to develop the student career experiences. In addition, students completed surveys concerning college and career interests which led to the team developing student experiences, including the opportunity to shadow employees or to become an intern at local businesses and companies.

Next Steps: Beginning in SY 2023-24, Muncie Central will ensure that the high school students will:

- Complete the aptitude and career guidance assessment, *YouScience*, which connects student interests and aptitudes to corresponding careers and educational pathways.
- Engage in a variety of experiences, exposing students to college and careers:
 - *Freshman*: attend the MCS College and Career Fair to interact with local college staff and local employers and participate in field trips to colleges or businesses.
 - *Sophomores*: learn from college and career presenters and participate in field trips.
 - *Juniors*: be introduced to the job shadowing program, allowing students to visit community partners to learn first-hand about specific careers.
 - *Seniors*: continue in the job shadowing program, with additional opportunities for work-based internships.



- *All*: Participate in lessons about college and careers, as tailored to the interests and experiences of students at each grade level and presented by their advisory period teacher each week. Project Leadership staff will assist teachers in preparation and teaching of the lessons, with continual adaptation based on students’ responses and to ensure effective implementation.

Strategy 3.22 Extend current and create new courses to build Grades 1-12 learners’ awareness and interest in high-demand jobs.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 a.** For Grade 7, provide a new course—*Business and Information Technology*—to develop learner skills in career planning, basic business, personal fiscal responsibility, and using technology as a tool with student enrollment increasing over time.

Progress Toward Goal: *Completed

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, all 7th grade students completed the required one-semester course *Business and Information Technology* (Table 3.7). The course focused on careers and developing skills in finance, computer software programs and business. The course concluded with the students attending a community business career fair in May.

Table 3.7. *Business Information Technology Course: Enrollment and Completion Rates—7th Grade*

| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Enrollment | 156 | 262 | 284 |
| Completion Rate | 100% | 100% | 100% |

***Completed Note:** The development and implementation of the *Business and Information Technology* is completed with the course, in the next year, being integrated into the *Preparing for Colleges and Careers* high school course. Project Leadership will develop a new curriculum for the course which will be implemented in SY 2023-24, with funding through the *IDOE Explore, Engage, and Experience* grant.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 b.** For Grade 8, provide a new course—*Preparing for College and Careers*—focusing on career options and college planning in preparing for high school with course enrollment to increase over time.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS 8th grade students completed the *Preparing for College and Careers* course, in its third year as an offering, this SY 2022-23. The course included students learning the 16 career clusters followed by (a) a field trip to Ball State to experience campus life; (b) a career fair at the Horizon Convention Center; and (c) times of service as community volunteers. The MCS goal is for all students to complete this course while in middle school. Unfortunately, this past school year scheduling conflicts did not allow for students enrolled in Spanish to take the course – this will be corrected next school year. Both the enrollment and completion rates (Table 3.8) decreased, possibly in part due to the teacher’s absence on long-term medical leave. MCS plans to redesign the course in SY 2023-24 to better meet students’ interests and needs.



Table 3.8. Preparing for College and Careers: Enrollment and Completion Rates—8th Grade

| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Enrollment | 95 | 213 | 146 |
| Completion Rate* | 87% | 70%* | 40% |

Next Steps: In adherence to MCS’ goal of preparing students for their futures after high school, the district aims for all eighth graders to complete an engaging and thoughtful course about college and careers. This will be accomplished in SY 2023-24 by:

- Improving class scheduling to permit all students to enroll in and complete the course.
- Redesigning the course with an improved curriculum to deepen student engagement to increase completion rates, using funding from the IDOE *Explore, Engage, and Experience* grant.
- Developing the course curriculum with:
 - Three pillars of conversation: high school, college, and careers.
 - Emphasis on student work products such as career interest inventories, college profiles and graduation plans.
 - Student participation in speaker’s bureaus and field trips.
- Ensuring all middle school students to complete the course before attending high school.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 c.** For grades 11-12, establish new Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways that offer college credits through partnerships with colleges and universities and that provide work-based learning experiences through local business partners.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MCS offered two CTE pathways: (a) the Purdue Engineering Program with students earning college credits through Purdue University’s Polytechnic Anderson campus, and (b) the Industrial Automation and Robotics Program through Ivy Tech Community College. Through these pathways, students gained exposure to 21st Century manufacturing technologies and conceptual frameworks that are valued in modern engineering and manufacturing workplaces. Senior students participate in extended internships with local manufacturing firms such as Mursix, Magna, Muncie Power Products, Arrowhead Plastics, Delaware Glass, and GKN Aerospace.

In Summer 2022, CTE staff noted that the *Industrial Automation & Robotic* course in the Automation and Robotics pathway experienced declining enrollments over the past three years to a point that MCS could not provide the course in SY 2022-23. Another course, *Advanced Career and Technology Education*—in the Engineering & Technology pathway—also showed declining enrollment with only five students enrolled in SY 2022-23, but MCS offered the course and all five students completed it. (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9. MACC CTE, Automation & Robotics and Engineering & Technology programs: Grades 11-12

| CTE Pathway | Course | Student | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------|---------|---------|---------------|
| Automation & Robotics | Industrial Automation & Robotics | Enrollment | 25 | 21 | (not offered) |
| | | Completion rate | 73% | 100% | ---- |
| Engineering & Technology | Advanced Career & Technology Education | Enrollment | 14 | 20 | 5 |
| | | Completion rate | 71% | 100% | 100% |



To determine the next steps for these CTE pathways, experts from industry, post-secondary education, and workforce development convened in Summer 2022 to redesign the CTE courses to better meet student interests and needs. The experts formed a steering committee, which met monthly during the year and titled the planned program the “Muncie Delaware Advanced Technologies Academy” (MDATA).

The committee determined the need for additional resources and supports to fully implement high-quality CTE courses, leading to the district contracting with the Indiana Manufacturing Competitiveness Center (In-MAC) with funding from the Ball Brothers Foundation and the George and Frances Ball Foundation and logistical support from *Future of Work*. This collaborative community initiative serves the Muncie area with a goal of building linkages between K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, local employers, and workforce development programs to prepare students to develop skills corresponding to 21st century workforce needs.

After studying various options for redesigning the CTE engineering and manufacturing pathways, the experts selected an academy model to move forward. Found to be successful in school districts similar to MCS, the academy model holds the purpose of developing a vision for student success based on relevant classroom experiences, employer engagement, and extended work-based learning activities.

The newly-formed MDATA will support CTE programs that will serve both MCS and Delaware County schools. To prepare for SY 2022-23, the MDATA steering committee developed the academy framework, planned and conducted student recruitment activities, drafted a student handbook, created a partner memorandum of understanding, and outlined work-based learning opportunities.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will continue to offer two CTE pathways under the MDATA umbrella: (a) *Industrial Maintenance Electrical* (replacing *Automation & Robotics*) and (b) *Engineering & Technology*. The MDATA steering committee selected the *Industrial Maintenance Electrical* pathway based on results from skills-mapping by local employers.

The mapping concluded that *Industrial Maintenance* would become the largest area of need for local manufacturing employers in the near future. Coursework in the pathway will consist of *Principles of Advanced Manufacturing*, *Advanced Manufacturing Technologies* and *Industrial Electrical Fundamentals*. Students will participate in work-based learning experiences with local manufacturing firms; receive training in the concept of “Lean Manufacturing”- maximizing productivity while minimizing waste; complete the course with OSHA-10 certification; and earn college credits through dual credit, dual enrollment courses.

In SY 2023-24 the Director of MACC, in conjunction with the MDATA steering committee will:

- Launch the new CTE pathway, *Industrial Maintenance*, including the hiring of an instructor and development of work-based learning partnerships.
- Continue to work with Purdue Polytech, Ivy Tech, and local manufacturers to improve the pathways and increase student enrollment.
- Develop and implement a robust marketing plan targeted for students and their families, highlighting the local opportunities available to young people in the field of advanced manufacturing.
- Conduct an analysis of the Engineering pathway and determine steps to create a “feeder” system for the Advanced CTE dual credit courses through Purdue Polytech.



- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 d.** For Grades 11-12, establish a variety of CTE courses with credit alignment and leading to certification, based on student interest and needs and local employer projected needs for employees.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Over the last three school years, MCS increased the number of dual credit and dual enrollment CTE courses available to students at both Muncie Central High School and the Muncie Area Career Center (MACC). These additions to MCS’ catalog of classes with college credit alignment help students meet Graduation Pathways requirements and complete Early College Elective courses. Some students completed short-term post-secondary certificates (e.g., Automotive: Maintenance and Light Repair Certificate; Health Science: Certified Nursing Assistant Certificate) and may only need one or two additional courses to complete the post-secondary Technical Certificate in a CTE program. In SY 2022-23, the number of CTE courses increased from 52-56 (Table 3.10)

Table 3.10. Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment CTE Courses Offered

| Courses Offered | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number | 33 | 52 | 56 |

Students demonstrated their interest in the new CTE dual credit courses by the number enrolling in the courses. In SY 2021-22, 83 students enrolled in certificate-track programs and in SY 2022-23 90 students enrolled (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11. Enrollment in Post-Secondary Certificates

| Certificates | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Automotive: Maintenance & Light Repair | --- | 33 | 33 | 36 |
| Health Science: Certified Nursing Assistant | 27 | 31 | 25 | 35 |
| Welding: Structural Welding | 8 | 12 | 16 | 12 |
| Construction: Electrical Specialist | --- | --- | 9 | 7 |
| Total | 35 | 76 | 83 | 90 |

Next Steps: The State of Indiana’s Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) course frameworks created new opportunities for high schools and career centers to facilitate additional college credit opportunities. To utilize this opportunity, MCS, in SY 2023-24, will:

- Continue to implement new CTE courses with embedded college credit at MCHS and the MACC.
- Implement focus areas of Fire & Rescue, Software Development, Education Professions, and Dental Careers.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 e-1.** For Grades 11–12: (a) establish nine new dual credit, CTE courses representing jobs in high demand careers: banking/finance, business, and health care and (b) expand three courses from Level 1 to Level 2, while continuing to increase enrollment in all courses.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track



Evidence of Progress: In school year 2022-23, MCS continued offering both first and second level courses in Human and Social Services, Education Professions, and Nutrition Science Careers with the later showing a significant increase from 17 students enrolled in the prior year to 52 in this past school year (Table 3.12). Completion rates also improved.

Table 3.12. Level II CTE Courses: Enrollment and Completion Rates

| CTE Level I, II Courses | 2020-21 | | | | 2021-22 | | | | 2022-23 | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | Level I | | Level II | | Level I | | Level II | | Level I | | Level II | |
| | Enrolled | Completed | Enrolled | Completed | Enrolled | Completed | Enrolled | Completed | Enrolled | Completed | Enrolled | Completed |
| Human & Social Services | 38 | 31 | 2 | 1 | 64 | 39 | 14 | 11 | 64 | 54 | 23 | 17 |
| Education Professions | 9 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 20 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 3 |
| Nutrition Science Careers | 10 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 17 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 52 | 42 | 6 | 5 |
| Total | 57 | 45 | 9 | 6 | 126 | 56 | 26 | 19 | 126 | 105 | 34 | 25 |

Additional courses added include the Next Level Program of Study (NLPS) aligned courses *Principles of Human Services* with 90 students and *Principles of Culinary and Hospitality* with 29 students. These courses replaced the Level I Human and Social Services and Nutrition Science pathways. MCS added the NLPS Business Management pathway, with 57 students enrolled and 46 completing the *Principles of Business Management* class.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Complete the transition to *Next Level Programs of Study* (NLPS) course frameworks for both first- and second-level courses in its CTE Pathways.
- Implement new pathways through the Ball State state-funded grant Attract-Prepare-Retain: *Education Professions* at MCHS and *Early Childhood Education* at MACC with benefits of:
 - For students, the ability to graduate from college in three rather than four years through the dual credit received for high school education courses required for a teacher’s license.
 - For MCS, the opportunity to increase its teacher pipeline through the MCS/BSU partnership.

Strategy 3.23 Increase job placement and employability skills and experiences for Grade 12 learners.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.23 a.** Develop learners’ skills in applying and interviewing for jobs through activities such as conducting online job searches, developing resumes, and preparing for and completing job interviews with local employers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, all MACC seniors participated in the job-seeking skills workshop – with 148 students attending. Students learned about different jobs and careers in a specific field; completed a resume-writing workshop by Ivy Tech Community College; and practiced interviewing with local employers, including Magna, Mursix, Open Door, IU Health, Delaware County EMS, IKORCC, and IBEW.



A second event for MCHS and MACC students was the College and Career Expo. Students heard from more than 50 employers, post-secondary providers, and community agencies, each with a booth about educational, employment and career opportunities. The 9-12 grade students reflected on the full-day event in a survey with results to be used in preparing next year’s event.

Next Steps: In reviewing our “Next Steps” to be implemented this past year, MCS hoped to provide additional interview preparation activities following the job-seeking workshop but was unable to do so nor to host an official “Signing Day,” as the new College and Career Expo required a great deal of time and effort for the district to implement. However, both events remain as goals to achieve in SY 2023-24, as MACC/MCS will:

- Develop and implement a job-seeking workshop.
- Create and hold a “Signing Day” event.
- Continue to provide the College and Career Expo.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.23 b.** Extend Career and Technical Education (CTE) on-the-job experiences through embedded student internships during the capstone period which occurs in the second year of the CTE pathway program.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Muncie Area Career Center (MACC) has a strong track-record of job-embedded learning experiences for CTE students through partnerships with local businesses and organizations. In SY 2022-23, the MACC added new internship locations in the Early Childhood Education pathway, the Criminal Justice pathway, and the Health Science pathway. The number of students participating in internships increased significantly in each of the last two years (Table 3.13).

Table 3.13. CTE Number of Student Internships

| 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 142 | 125 | 167 | 195 |

An MCS goal is to provide a local job-related experience for all high school students before they graduate. MCS made progress in creating this opportunity by first determining - with the assistance of Project Leadership - the experiences students believe would be most valuable to them, such as job shadowing and internships.

Next Steps: For SY 2023-24, MACC will continue to

- Provide appropriate and extensive job-embedded experiences for CTE students, including opportunities that will support the community.
- Seek new partnerships with companies and organizations in the fields of Digital Design, Automotive Technology, Welding, and Industrial Maintenance.



Strategy 3.24 Strengthen opportunities for high school learners to earn college credits.

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

- ◆ **Action Step 3.24 a.** Implement a plan to increase enrollment in and completion of advanced placement (AP) and dual credit courses.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Advanced placement (AP) courses, as created by the College Board, are college-level courses for high school students. MCHS teachers serve as course instructors with students taking a national exam at the end of the course. Students “pass” if they receive a three or higher on the exam, with the credits earned transferred to college.

Dual credit, also known as concurrent enrollment, is another option to earn college credits. Benefits to completing dual credit and AP courses include saving time and money by completing college credits before entering college, improving students’ time management and study skills, and providing students with opportunities to act on future career and college goals. Table 3.14.a. shows the AP course exams taken and passed by MCHS students.

Table 3.14a. Advanced Placement Courses: MCHS Exams Taken and Passed

| AP Exams | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Exams Taken | --- | --- | --- | 241 |
| Exams Passed | 151 | 127 | 101 | 122 |
| Percentage of Exams Passes | --- | --- | --- | 51% |

Disaggregation of enrollment data by ethnicity showed an increase in enrollment by multi-racial students with decreased enrollment by Black students and white students with Hispanic students remaining stable (Table 3.14b).



Table 3.14b. Advanced Placement Courses: Enrollment by Ethnicity

| Ethnicity | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| | Student Group | Enrolled in AP | Student Group | Enrolled in AP | Student Group | Enrolled in AP |
| Total | 1,388 | 10.6% (147) | 1,341 | 12% (161) | 1,300 | 11% (144) |
| Black | 23.8% | 8.7% (13) | 24.3% | 8.6% (14) | 23.5% | 11% (16) |
| Hispanic | 4.0% | 6.0% (9) | 5.6% | 9.8% (16) | 5.7% | 11% (16) |
| Multiracial | 9.1% | 6.7% (10) | 9.9% | 5.5% (9) | 10.9% | 7.5% (11) |
| White | 62% | 77.0% (115) | 59.0% | 74.8% (122) | 59.0% | 69% (101) |

| Ethnicity | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| | Student Group | Enrolled in AP | Student Group | Enrolled in AP | Student Group | Enrolled in AP |
| Total | 1,261 | 9.2% (115) | 1,330 | 7.5 % (100) | 1,258 | 10.3% (129) |
| Black | 23.3% | 4% (5) | 24% | 11% | 24% | 9% |
| Hispanic | 5.0% | 11% (13) | 5.4% | 7% | 6.5% | 7% |
| Multiracial | 12.2% | 14% (16) | 12.6% | 11% | 13.6% | 16% |
| White | 57.0% | 66% (76) | 57.3% | 71% (71) | 53.5% | 67% |

Student representation in AP enrollment increased substantially for students receiving free and reduced lunch (FRL) from 31 percent to 41 percent this school year. The district notes that the number of females enrolling in AP courses grew for a third straight year to 56 percent of all students enrolled (Table 3.14c).

Table 3.14c. Advanced Placement Courses: Enrollment by Economics and Gender

| FRL Gender | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | |
|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Student Groups | Enrolled in AP | Student Groups | Enrolled in AP | Student Groups | Enrolled in AP |
| Total | 1,388 | --- | 1,341 | --- | 1,300 | --- |
| FRL | 68.9% | 29% (44) | 70.1% | 29% (47) | 59.2% | 29% (43) |
| Female | 47% | 49% (73) | 47% | 48% (78) | 47% | 51% (74) |
| Male | 53% | 51% (77) | 53% | 52% (85) | 53% | 49% (79) |

| FRL Gender | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | |
|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Student Groups | Enrolled in AP | Student Groups | Enrolled in AP | Student Groups | Enrolled in AP |
| Total | 1,261 | --- | 1,300 | --- | 1,258 | 129 |
| FRL | 58.7% | 33% (39) | 58.7% | 31% | 70.5% | 47% |
| Female | 45.5% | 51% (59) | 46.2% | 52% | 48.2% | 56% |
| Male | 54.2% | 49% (56) | 53.8% | 48% | 51.8% | 44% |



Next Steps: MCS will continue to review enrollment in Early College and/or AP courses with a goal of enrollment and completion rates mirroring the high school student population more closely. MCHS partners, AP-TIP from Notre Dame and UCAN from U Indy, share the district’s vision for a viable and rigorous AP and Early College program available for all students with multiple resources and strategies available.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.24 b.** Implement a plan to increase student enrollment and completion of the Early College Program at the high school.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: An additional opportunity for students to receive college credits is through Muncie Central High School’s Early College Program (EC). This program enables students to complete an associate degree while also completing the Indiana Academic Honors Diploma through earning dual credit at Ivy Tech. MCS is one of only 44 fully endorsed Early College Programs in Indiana.

With the goal of increasing the completion rates of students in the program, MCS (a) reviewed and updated course offerings based on student interests and needs and (b) determined the positive outcome of dual credit course teaching staff becoming credentialed with MCS financial incentives. To increase the enrollment rate in the Early College program, staff from IVY Tech described the program to all middle school students Spring 2023. IVY Tech staff held a well-attended “Early College Night” at MCHS for families and students, explaining the application process and the programs’ benefits.

Towards the end of the school year, MCS shared the EC program with incoming dual credit admitted freshman to build enthusiasm for their upcoming high school experience. The school administration was instrumental in increasing EC numbers this past school year with the new assistant principal championing the new BSU grant, Attract-Prepare-Retain, future teachers’ program by meeting with incoming freshman and steering them toward Early College programs.

MCS administrators relate that a decrease in EC enrollment was the result of a smaller dual credit class in SY 2022-23 than in SY 2021-22. MCS anticipates enrollment to near 300 for SY 2023-24. Enrollment by ethnicity showed small gains in most categories, except “White” (Table 3.15a).

Table 3.15a. Early College High School: Enrollment by Ethnicity

| Ethnicity | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | Student Groups | Enrolled in Early College | Student Groups | Enrolled in Early College | Student Groups | Enrolled in Early College |
| Total | 1,388 | --- | 1,341 | --- | 1,300 | --- |
| Black | 23.8% | 18% | 24.3% | 23% | 23.5 % | 15.0% |
| Hispanic | 4.0% | 7% | 5.6% | 7% | 5.7% | 4.0% |
| Multiracial | 9.1% | 8% | 9.9% | 10% | 10.9% | 10.0% |
| White | 62% | 65% | 59.0% | 60% | 59.0% | 70.0% |



(Table 3.15a. *continued*)

| Ethnicity | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | Student Groups | Enrolled in Early College | Student Groups | Enrolled in Early College | Student Groups | Enrolled in Early College |
| Total | 1,261 | 303 | 1,300 | 301 | 1,258 | 278 |
| Black | 23.3% | 15.1% | 24% | 15.7% | 24% | 16.2% |
| Hispanic | 5.0% | 3.0% | 5.4% | 4.5% | 6.5% | 5.4% |
| Multiracial | 12.2% | 12.0% | 12.6% | 10% | 13.6% | 12.6% |
| White | 57.0% | 69.0% | 57.5% | 68.5% | 53.5% | 64% |

Early college enrollment by students receiving FRL increased slightly in SY 22-23 to 48 percent with an even split of 50 percent for males and females (Table 3.15b.).

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

| FRL & Gender | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| | Student Group | Enrolled in Early College | Student Group | Enrolled in Early College | Student Group | Enrolled in Early College |
| Total | 1,388 | --- | 1,341 | --- | 1,300 | --- |
| FRL | 69% | 53% | 70% | 52% | 59% | 53% |
| Female | 47% | 57% | 47% | 56% | 47% | 58% |
| Male | 53% | 43% | 53% | 56% | 53% | 42% |

| FRL & Gender | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| | Student Group | Enrolled in Early College | Student Group | Enrolled in Early College | Student Group | Enrolled in Early College |
| Total | 1,261 | 303 | 1,300 | 301 | 1,258 | 278 |
| FRL | 59% | missing | 59% | 47% | 71% | 48% |
| Female | 45% | 57% | 46% | 58% | 48% | 50% |
| Male | 54% | 42% | 54% | 42% | 52% | 50% |

External sources recognize the quality of the MCS Early College Program. The Urban College Acceleration Network (UCAN) acknowledged the superiority of the program in SY 2021-22 by selecting MCHS as a Mentor School to Anderson, Crispus Attucks, and Terre Haute South high schools, who sought to implement the Early College program to become fully endorsed (<https://cell.uindy.edu/our-work/early-college-high-school/ucan-project.html>).

Secondly, MCHS received full endorsement as an Early College HS twice through the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL). As part of this partnership, MCHS is committed to the Eight Early College Core Principles (<https://cell.uindy.edu/our-work/early-college-high-school/index.html>).



Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, staff serving the Early College Program will:

- Increase the time spent at the middle schools by the high school administrators and high school counselors to market the benefits of the program as a means to improve student enrollment.
- Develop a high school student mentor program to pair with middle school students who are beginning Early College, offering them encouragement.
- Continue to explore course offerings with credentialed staff to allow students to earn more credits towards degree completion.
 - Review Business/Technology department course of study and hire a fully credentialed staff member to teach Business and Accounting classes for dual credit as well as the return of dual credit Digital Applications.
- Increase family involvement in the recruiting and marketing process with the utilization of UCAN grant funds.

- ◆ **NEW Action Step 3.24 c.** Strengthen credits earned, tuition saved, and degrees earned through the Early College Program.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS utilizes state-provided and other funding programs that allow students to gain college credit while in high school. The district’s goal is to increase the number of students participating in these programs and the number of students completing the Indiana College Core Degree or an associate degree. Table 3.16 provides the results from previous years and from SY 2022-23.

Table 3.16: College Credits, Degrees Earned, and Tuition Savings of High School Students 2022-23

| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Credits Earned | 3,377 | 3,488 | 3,135 | 3,261 | 2,575 |
| Tuition Saved | \$ 455,940 | \$ 508,416 | \$ 471,560 | \$ 499,889 | \$456,800 |
| Indiana College Core (ICC) Degree | 23 | 10 | 23 | 16 | 18 |
| Associate degrees* | 23 | 28 | 17 | 27 | 21 |

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

Next Steps: MCS will continue to enroll as many students as possible to earn college credits.

Strategy 3.25 Expand and strengthen college and career programs and increase students’ knowledge about colleges and universities.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 a.** Align CTE Pathway Plans (course outlines) to the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Course Standards; the technical certification dual credit sequences; industry certifications; and embedded work-based learning recommendations – making edits and changes in the plans as needed.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track



Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MACC officially adopted the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) course frameworks for all programs. This year served as a transition year for the Dental Careers and Cosmetology programs, with second-year students required to complete the original Level II course due to having only the original Level I courses as a pre-requisite.

The adoption of the NLPS pathways allows MACC to provide more opportunities for students to earn dual credits and attain industry-recognized credentials – the centerpieces of the GWC initiative to improve CTE statewide. In SY 2022-23, new dual credit opportunities included Early Childhood Education, Criminal Justice, and EMT pathways. New certifications included Health-Science Pre-Nursing (Certified Medical Assistant) and Digital Design pathways (Adobe). As mentioned in Action Step 3.21 e-1, MCHS also adopted NLPS course frameworks for a number of CTE pathways, offering the first course in the NLPS pathway sequence for each of the following career pathways: Business Management; Nutrition Science; Human and Social Services; and Business/Accounting.

Next Steps: MACC will continue to strengthen the alignment of the CTE Pathway Plans to the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Course Standards; the technical certification dual credit sequences; industry certifications; and embedded work-based learning recommendations, as it will in SY 2022-23:

- Provide courses and experiences for obtaining short-term and technical certificates through two post-secondary institutions: Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University.
- Ensure that students earn college credits through a combination of dual credit offerings within CTE programs and dual enrollment opportunities for college-level courses at Ivy Tech.
- Increase embedded work-based learning opportunities in CTE programs, with an emphasis on extended and sustained work-based learning experiences for students enrolled in NLPS capstone courses.
- Offer two new pathways, *Software Development* and *Industrial Maintenance: Electrical*, that are aligned to the NLPS pathway frameworks.
- Provide dual credits in the Early Childhood Education and Education Professions pathway through Ball State’s grant project, “Attract-Prepare-Retain.”

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- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 b.** Develop and implement the CTE Pathways Marketing Plan for Muncie area students and families to increase student awareness of local employers and jobs options and knowledge of CTE courses.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

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

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

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



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

Next Steps: As the videos proved to be a meaningful marketing tool, MACC staff will continue to market the CTE programs using the videos and other sources in SY 2023-24 and will:

- Share the videos with middle school students as a renewed effort to build career awareness among younger students.
- Develop and implement a marketing campaign outlining the new Muncie Delaware Advanced Technologies Academy (MDATA).
- Create and implement educational programs to increase student and family awareness of nontraditional employment opportunities.
- Design and develop outreach efforts to students and families concerning the new Early Childhood Education and Education Professions pathway in collaboration with Ball State’s grant initiative “Attract-Prepare-Retain.”

- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 c.** Expand the capacity of the Graduation Academy and MCHS online programs to help students recover credits and graduate on time.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS provides several opportunities for students to obtain or recover high school credits needed to graduate through the MCHS Online Program and the Graduation Academy. Table 3.17 shows results for student enrollment, credits received, and graduation achieved for SY 2022-23.

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

| | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Students enrolled | 84 | 101 | 179 | 82 |
| Credits earned | 282 | 467 | 894 | 426 |
| # Graduated after program | 17 (20%) | 17 (20%) | 29 (16%) | 25 (30%) |

The Graduation Academy opportunity occurs at the high school with students attending during the school day or during summer school. Students may concurrently enroll in new courses and attempt to recover prior course credits. Learner progress is closely monitored and celebrated. The number of students enrolled increased by 25 students in SY 2022-23 (Table 3.18).



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

| | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Students enrolled | 89 | 124 | 90 | 115 |
| Credits earned | 523 | 704 | 632 | 1,259 |
| Graduates | 27 (30%) | 66 (53%) | 33 (37%) | 64 (57%) |

Next Steps: In addition to the online program and the Graduation Academy, MCS will, in SY 2022-23:

- Partner with *The Crossings* to offer credit recovery and workplace learning in an offsite setting, for students that struggle with credit recovery and workplace learning by providing academics, job training, and character education at a state-accredited site with education provided by certified teachers and professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 d.** Expand and strengthen programs for students to learn about and visit colleges and universities, to increase the number of MCS graduates attending 4-year higher education institutions.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, several MCS students visited the Ball State Campus through programs such as GEAR UP and the Bridge to College grant. In addition, MCHS partnered with the College of Sciences and Humanities at BSU and hosted weekly visitors from each of the college’s degree programs. The visitors spoke to students during weekly advisory classes about career opportunities and pathways to degree completion in their respective areas of study.

Next Steps: MCS and BSU staff will in SY 2023-24:

- Continue to develop the program and offer expanded opportunities to MCHS students to be a part of the BSU experience.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 e.** Increase opportunities for high school minority students to learn about and experience Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MCS provided opportunities for high school students to learn about Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) monthly in their advisory period. A high school teacher led students in investigations of a HCBU of their choice. In September, eight students from the HBCU high school club attended the HBCU College Fair in Carmel, with the NAACP Muncie Chapter as the sponsor. A few students also attended the Black College Expo Fair in Chicago in the Spring, with many HBCUs represented and with a Lilly Grant assisting in the costs.

In June, the Whitely Community Council Education Committee planned a Washington, D.C. trip for middle school students to visit two HBCUs: Howard University and the University of the District of Columbia, as well as several museums. A total of 17 students participated in the trip with 11 students from Northside, one from Southside, and five from outside of the MCS district (Yorktown and Burriss).



Funders for the trip included the Whitely Community Council as arranged by Ed Hudson, the executive director who also served as a trip chaperone; Open Door Health Services; the George & Francis Ball Foundation, and the Recovery Learning Loss Grant through BSU and IDOE. Walmart donated snacks and Ivy Tech drawstring backpacks.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Provide opportunities for students to learn about HBCUs and experience activities related to them.
- Plan for students to attend the Circle City College Fair and the accompanying football game between two HBCUs universities and an event related to “stepping” into Greek life at a HBCU.
- Continue to use community organizations and local grants to assist in funding the trips and events, including the Whitely Community planning, organizing, and funding (with other groups) a Washington, D.C. learning trip.

G. EXTENDED OPPORTUNITIES for LEARNING

Strategy 3.26. Provide afterschool and summer programs to extend learners’ academic, social, emotional, and physical development, learning, and exploration.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.26 a.** Improve learners’ literacy, math and other academic skills and social, emotional, and physical development by providing extended opportunities, after school and during the summer.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Understanding the importance of learning opportunities for students beyond the school day, MCS provided and collaborated with community partners to provide before school, after school, and summer school experiences (Table 3.19). Afterschool programs included the Grissom Elementary School program as funded by the 21st Century Afterschool Community Learning Center grant.

Other programs occurred during the summer for students at all grade levels. Program sites included Camp Adventure, the schools, community centers and Ball State. Federal and state grants, local funds, and community partners provided funding for the various programs with district funding paying for student transportation and meals to encourage learner participation.



Table 3.19. MCS Afterschool and Summer Student Opportunities: Enrollment

| Extended Learning Opportunity | About/Focus Area | Attendance | | |
|--|--|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | 20-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
| 1. Grissom Gold For K-5th grades; afterschool | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy SEL | 55 | 43 | 50 |
| 2. Camp Adventure: Literacy and Science For 3rd & 4th; summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy, writing, math Outdoor activities | 45 | 44 | 64 |
| 3. Robotics Camp For 5th, 6th grades; summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills of engineers, programmer With <i>Lego Mindstorm</i> kits | 34 | 20 | 28 |
| 4. IREAD-3 Literacy For 3rd grade, by invitation only; summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personalized, targeted reading instruction Lessons specific to I-READ areas | 129 | 170 | 156 |
| 5. Newcomer English Learning For refugee students, grades 1-12; summer; half-day - 8 weeks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EL and cultural learning Students identified as Afghan refugees fluent primarily in Pashto and Dari | --- | 45 Gr. 1-5: 20 Gr. 6-12: 25 | 30 Gr. 1-5: 10 Gr. 6-12: 20 |
| 6. Mathematician Exploration For 9-12 grades; summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math through real-world explorations | --- | 12 | 14 |
| 7. MCHS Blended/Online Learning and PUSH to Graduation For MCHS students; summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To advance in Graduation Pathways or course recovery Online or in-person learning | 241 (210 credits) | 272 (225 credits) | 237 (165 credits) |
| 8. Marching Band Camp For 9-12 students; summer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prepare for and participate in band contests | 70 | 72 | 92 |

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24 MCS will:

- Review each of the afterschool and summer programs, reflecting on student enrollment numbers, student interest levels, funding sources, staff availability and other factors and make changes as needed.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.26 b.** In partnership with others, improve learners' literacy, math and other academic skills and social, emotional, and physical development by providing extended opportunities, during school, after school and during the summer.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress 3.26 b1 - Afterschool and Summer Programs provided by MCS Partners

MCS works closely with Ball State and the YMCA in their provisions for summer programming. Ball State offers several writing sessions and a girls' STEM camp on campus with a literacy and science camp for second graders at Camp Adventure. BSU also continues to lead the Longfellow afterschool program. The YMCA hosted the Reading Futures program with selected students attending. MCS offered after



school tutoring and mentoring at the elementary and middle schools as funded by the Learning Loss and School Improvement grants (Table 3.20).

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

| Extend Learning Opportunity with Partner | Partner | About/Focus Area | Attendance | | |
|---|-------------------|---|------------|------------|--|
| | | | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
| 1. Longfellow MP3 For K-5th grades; afterschool | Ball State | ○ Literacy & Math | 67 | 57 | 66 |
| 2. Camp Adventure: Literacy & Science For 2nd grade | Ball State | ○ Reading, writing, science ○ With outdoor activities, e.g., archery, fishing, art | 44 | 69 | 76 |
| 3. Youth Writing For 4-5 & 6-8 grades | Ball State | ○ Creative writing workshop | --- | 9 | 12 |
| 4. Youth Poetry Writing For 4-5 & 6-8 grades | Ball State | ○ Explore language and words | --- | 7 | 14 |
| 5. Weekend Writing Warriors For 4-5 & 6-7 grades | Ball State | ○ Writing workshop | --- | 9 | 12 |
| 6. Girls' STEM Camp For 6-8 grades, girls | Ball State | ○ STEM activities | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| 7. Summer All-Day Club For K-5 & 6-8 grades | Boys & Girls Club | ○ Academics and physical activities | 88 | 215 | 140 |
| 8. Y Summer Camp | YMCA | ○ Academics and physical activities | 127 | 159 | 140 |
| 9. "Reading Futures" For selected grade 2-3 students | Held at YMCA | ○ Intensive 55 mins. daily reading instruction using Science of Reading | -- | -- | 22 |
| 10. Ross Center day camps • For grades 2-5 | Ross Center Staff | ○ Academics, Arts, and physical activities | --- | --- | 83 WVE 21 SVE 23 NVE 29 EWA 10 |
| Total number of students involved with MS partners in summer and afterschool opportunities | | | 199 | 367 | 568 |

Next Steps: MCS realizes that the two months of summer break are critical to students' maintaining their learning, knowledge, skills, and curiosity from the prior school year. MCS will continue to seek community partners to offer robust afterschool and summer programming.



MCS continued its partnerships to provide school-day programs for students in SY 2022-23 with GEAR-UP, Project Leadership, TeenWorks, and City Life.

Evidence of Progress 3.26 b2 - High School Programs: GEAR-UP Partnership

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

To increase student academic achievement for SY 2022-23, GEAR-UP staff (hired by Purdue) provided after-school tutoring to MCHS high school seniors, per the grant requirements. The staff allotted two days a week to assist students seeking credit recovery and two days to assist those needing assistance with homework. This included providing junior and senior students access to an online program, “tutor.com.” The GEAR-UP staff, housed at the high school, provided academic and social and emotional support through over 500 student visits (Table 3.21).

Table 3.21. GEAR-UP After-School Tutoring

| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Cohorts | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Visits | 146 | 388 | 335 | 781 | 521 |

The staff assisted 21st Century Scholar seniors (55 students) in completing their “Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)” during FAFSA labs and in updating their *Scholartrack* accounts (108 students). For the cohort graduating, GEAR-UP offered several Bridge-to-College days during the year with 78 seniors taking advantage of the opportunity. Summer 2023 included a leadership conference for interested seniors.

Next Steps: GEAR-UP will expand its programs in SY 2023-23 as a new grant cycle begins with the partnership with the following goals:

- Begin two middle school cohort classes.
- Continue two cohort classes at the high school level.
- Increase student awareness of GEAR-UP for all potential students.
- Provide facilities to operate the programs.

Evidence of Progress 3.26 b3 - High School Programs: Project Leadership Partnership

As a nonprofit serving Muncie students and families, Project Leadership partners with MCS to increase high school and post-secondary completion rates through financial education. With a mission to ensure that low-income students achieve an education with value in the marketplace through college access and completion, achievements in SY 2022-23 included:

- Promoted and supported 7th and 8th graders and their families in enrolling in the 21st Century Scholar program.
- Assisted over 100 students in completing the required twelve activities to remain active in the 21st Century Scholars Program.



- Provided two sessions at MCHS explaining FAFSA and assisting 97 families in completing their applications.
- Provided individual meetings for seniors with a career coach from February to April to complete FAFSA applications in meetings with 219 students.
- Created volunteer adult partnerships with 21st Century Scholars high school students for four years, providing support and guidance.
- Initiated college and career presentations for incoming 6th and 9th graders during the district's orientation days with 160 high school students and 120 middle school students participating.
- Assisted 559 freshmen, sophomores, and juniors in creating ScholarTrack accounts and logging into Scholar Success Program activities through providing six full days of labs.
- Created a micro-internship program and handbook to provide students with job experiences.
- Partnered with community businesses to set up programming for students to complete micro-internships and job experiences.
- Led students to discover over \$600,000 in financial aid to secure tuition and training after high school.

Next Steps: Muncie Community Schools received a new IDOE 3E Grant to continue its partnership with Project Leadership. Services provided to students during SY 2023-24 will:

- Establish time and staff to complete “Pathway Planning” for Grade 8 students.
- Track 21st Century Scholars in their completion of requirements and support them in completion.
- Provide high quality work-based student learning experiences for high school students, especially for juniors and seniors.
- Host E3 Labs for high school seniors:
 - To assist families and students in FASA completion.
 - To coach and support high school teachers in implementation of the new college and career curriculum to be used twice weekly in the advisory period with all students.
 - To coach and support middle school teachers in implementation of the course, *Preparing for College and Careers* (PCC).

Evidence of Progress 3.26 b4 - High School Programs: TeenWorks Leadership Partnership

In SY 2022-23, MCS and TeenWorks entered into a second year of partnership. The summer program provided employment at non-profits and opportunities to increase personal and business skills. A seasonal TeenWorks supervisor directed MCS Central students at work in areas such as community farming, park beautification, and school cleaning and provided weekly training in professional skills development, including financial literacy, resume writing, and professional etiquette and communication. Students also completed personality and interest survey tools, visited college campuses, participated in mock interviews, and networked with a variety of community professionals.

The program provided high schools students, grades 10-12, with year-round employment and included professional development, networking, and assistance with planning their next steps after high school. Areas of employment included “first job” positions through internships in areas such as logistics and engineering. An appointed Career Pathway Manager became a trusted partner for each student – providing another adult for support and guidance. Enrollment continues to increase each year in the TeenWorks program (Table 3.22).



Table 3.22. TeenWorks Student Participation

| 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| -- | 56 | 73 | 98 | 103 |

Next Steps: MCS will work in partnership with TeenWorks in SY 2022-23 to:

- Continue to use multiple ways to inform parents and students about the program.

Evidence of Progress 3.26 b5 – Middle School Programs: City Life Partnership

For students at Southside Middle School, the non-profit City Life began in SY 2021-22. City Life strives to walk with pre-teens and teens in urban communities, being “a steady voice and presence in their lives.” The George and Francis Ball Foundation generously matched financial support for this important support for middle school students. During SY 2022-23, City Life worked with students at Southside Middle School in the following ways:

- Provided 77 after-school and 32 in-school tutoring sessions.
- Led 20 study table lessons for student skill development.
- Conducted five whole-group events focused on decision making, mentoring, and life skills, e.g., leadership training, a block party, and a day at Kings Island amusement park.

Next Steps: City Life will continue to provide services and supports to students at Southside Middle School SY 2023-24:

- Southside building administrators will increase student participation in all City Life programs: in-school tutoring; after-school tutoring; and leadership and mentoring.
- City Life volunteers tutoring students will focus on improving students in specific math deficits in conjunction with the Middle School Cradle to Career initiative (Middle School CAN).

Strategy 3.27 Provide transition opportunities for learners upon entering new school levels - kindergarteners entering school, 6th graders entering middle school and 9th graders entering high school.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.27.** Establish transitional experiences over multiple days for kindergarten, 6th grade, and 9th grade students as they enter new school levels.

Progress Towards Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS provides transition camp experiences to students entering kindergarten at all six elementary schools; grade 6 at both middle schools; and grade 9 at the high school. These experiences provide learners with a visit to their new school before the first day of school and include tours and activities appropriate for each level.



For SY 2022-23, MCS focused on increasing the attendance at the kindergarten transition event. With recommendations from the United Way, the event adopted a new name, “Blast Off to Kindergarten” with multiple hands-on activities for the children. Held in April and May, Kindergarten teachers across the district led activity lessons that typically occur during the school day. For parents, the teachers explained the purpose of the lesson they observed as related to children’s growth and learning, and ways to continue with similar activities over the summer in preparation for the beginning of school.

To encourage families to continue the activities , each child received materials to practice at home: (a) for reading, teachers modeled reading a story aloud and asking a few questions with everyone receiving a book to take home; (b) for math, the educators led a lesson in sorting and counting using manipulatives, which the children took home; and (c) for writing, the teachers demonstrated writing their names, with the future students taking home a small white board and markers. To practice the routines of the school day, the children experienced climbing the school bus steps and following the rules while riding around the block and balancing a cafeteria tray with a snack of milk and cookies. MCS appreciates the assistance from the United Way and BY5 in providing materials and book bags and supplying volunteers.

At the middle and high school levels, MCS partnered with Project Leadership to plan activities focused on developing positive relationships and planning early for college and careers. In Spring 2023, MCS communicated about the school transition event through mail, email, social media, and the automated call system. MCS values the donation from the George and Frances Ball Foundation of incentives to foster student and family participation in the transition experiences (Table 3.23).

Table 3.23. Student Participation in School Level Transition Experiences

| Transition Experience | School Levels | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|
| | | District Enrollment | Attended | District Enrollment | Attended | District Enrollment | Attended |
| Blast Off Kindergarten | Elementary schools | 380 | 113 30% | 415 | 109 26% | 356 | 113 32% |
| Titan Camp | Northside: 5th into 6th | 176 | 101 78% | 213 | 100 47% | 220 | 116 58% |
| Panther Camp | Southside: 5th into 6th | 159 | 69 61% | 147 | 30 20% | 167 | 30 18% |
| Bearcat Camp | Central: 8th into 9th | 366 | 109 43% | 359 | 125 35% | 356 | 164 46% |

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Continue “Blast off to Kindergarten” in each of the schools.
- Continue to review and improve transition camp at the middle schools with a focus on promotion and communication.
- Continue to review and improve freshman transition at the high school.
- Continue partnerships with community partners to provide activities during the camps.
- Determine ways to increase student and family participation.

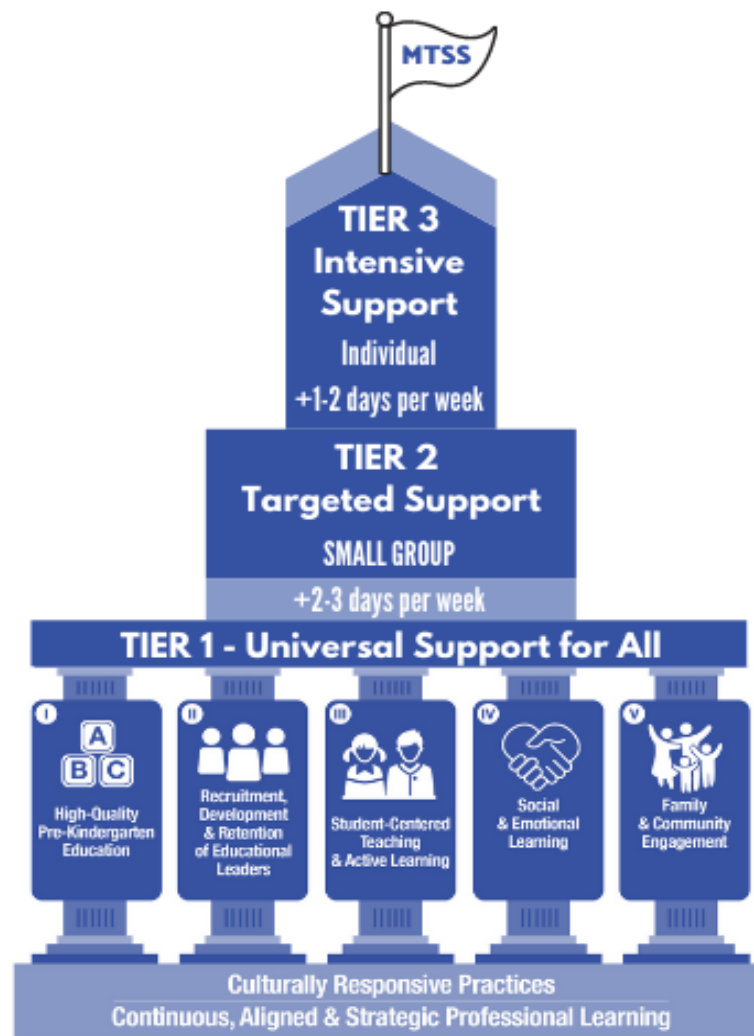


Pillar IV: Social and Emotional Learning

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

Rationale for Pillar and Goal. To meet the needs of all learners, MCS initiated support for social and emotional learning and development in SY 2021-22. Ensuring students are socially and emotionally mature for their ages helps to create a safe and positive learning environment for everyone and increases student ability to succeed in school, careers, and life. To that end, two years ago MCS initiated Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) district wide. MTSS is a process that determines individual student’s academic and social-emotional needs through multiple measures and results in the provision of appropriate support for each learner at the level or “tier” needed (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support





Description of MTSS. In supporting our students’ social and emotional learning (SEL), MCS’ goal is to fully implement MTSS in all schools, leading to an outcome of reduced behavioral and disciplinary issues. The MTSS framework provides a proactive and preventative approach to support learner growth through three tiers of supports with each tier providing more support than the previous one.

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

Learners move up and down the tiers depending on the level of support needed at any given time, with the goal being to reduce adult support and interventions as students strengthen their social and emotional skills and behaviors.

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

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2021-22 MCS created and adopted a district-wide philosophy regarding SEL development, best instructional practices and interventions. The adopted belief statements include these concepts: (a) all learning has social and emotional aspects; (b) creation of student self-regulation occurs through adult co-regulation; (c) adults need to focus on developing relationships with the students rather than on the “rules;” (d) adults need to be proactive rather than reactive; and (d) the best solutions occur through student and adult collaboration – a “win-win” for both. Having adopted these beliefs at the district level the prior year, the second step, which began this past school year, was the sharing and adoption of the philosophy by all MCS teachers and staff.

As a step toward implementation of the philosophy, MCS school administrators, behavior specialists and coaches, and school counselors participated in a book study of “Lost at School,” a book about helping learners with behavioral challenges. The year-long study, conducted virtually across the district, included questions for staff to discuss and instruction on appropriate strategies to use with students.

Next Steps: As the book study is proving to be an effective method of professional development, in SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Expand the book study to additional groups of teachers and staff to learn the best practices for assisting students with behavioral challenges.
- Provide more advanced training to administrators and support staff in Dr. Ross Greene’s collaborative and proactive solutions model.



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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, the MCS writing committee for the *MCS MTSS Student Handbook* included MTSS experts from BSU and the director of special education, who oversees MTSS. The revised *Handbook* now reflects the MTSS philosophy of SEL development with an emphasis on restorative rather than punitive practices.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the director of special education will oversee:

- Increased understanding and utilization of the *MTSS Student Handbook* by all teachers, administrators, and staff with a focus on implementation of the SEL practices outlined in the *Handbook*.
 - Revision of the *MTSS Student Handbook*, as needed, by the writing committee by the end of the school year.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 c.** Determine and obtain the resources needed to fully implement MTSS in each school, e.g., specialized staff, continued staff training, adequate space and materials, and daily schedules for the providing of student supports through the MTSS tiers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: With a district-adopted MTSS screener and school-level MTSS schedules in place all schools moved forward in establishing MTSS in SY 2022-23. As the initial step in the process, classroom teachers completed the SEL screener for each learner twice during the year. With school-level schedules for Tiers I and II supports, the schools began to provide various interventions. At Southside Middle School, Grade 6 added an additional support for all learners by implementing a “team model.” This model consists of pairing a group of students with a group of classroom teachers for the teaching and learning of the basic academic courses, English, social studies, science, and math.

With the classrooms located near one another, the model allows for reduced student travel time between classes; familiarity with one another, as the students remain in the same group for all classes; and consistent and daily instruction and interaction from the same group of teachers. For students that struggle with the transition from the community and safety of an elementary classroom to a large middle school, the teaming model provides a sense of security and routine, and lessens students’ concerns and anxiety, leading to improved attendance and behavior. The teachers involved with team modeling and the middle school principal deemed the experience to be successful in building relationships with students.

Next Steps: Having achieved a basic level of implementation of MTSS in all schools, improvement will occur in SY 2023-24 as MCS will:

- Establish “teaming models” in the middle schools, at all grade levels (6th, 7th, 8th) and a new schedule for providing Tier II and III supports.
 - Increase the availability of behavioral coaches, student assistance coordinators, and counselors to work with students by lessening their administrative duties with the hiring of three additional assistant principals in the elementary schools.
-



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

Progress Toward Goal: *Completed 2022-23

***Completed Note:** MCS completed purchase of SEL curricula for all grade levels this year.

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 e.** Implement multiple measures to identify students needing additional SEL support, including the Student Risk Screening Scale and teacher-referral forms.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed 2021-22

- ◆ **Action Step 4.1 f.** Design and employ a districtwide MTSS adopted process of (a) identifying learners that need Tier II and III supports; (b) collecting student data; (c) making student referrals; (d) providing interventions and (e) conducting progress monitoring.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS developed an initial process for identifying students with SEL needs and providing supports for them in SY 2021-22. In SY 2022-23, the MCS director of special education, a team of MCS school psychologists (MCS employees and a BSU extern/intern), and two Ball State SEL ambassadors created a draft of the 22-page *Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Manual* to describe the MTSS process. The manual, released in June 2023, includes a description of the three levels of tiers, an explanation of the student referral process, and a chart of the available student interventions with recommendations for each tier.

The section “MTSS Team Meetings,” which occur at each school, includes guidelines for teacher communications and special considerations for English language learners. “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs) address specific issues that may arise such as (a) the relationship between MTSS and students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), as the two are, at times, difficult to differentiate, (b) student MTSS identification procedures, and (c) a list of available professional development for teachers. The appendices offer several MCS newly adopted forms for classroom teachers to complete in the referral process; information on resources; the MTSS Process Flowchart; and a parent information guide.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the MTSS committee will:

- Finalize the *MTSS Manual*, in Summer 2023.
 - Disseminate the manual district-wide in Fall 2023.
 - Provide guidance and support to teachers and staff to implement the manual with consistency and rigor in all schools.
 - Monitor the appropriate and consistent use of the *MTSS Manual* as observed in MTSS school site meetings.
 - Determine additions/changes needed in the manual and make edits at the end SY 2023-24.
-

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



- ◆ interventions and supports, and (c) provide resources and supports for the teams to create continuity and consistency of MTSS implementation.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In Fall 2020, MCS established MTSS Teams at each school, consisting of the school principal (or a designated administrator), a school psychologist, a behavior support member (e.g., behavioral coach or board-certified behavior analyst), a school counselor and an interventionist. Last school year, the MTSS Teams met regularly to review and make recommendations and decisions on newly identified students and students currently receiving MTSS support. In SY 2022-23, the teams focused on areas to improve from the prior year: (a) availability of student data; (b) analysis of student data; and (c) identification of students for SEL MTSS support versus for special education.

To address issues of student data, MCS hired a data specialist to assist MTSS staff in accessing student data. The availability of student data improved this past school year, providing staff with current data to assist in decision-making. A second response to the need for data was the purchase of an extension of *PowerSchool*—the district’s data system—called “Insights.” This system provides real-time student, school, and district level data and allows for tracking student progress over time.

To improve the understanding of the purpose of MTSS and the identification of students to receive those supports as opposed to the purpose of and supports for students with special needs (special education), MTSS staff created a meeting agenda template. The template “builds in” the processes described in the *MTSS Manual*. The manual also includes data tracking sheets to support meeting discussions and decisions.

Next Steps: To improve the MTSS Teams’ ability to utilize data for decision-making about students receiving MTSS Tier II and III supports, MCS will, in SY 2023-24:

- Ensure the rigorous use of the *MTSS Manual* in the team meetings as observed by the BSU SEL ambassadors.
- Improve the routine use of data in discussions about students’ needs, progress, and appropriate interventions through the participation and guidance of BSU SEL ambassadors at the school-level MTSS Team meetings, to utilize in making data-based decisions.

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

Progress Toward Goal: *Completed 2022-23

Evidence of Progress: MCS continued to serve as a member of the Delaware County Comprehensive Counseling Coalition in SY 2022-23. MCS focused on this funding opportunity from Lilly to implement the *Xello* program for school counselors to assist students in discovering relevant college, trade, military, and career options based on their personality, skills, and knowledge.

Although SY 2023-24 is the final year of the grant, MCS will continue to provide support through the MCS special education director serving as the lead on the Cradle to Career Social-Emotional Learning Community Action Network (see Pillar V) and through funding from the comprehensive school counseling grant that MCS received from IDOE to provide continued professional development and ongoing support to school counselors.



***Completed Note:** MCS' participation and leadership in the Delaware County Comprehensive Counseling Coalition is well-established and will continue each year, thus this action step is deemed completed.

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

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, MCS provided multiple means for teachers and administrators to increase their understanding of SEL MTSS. For classroom teachers, MCS presented an overview of the MTSS process at the beginning of the year in each school. Classroom teachers gained knowledge in observing and participating in MTSS team meetings with the identification and determination of appropriate student supports. Of note is that MTSS staff is beginning to recognize certain circumstances that may lead students to need Tier II and III supports and interventions. Recognition of these circumstances will allow for early identification and intervention and a proactive, rather than reactive, response to student behavior.

At the end of the school year in May, school psychologists presented the newly authored *MTSS Student Handbook* to school teams. The teams, consisting of principals and assistant principals, counselors, family navigators, student assistant coordinators, counselors, behavioral coaches, BCBA's, and the 9th grade on-track coordinator reviewed SEL student data to determine progress made and to create goals for SY 2023-24.

Next Steps: For SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Hire a fourth school psychologist, increasing the number districtwide to four, allowing for more time for staff to support students, including conducting student evaluations.
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, behavioral specialists and coaches assisted classroom teachers in gathering evidence of SEL student needs. This occurred through the classroom teachers' implementation of the SEL curriculum and utilization of the Tier I supports.



Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Provide support for classroom teachers to successfully implement the student identification process for students needing SEL assistance.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 4.2 c.** Increase fidelity of implementation of the K-12 adopted SEL curriculum and evidence-based Tier I SEL instruction.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In the prior school year, MCS, with support from BSU, developed a list of district-purchased interventions for Tier I, grades K-5 (as well as for Tiers II and III). With Tier I programs and materials in place, MCS, in SY 2022-23, turned to training teachers and MTSS providers on teaching the adopted SEL curricula and utilizing some of the selected interventions.

Academic and SEL/behavioral interventionist received training regarding specific interventions, such as, setting corresponding goals, establishing timelines, and conducting process monitoring through the use of the new MCS data recording sheets. The training represented an initial step in providing SEL interventionist with professional development.

MCS paired with Ball State's psychology practicum students and externs to develop Tier I intervention booklets. As Tier I interventions, these ideas reflect the classroom teachers' role in providing extra and consistent support within the classroom. The MCS/BSU team also created a booklet of Tier II behavioral interventions for MTSS team members.

At the secondary level, the school psychologist led the implementation of the Hope Squad for Suicide Prevention, the curriculum adopted for MTSS Tier I. Completed coursework and training led to the counselor's three-year certification to provide training to students and staff. Accomplishments include the identification and training of squad members to listen to and support their peers and to effectively lead the quad meetings.

Next Steps: With a written process of identifying and serving learners with MTSS needs and a list of evidence-based interventions, MTSS leaders will, in SY 2023-24:

- Guide implementation of the teaching of the SEL Tier I curriculum and the use of Tier I supports in all classrooms.
- Observe and provide support to classroom teachers in teaching the SEL curriculum and the use of Tier I interventions.
- Develop interventions that correspond to the new, district-adopted reading curriculum.

At the secondary level staffing additions and staff actions will include:

- Two teachers serving Hope Squad sponsors.
 - The secondary psychologist
 - Continuing to provide administrative support, monitoring, and training for the Hope Squad for Suicide Prevention.
 - Continuing to monitor MTSS interventions at the middle and high schools, along with the principals.
-



NEW Strategy 4.3 Improve teacher and staff proactive and reactive interactions concerning student behavior and chronic absenteeism to reflect restorative practices.

Rationale: MCS administrators and the MCS board realize the connections between and the reoccurring cycles of (a) students' social-emotional development and learning (SEL); (b) students' behavior, engagement, attention, and attendance at school; and (c) the proactive or reactive actions of the district's teachers and staff to the student behaviors.

While MTSS is a successful student-based tool, MCS sought ways for the district's adults to learn to adjust their behaviors, responses, or attitudes, ideally before, but also after a student behavior occurs. Research-based, these "restorative practices" acknowledge the relational process between students and adults and the need for an intentional, inclusive, and respectful ways of thinking about, talking about, and responding to behavioral issues. In the schools, restorative practices help to build and repair relationships, de-emphasize punitive discipline in favor of communication to resolve conflict and increase students' skills in making appropriate choices, in voicing their opinions, in increasing self-regulation and in improving communication skills.

- ◆ **NEW Action Step 4.3 a.** To improve the implementation of restorative practices by all staff, school principals will, with school teams, analyze student data in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, discipline, and absenteeism to establish yearly school improvement goals in each area and to discuss how restorative practices can be applied.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: ELA and Math. The review of student data to determine gaps, losses, and gains is key to developing goals that will lead to student success and school improvement. Thus, in 2019, the MCS CEO, in the first year of her administration, began annual data reviews with school principals to determine student and school growth and to establish goals to improve in specific areas, and secondarily to improve leaderships' understanding and use of data to make decisions. Regarding this later purpose, the CEO reported anecdotally, that for the May 2023 review the school leaders demonstrated a significant increase in their ability to interpret the data and to create appropriate and rigorous goals based on the data.

In early June 2023, K-12 staff, including instructional leadership teams (ILTs) - principals, assistant principals, master and mentor teachers and external experts from *i-Ready*, NIET, BSU, and the science of reading - met for several days. The teams disaggregated the data, determined root causes, and created school-level goals for SY 2023-24 in English language arts, mathematic, discipline and attendance. As a final step, the teams determined strategies that would lead to the achievement of the goals based on best practices.

At the secondary level, the school teams reviewed end-of-year data and created goals related to increasing school enrollment; daily attendance rates credits and diplomas earned; completion/passing rates in AP, CTE, Early College, and other opportunities; and decreasing the number of student discipline events. Lastly, the team determined strategies that would potentially lead to the attainment of the goals.



Also in early Summer 2023, the CEO met with principals and their support teams (assistant principals, counselors, family navigators, behavior coaches, school psychologists, student assistant coordinators, and external experts, including Ball State) to discuss the topics of behavior, discipline, attendance, suspensions, and expulsions. The CEO challenged the teams on the purpose and effect of the suspensions and expulsions in that they result in a student being removed from school for long periods of time, resulting in a negative impact on student learning.

The school psychologist supported this concept with a quote from the newly-developed *MCS MTSS Student Handbook*, emphasizing the role of chronic absenteeism on student progress:

Adequate [student academic] progress cannot be determined accurately if the student has too many absences, defined as . . . *the warning level* with the student missing 10-17 days in a school year and *the chronic absence level* with the student misses 18 or more days in a school year. ⁴

To further investigate the outcomes of adult responses to student behavior, the teams (a) examined the data concerning student behavior and chronic absenteeism that resulted in the student being suspended or expelled, followed by (b) an examination of the data regarding adult reactive responses to student behavior (expulsions, suspensions) and adult proactive, restorative responses to student behavior. The data review concluded with goal and strategy development for SY 2023-24. As time permitted, some school teams examined their *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Systems* (PBIS) and determined improvements or changes needed for the next school year.

Next Steps: ILTs and Student Support teams will, in 2023-24:

- Monitor, monthly, (a) the number and type of student behavior events; (b) the adults' responses to the student behavior; and (c) the use of and effectiveness of pre-determined strategies in response to student behavior.

-
- ◆ **NEW Action Step 4.3 b.** Establish and increase the use of evidence-based classroom management strategies, with fidelity, for all K-12 teachers through providing training and coaching to improve and provide consistent classroom and school cultures.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In the second year of the K-12 SEL MTSS program, district behavior specialists and coaches identified a variety of classroom procedures and protocols used by MCS classroom teachers and arranged them in order from ineffective to highly effective. They determined the need for teachers and staff to increase their understanding and knowledge of effective classroom management practices. MCS began to address this issue in SY 2022-23 by implementing in one elementary school two techniques for whole-class behavior management: the zones of regulation and the classroom calming corner.

The zones of regulation occur at the school level with a specific, assigned area staffed by a behavioral coach. The purpose is to reduce in- and out-of-school suspensions by providing support to students in regaining self-control by changing attitudes or behaviors that will allow the student to return to the classroom as soon as possible. This cognitive-behavioral approach teaches students how to describe, recognize, and respond appropriately to their feelings.

⁴ Muncie Community Schools, (2023). *Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Manual*.
MCS Strategic Plan Report, SY 2022-23



A second technique is the classroom calming corner or the “comfort corner.” This small, designated space in the classroom allows students to move into the area when their emotions rise and they need time away from a situation or event. The corner serves as a “safe space” for learners that experience trauma at home, who feel overwhelmed at times, or have difficulty staying on task or paying attention - all of which interfere with cognition and the ability to learn.

The director of special education reported, anecdotally, that both techniques improved school and classroom culture when implemented in SY 2022-23. The director noted that classrooms using the two techniques showed increased student engagement and attention.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MTSS staff will lead the behavioral specialists and coaches in working with all elementary classroom teachers to:

- Implement with fidelity the regulation strategy.
- Develop and teach students to utilize the classroom calming corner.
- Provide professional development and training in whole-class behavior management systems that are appropriate for the cultures and experiences of MCS students.

-
- ◆ **NEW Action Step 4.3 c.** Establish supports for middle and high school students in reducing and eliminating habits and behaviors that interfere with their physical, cognitive, emotional, or social development, such as, vaping, smoking, drugs, and alcohol.

Rationale: As pre-teens and teenagers may be susceptible to peer pressure, current fads and trends, and risky behaviors, MCS will establish programs and supports for students addicted to e-cigarettes or vaping. The U.S. Surgeon General reports that

Adolescent years are a time of important brain development. Brain development begins during the growth of the fetus in the womb and continues . . . to about age 25. Nicotine exposure during adolescence and young adulthood can cause addiction and harm the developing brain.⁵

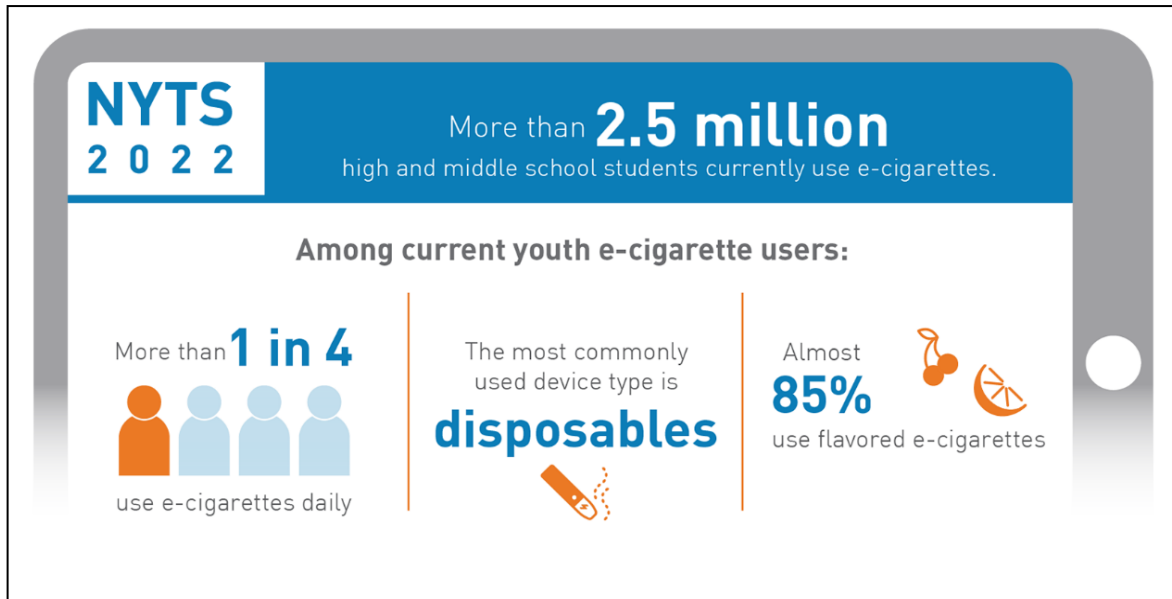
MCS is concerned about the health and brain development of our teens and the multiple days they miss from school if seen vaping. The use of e-cigarettes is a concern of all high schools in the U.S. as,

Their use has grown dramatically in the last five years. Today, more high school students use e-cigarettes than regular cigarettes. The use of e-cigarettes is higher among high school students than adults. . . In 2018, 1 in 5 high school students reported using e-cigarettes in the past month.⁵ (Figure 4.2).

⁵ THE FACTS on e-cigarette use among youth and young adults. US Surgeon General. Retrieved <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/#:~:text=E%2Dcigarettes%20and%20Youth%20Don,and%20harm%20the%20developing%20brain>



Figure 4.2 Findings on Youth E-Cigarette Use



Next Steps: To address this challenge in SY 2023-24, MCS will:

- Develop a restorative practice to educate teens about the health and cognitive consequences of vaping and provide support in tackling their addiction.
- Refer students found vaping to the program instead of suspending them from school.
- Implement the program, meeting one-half day per month for middle and high school students and that includes vaping education, discussion, and a project.
- Provide resources in the form of mini-modules about the danger of vaping to classroom teachers and teachers of health/PE/wellness units.
- Implement these initiatives in partnership with
 - Jordan Moss, Program Coordinator for Tobacco Free Coalition of Delaware County.
 - Dr. Lynn La Rue Witty, a physician specializing in Critical Care Medicine, Internal Medicine and Pulmonology through IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital.



Pillar V: Family and Community Engagement

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

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

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

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

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, several Muncie schools created their Family and Community Engagement (FCE) teams. The purpose of the FCE teams is to offer family engagement opportunities as well as community resources in the neighborhoods surrounding each of the MCS schools. Schools varied this year in their level of development of the teams and the teams' provision of activities as this is a new district-wide initiative.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, all schools will establish FCE teams.

- School administrators will report initially at the administrators' retreat and then routinely during the school year:
 - The current status of their FCE team.
 - The adult representation on the team to ensure the members reflect the diversity of the learners at the school.
 - The planned meeting dates for the school year.
- The MCS volunteer Coordinator will determine the needs of each MCS school FCE team and provide support to the principals in creating ongoing relationships with their team in providing meaningful family engagement opportunities that align to the MCS strategic plan.



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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS demonstrated the value it places on family and community involvement by hiring a full-time district-level volunteer coordinator in July 2022. The coordinator first observed and talked with volunteers as they fulfilled assignments in order to determine areas for refinement. Secondly, the coordinator became familiar with the *Cradle to Career Collaborative Action Network* which also provides volunteers to MCS.

The volunteer coordinator accomplished a number of tasks this past school year: (a) ensured the fulfillment of MCS procedures for volunteers (e.g., background checks); (b) determined that older volunteers prefer a non-online list of volunteer opportunities and registration; and (c) forged new relationships and deepened prior ones with churches, community organizations, and non-profit agencies, leading to a 30 percent increase in the number of volunteers serving MCS in SY 2022-23 and with a total of 875 volunteers approved.

Next Steps: The MCS volunteer program will improve and expand in SY 2023-24 with the coordinator completing the following:

- Create specific ongoing, targeted volunteer opportunities, directly related to assisting MCS to achieve its goals, such as a targeted literacy volunteer program.
- Conduct training and provide materials and/or learning experiences for volunteers in targeted-area positions to assist MCS in achieving its goals.
- Ensure targeted-area volunteers implement the practices and skills from the trainings in order to use the assistance provided by the volunteers to measure the value of the volunteer program.
- Implement *All Pro Dads*, a monthly gathering in all elementary schools consisting of dads - and other significant men in children's lives - and their children, to conduct engaging and meaningful conversations and activities centered around a character-based curriculum, as launched by Tony Dungy in 1997.
- Increase the number of events or opportunities requiring the use of volunteers.
- Increase the number of volunteers through partnering with the neighborhood associations.
- Develop situations for volunteers and students to build relationships through regularly determined and consistent times of volunteering.
- Determine and implement a non-electronic process for volunteers to register and select volunteering opportunities.
- Develop and provide specific literacy lesson plans/activities for specifically selected volunteers to support student learning.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.1 c.** Provide monthly events or activity nights at each school related to academics and/or the curricula.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2022-23, most MCS schools held family events or activities related to academics/curricula. As such, holding the monthly event will become a principal requirement for SY 2023-24. The volunteer coordinator partnered with Second Harvest Food Bank and a few schools to combine their monthly food give-away evenings—for both families and school staff—with MCS



providing information and resources related to an academic area or the curriculum. Called “Big Idea Night” strong attendance and positive feedback deemed the family nights as successful and MCS will expand them in SY 2023-24.

Next Steps: MCS looks forward to a rigorous schedule of family events in all schools in SY 2023-24. As directed by the volunteer coordinator, MCS will:

- Plan, organize and present monthly “Big Ideas Nights” in all schools in conjunction with Second Harvest Food Bank give-away and with other community partners as appropriate.
 - Develop and use monthly themes as determined by the MCS volunteer coordinator based on schools’ identification of their families’ needs with initial themes: for September – the importance of regular school attendance and for October – the benefits of good nutrition.
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: Beginning in 2021-22, MCS elevated the importance of parent-teacher conferences by listing conference dates in the district master calendar. Parents selected the format of the conference either in-person at the school or virtually.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, actions include:

- Administrators leading staff in understanding and implementing student-led conferences at all school levels.
 - Students learning their role in sharing their accomplishments and areas to improve through classroom practice.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 5.1 e.**

Establish Parent Advisory Councils and Student Advisory Councils in every school that serve as listening sessions for the principal with a focus on barriers that students and families experience and determine additional ways for family and community voices to be heard.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In the two prior years, some principals established Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) and/or Student Advisory Councils (SAC) with varying degrees of implementation. To provide an avenue for parents to allow their voices to be heard and their questions answered, the MCS CEO conducted a listening tour at South View with an open invitation for all parents and the community. The CEO heard questions and concerns and offered clarification on issues raised. As family and community members appreciated this time with the CEO, additional tours will be added.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will ensure the development and active implementation of PACs and SACs:

- In all schools, meeting on a regular basis, and led by the principal.
- With members reflecting demographics similar to those of the school’s student population.



- With the principal assisting in the development of the council goals for the SACs and the achievement of those goals.
- To offer another avenue for hearing parent voices, the MCS CEO will conduct listening sessions in additional district neighborhoods.

Strategy 5.2 Enhance supports for students and their families.

◆ **Action Step 5.2 a.** Create wrap-around community service programs within the schools and align to the *Cradle to Career Muncie* framework.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Wrap-Around Services Progress #1: Meridian Health Clinics and Open Door Clinic

Wrap-around health services are a key component in meeting the needs of students and families in communities with high percentages of low-income residents and with limited transportation services. As a solution to this problem, MCS and Meridian Health partnered in SY 2020-21 to establish a health clinic at Southside Middle school through funding as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). With yearly data results indicating high rates of usage, the partners established a goal to create health clinics in each of the MCS buildings. Thus, in SY 2022-23, MCS created a nurse’s office in all eight of the district’s elementary and middle schools with a certified nurse hired by and paid for by Meridian Health. The school-based clinic offered both primary medical care, and behavioral and social healthcare. For the high school, Open Door established a Federally Qualified Health Center to serve students, families, and staff.

Data collected supports a clear need for the clinics and strong recognition by students and families of the availability of the services (Table 5.1). The nurses’ clinics at Southside Middle School witnessed approximately 67,500 visits with Behavioral Science Services visits doubling from last year and visits with licensed clinical social workers increasing by 90 percent from about 230 visits to almost 2,000 in SY 2022-23.

Table 5.1. Meridian Southside Clinic: Patient Visits

| Service Visits | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------|---------------|
| | Southside Middle | | All schools |
| Primary Care (medical services) | 14 | 379 | 141 |
| Nursing Services (approximate) | NA | NA | 67,500 |
| Behavioral Science Services | 1,358 | 1,223 | 2,420 |
| Licensed Clinical Social Worker | 239 | 229 | 1,197 |
| Flu Shots | 233 | 98 | 59 |
| COVID Vaccines | 155 | 0 | 0 |

In addition to the school clinics, Meridian Health partnered with MCS in several other ways to promote health, such as in providing numerous educational materials for students and families at the annual “Fam Fest Back-to-School Fair” at Southside for the entire community.

Meridian Health serves as a strong financial partner to MCS through the community-wide gala, *Rialzo XII*. With over 1,000 people attending, the event raised \$100,000 to directly support the school-based health clinics. The funding will provide for nursing staff, vaccines, supplies, and training for the next



school year and beyond. As partners, MCS and Meridian Health Services provide a much-needed response to the mental health crisis facing many American youth today.

Next Steps: MCS, Meridian Health and Open Door will:

- Continue to support the nursing and health services for students and their families through school-based health clinics.
-

Evidence of Wrap-Around Services Progress #2: Family Navigators

A second wrap-around service, *Family Navigators*, began in SY 2021-22 and continued to be refined in SY 2022-23. *Family Navigators*, in partnership with Marian University and the City Connects program, hires professionals with master’s degrees in social work or counseling and provides them with additional training as “navigators” within the schools. The Navigators coordinate the wrap-around services for students and families, helping them “navigate” the services available at the school and in the community. Previously, MCS provided Navigators at South View, East Washington, Southside, and Grissom and this year added a Navigator at Northside.

Funding for the *Family Navigators* occurred through multiple sources including the Office of the Muncie Mayor, Marian University, and multiple grants. To coordinate efforts and provide consistency, the MCS special education director and the volunteer coordinator arranged meetings between community resource sites and the Navigators to share about specific services offered in the area and the needs of MCS families. BSU Community School coordinator met with the Navigators to share her deep connections with families and the community and to provide training on using an asset-based perspective when assisting families. Marian University communicated weekly with the Navigators to provide continued training and support with the City Connects model.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will coordinate with the *Family Navigators* program to:

- Expand the number of schools with a navigator by adding one at Longfellow Elementary.
 - Continue to provide the Navigators with support and training from Marian University.
 - Continue to provide regular meetings between the Navigators and community service providers as organized by the MCS director of special education and the volunteer coordinator.
-

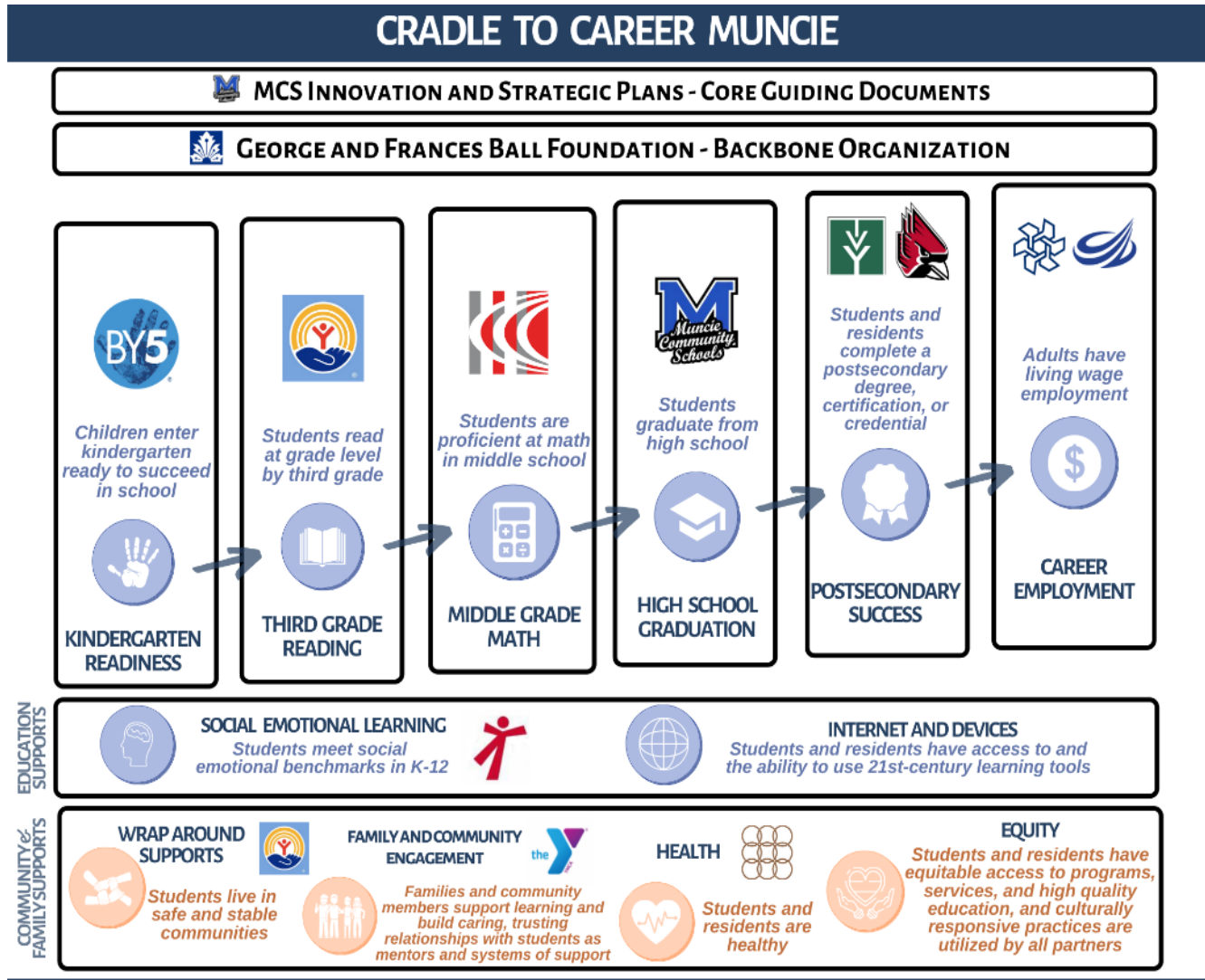
- ◆ **Action Step 5.2 b.** Create and implement the neighborhood *Cradle to Career Muncie* initiative to provide children with health, social, and educational supports from early childhood to college and career.

Rationale: In SY 2020-21, the George and Frances Ball Foundation led the development of an initiative to support students and their families and used the *Muncie Community School Innovation Plan* and *Strategic Plan* developed in 2018-19 as its guide. Known as *Cradle to Career Muncie*, the foundation’s work encompasses children from birth to young adulthood or when youth enter college or the workforce. Nonprofit leaders facilitate the collective work groups called the Collaborative Action Network or CAN. The CANs, as shown in Figure 5.1, mobilize and build upon existing community strengths.



Together, the schools, organizations, nonprofits, and individuals strive to accomplish the goals through a collective impact approach, each playing an important role in the economic mobility of the community.

Figure 5.1 *Cradle to Career Muncie* Roadmap to Success



- ◆ **Action Step 5.2 c.** Create and implement the neighborhood *Cradle to Career Muncie* initiative to provide children with health, social and educational supports from early childhood to career.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: *Cradle to Career Muncie*, with the George and Francis Ball Foundation serving as the backbone organization, is a community-wide initiative centered on the health, social and emotional and academic development of Muncie students. More than 40 local organizations and over 70 local individuals are actively involved. *Cradle to Career Muncie* is the only Indiana-based *Strive Together* member in the national network of 70 communities. Its purpose aligns and overlaps with that of MCS. The organizational structure of the *Cradle to Career Muncie* initiative consists of twelve working groups or CANs, as noted earlier, that represent the large, over-arching individual focus areas of the initiative,



such as improving third grade reading skills or increasing the high school graduation rate. In the past school year, the CANS completed a number of actions toward the achievement of their goals and as related to MCS.

- **CAN: Kindergarten Readiness**

Goal: Children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school.

BY5, the United Way, and MCS created and implemented a new kindergarten experience for students and families enrolling in SY 2023-24, called “Blast Off to Kindergarten” (see Action Step 3.27).

- **CAN: Third Grade Reading**

Goal: Students read at grade level by third grade.

To improve the level of reading for third graders, the United Way established a program with volunteers listening to or reading with small groups of learners during the school day.

In another effort, the third-grade reading CAN arranged a trip in Fall 2022 to visit Philadelphia’s citywide reading initiative. A team of eight, including MCS staff, learned about the city’s project, “*Read by 4th.*” With a goal of all learners being able to read well by fourth grade, the city described the initiative as:



“A citywide coalition of family, community, and systems leaders protecting every child’s right to read.” This “right” coincides with the MCS vision of “Placing learners first” with success in reading being foundational to student success.

- **CAN: Middle Grade Math**

Goal: Students are proficient at math in middle school.

This CAN organized volunteers to serve as tutors for middle school students.

- **CAN: High School Graduation**

Goal: Students graduate from high school.

The financial support of the George and Frances Foundation allowed Central High School to hire a 9th Grade On-Track Coordinator. The coordinator’s role is to “track” or review each freshman’s records of attendance, behavior, and credits earned followed by guidance and support for the student to improve in the areas needed. Research studies from the University of Chicago Consortium served as the impetus for the development of this new position.

... students who are off-track in 9th-grade are much more likely to drop out even if they entered high school with high grades and test scores, and on the other hand that students on-Track at the end of freshmen year are three times more likely to graduate from high school.⁶

With the assistance of the High School Graduation CAN, incentives are available to encourage students to become successful in their attendance and behavior and in the steady earning of course credits. Additionally, this CAN and MCS staff traveled to Racine, Wisconsin to observe a

⁶ <https://ncs.uchicago.edu/page/ninth-grade-success-and-college-readiness>



career academics model at the middle and high school level to consider similar ideas for the Muncie community.

- **CAN: Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)**

Goal: Students meet social emotional benchmarks in K-12.



The SEL CAN focused on the importance of physical play in children’s development. They discovered that the time-honored tradition of “recess” is rarely structured to provide activities and games that lead to social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth for students. Thus, the CAN traveled to Indianapolis to the Boys and Girls Club to observe the evidence-based program *Playworks*. This program occurs during recess with a goal to “help students discover the joy of physical activity, build social and emotional skills and come back to class ready to learn—all through play.”

Research, utilizing a randomized control trial, determined that students engaged in *Playworks* were more physically active than their peers and with teachers reporting that the students had greater feelings of school safety and less bullying behavior. Other outcomes reported include leadership skill development and increased classroom participation. This CAN group will continue to pursue other programs and supports for students’ social and emotional learning and determine the most appropriate for MCS students.

- **CAN Family and Community Engagement**

Goal: Families and community members support learning and build caring, trusting relationships with students as mentors and systems of support.

This CAN established work groups around asset mapping, identifying community leaders, and gathering baseline data. Secondly, the CAN Family and Community Engagement traveled to New York City in Spring 2023 to visit the Harlem Children’s Zone. Begun in the 1990s and led by renowned community organizer, Geoffrey Canada, the *Harlem Children’s Zone* addresses intergenerational poverty one block at a time.



The Muncie team of twelve learned of the Zone’s three early childhood programs, starting with “The Baby College;” the four school academies; the college success office; the community centers; the physical and emotional wellness facilities and much more. As described by the Zone:

Our cradle-to-career pathway of comprehensive programs — all offered at no cost — empowers our scholars, families, and communities with the opportunities needed to achieve life-changing social and economic mobility.⁷

This description aligns well with the *Cradle-to-Career Muncie* initiative and partners of the initiative will continue to investigate the Zone as related to the City of Muncie.

⁷ Retrieved from <https://hcz.org/our-purpose/our-approach/>



Further, MCS, in collaboration with the George and Francis Ball Foundation, hired a three-member data team. For the first time in the district's history, this team will review the goals and plans implemented by the school district, the community organizations, and other groups that provide services to MCS students. They will then review the provided outcomes measurements - both quantitative and qualitative - to determine student growth across a variety of areas. As the team analyzes the data, they will seek patterns and trends that lead to determining the success of an individual program/support.

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, the George and Francis Ball Foundation will continue to serve as the backbone organization for *Cradle to Career Muncie* with the CANs collaborating with the school district to take actions in line with MCS Strategic Plan. This brings together early education, K-12, higher education, and social service systems to create a better future for Muncie students.

- ◆ **Action Step 5.2 d.** Collaborate with community foundations and non-profits to align strategies and resources in support of MCS students, families, teachers, and staff.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

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

Next Steps: MCS will continue to work strategically to develop partnerships and funding opportunities to assist in implementing family and community-based projects and programs.
