



MUNCIE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

STRATEGIC PLAN

Update for SY 2023-24

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. and Dr. Reynolds

We are pleased to present our updated five-year strategic plan, which reflects our ongoing commitment to educational excellence and continuous improvement. This annual update allows us to celebrate our achievements while continuing to chart the course ahead. From the beginning, our initial five pillars have provided clear goals for Muncie Community Schools. Here are some of the key achievements to date under each of these pillars:

- I. High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education
 - a. Enrollment increased from 50 to 227
 - b. Number of classes offered increased from 3 to 12
 - c. Families taking advantage of grant funding increased 3 to 79
 - d. Total grant funding grew from \$9,000 to \$370,000
- II. Recruitment, Development, and Retention of Educational Leaders
 - a. Maintained balanced budget while significantly increasing staff and teacher salaries
 - b. Staff and teacher salaries increased by \$2 million from 2019-20 to 2022-23
 - c. Teacher retention grew from 67% in 2016-17 to 83% in 2023-24
- III. Student-centered Teaching and Learning
 - a. Multiple schools received millions of dollars in classroom and athletic facility improvements to aid the learning environment and extracurricular experience
 - b. High school students had increased opportunities for new learning opportunities through expanded Early College program and additional Career Center pathways
 - c. Forty MCHS students graduated with Associates degrees in hand from Ivy Tech in 2024, by far its highest number ever
 - d. Tuition savings totaled nearly \$600,000 in 2024
- IV. Social and Emotional Learning
 - a. Improved in-school attendance for some of our most vulnerable students by decreasing chronic absenteeism by 6% over three years
 - b. Provided needed assistance for dozens of students through added support personnel like family navigators, student assistance coordinators, and behavior coaches
- V. Family and Community Engagement
 - a. Have increased family participation at school events district-wide through monthly “Big Idea” nights, our community-wide Cradle-to-Career initiative, and third-party school assessment research done by Scholastic

In addition, MCS has received \$22 million in grant funding over the past five years, which has helped us with many of the initiatives above. These achievements reflect the dedication of our staff, the support of our families, and the resilience of our students. We celebrate these successes and remain committed to addressing ongoing challenges, setting even higher goals for the coming years. Please review the full strategic plan in greater detail. Your continued engagement and support are crucial as we work together to provide the best possible education for every student in our district. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Dr. Lee Ann Kwiatkowski and Dr. Chuck Reynolds,

Former and current Director of Public Education and CEOs - Muncie Community Schools



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. The appendix includes the “dashboard” which provides visual tracking of our progress over five years. The State of Indiana requires this report in accordance with the State’s statutory directive (I.C. 20-23-18-10) forming the partnership between Muncie Community Schools and Ball State University. This report is to specifically include innovative methods of instruction in our schools, in addition to demonstrating a strong, evidence-based teaching and learning foundation.

Our Presentation

Our presentation follows the outline of the *MCS Innovation and Strategic Plan (2020)* 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 Learning
- Pillar IV:** Social and Emotional Learning
- Pillar V:** Family and Community Engagement

Each Pillar contains the following format:

Pillar I

Goal 1

Strategy 1.1*

- Action Step 1.1
- Progress Toward Goal: *Not Yet Begun - Early Stages - On Track – Completed*
- Evidence of Progress
- Next Steps

*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.



Table of Contents

• Letter from Dr. K and Dr. Reynolds	2
• A Note to the Reader	3
• Table of Contents	4
Pillar I: High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education	5
Pillar II: Recruitment, Development, and Retention of Educational Leaders	14
A. Development of Teachers and Leaders	14
B. Recruitment and Retainment of Teachers and Leaders	18
Pillar III: Student-Centered Teaching and Learning	23
A. Learner-Centered Classrooms and Schools	23
B-1. Literacy, K-8 grades	27
B-2. Mathematics	32
B-3. Social Studies	35
C. STEAM, K-12	35
D. Learning Spanish and English as New Languages	40
E. Physical and Nutritional Health	44
F. Preparing for College and Careers	45
G. Extended Learning Opportunities	61
Pillar IV: Social and Emotional Learning	67
Pillar V: Family and Community Engagement	76
Appendix: MCS Strategic Plan: Implementation Dashboard	



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 indicate 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 that the effects carry over 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 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 2023-24, the twelve Pre-K classrooms reached a total enrollment of 227 students, up from a total of 158 the prior year. With 20 students being the allowed capacity, the PreK classes reached 94 percent capacity for enrollment (Table 1.1).



Table1.1. Pre-K Classroom Enrollment by Year

Elementary School	2018-19 Baseline	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1. East Washington Academy	20	19	20	20	20	37
2. Grissom	17	20	20	38	38	54
3. Longfellow	--	10	12	19	20	38
5. North View	---	---	19	21	20	20
4. South View	13	18	20	38	40	58
6. West View	---	---	20	20	20	20
Total	50	67	111	156	158	227

Pre-K student enrollment increased in SY 2023-24, as MCS created more classrooms. However, the percentage of eligible students enrolling continued to remain low districtwide. To address this fact, MCS continued efforts to improve parent and community awareness of the importance of Pre-K classes and early education by mailing informational postcards to all families of 3-4 year olds; promoting the Pre-K program through the school’s weekly communications and at school events; and utilizing social media with audience-specific video messaging. In addition, MCS continued to list its program on the “Child Care Finder” page of the state’s website for families. (<https://www.in.gov/fssa/childcarefinder/>).

MCS addresses the needs of Pre-K students in Delaware County through enrollment in its Pre-K developmental classrooms and/or through individual or group speech and language therapy. For SY 2023-24, the program served 82 students.

Following its commitment to increase the number of Pre-K classrooms, MCS established three new classrooms in SY 2023-24—one each at EWA, Grissom, and South View; and Huffer added a classroom at Longfellow. This brings the total number of Pre-K classrooms to twelve—an increase of nine since 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	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

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

Add one additional classroom at Grissom for a total of four classrooms at the school.



- Continue to seek solutions to allow the establishment of more Pre-K classrooms as the district faces limitations of available spaces to add more Pre-K classrooms in the elementary schools.
-



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/families using the funding streams, MCS can offset its costs for the Pre-K classrooms, allowing for an increased number of classrooms to be established.

- ◆ **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 OMW Preschool funding; (b) communicating with those 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 continue to reach parents and families about the existence of and the need for early childhood education in meeting two goals for SY 2023-24. The first goal achieved was the hiring of a Pre-K coordinator, a new position. The coordinator's most important role this school year was to devise and implement strategies to increase (a) Pre-K enrollment and (b) families' knowledge and interest in On My Way (OMW) preschool funding. During the school year, the coordinator met with Pre-K parents at the schools; visited homes to share the importance of preschool education; and assisted families in completing the required paperwork to increase OMW applications.

MCS met the second goal for the year by including the OMW application for parents as part of the Pre-K registration packet. While all schools participated, some principals and front offices were more engaged than others in this strategy, and thus, this will be an area of focus in SY 2024-25. MCS continued this year to utilize various communication strategies to reach families about OMW Pre-K: distributing flyers; using social media; and enrolling families at the Pre-K and Kindergarten registration events held at the elementary schools in the spring. In addition, MCS met regularly with the Delaware County OMW regional manager to assist families in obtaining Pre-K funding.

The second source of family funding is the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), a funding source for low-income families to pay for childcare costs with a requirement that the funds be used 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.

MCS' completion of the goals of hiring a coordinator, improving communication to families, and working alongside the county OMW manager led to an increase of an additional 28 students receiving funding through OMW and 11 through CCDF in SY 2023-24. Thus, 35 percent of the enrolled Pre-K families utilized one of the two funding streams (Table 1.3). While this is a 10 percent increase from the prior year, many more eligible families do not yet participate in the available funding. Increasing families' use of these funds will continue to be a major task of the Pre-K coordinator next year.



Table 1.3. Children Receiving OMW Grants and CCDF

Elementary Schools	2018-19 Baseline		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF	OMW	CCDF
1. East Wash.	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	4	0	5	2
2. Grissom	3	0	6	0	8	0	3	2	7	0	14	3
3. Longfellow	---	---	0	0	0	0	5	2	19	0	24	5
4. North View	---	---	2	0	4	0	2	1	3	0	4	0
5. South View	---	---	1	1	5	0	4	1	3	1	15	2
6. West View	---	---	--	--	0	0	3	0	3	0	5	0
Subtotal	3	0	9	1	18	0	19	8	39	1	67	12
Students Receiving Funds*	3		10		18		27 (17%)		40 (25%)		79 (35%)	

*of total number that were eligible to apply

As shown in Table 1.4, even a small increase in the number of Pre-K families using state-provided preschool funding brings in substantial monetary support for the district’s preschools. For SY 2023-24, the total preschool grants awarded reached a new high at over \$370,000, more than double that of the prior year (Table 1.4).

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

Elementary Schools*	2018-19 Baseline	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1. East Washington	---	\$ 1,939	\$ 3,698	\$ 14,290	\$ 28,827	\$39,844
2. Grissom	\$ 9,038	\$ 29,411	\$ 60,087	\$ 26,671	\$ 57,017	\$134,600
3. North View	---	---	---	\$ 25,084	\$ 27,268	\$28,760
4. South View	---	\$ 13,937	\$ 24,393	\$ 38,739	\$ 23,275	\$112,749
5. West View	---	---	---	\$ 27,467	\$ 30,957	\$54,423
Total	\$ 9,038	\$ 45,287	\$ 88,178	\$ 132,251	\$ 167,344	\$ 370,376

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

Next Steps: MCS will continue to:

- Work diligently to increase the number of PreK families utilizing OMW grants and CCDF awards, allowing the district to open additional preschool classrooms. MCS knows there are many more families eligible to receive the funding than are applying.
- Improve the information to and the engagement of families and children at the Pre-K and K registration event by (a) establishing a single district-wide registration event, occurring on the



- same evening; (b) creating similar agendas and activities at all schools; and (c) adding times to meet with the teachers and visit the classrooms during the event.
- Strengthen the elementary principal's and office staff's consistency and attention to increasing family completion of OMW applications.
-

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, (c) best practices 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.

Note to the Reader: As a major focus area of the MCS Strategic Plan is the development of a strong Pre-K program, the administration determined a review of the current program would be instrumental to its continual growth and leading to Level 4 accreditation. In Fall 2023, MCS hired an early childhood education (ECE) specialist to conduct a review of the program in its entirety.

The ECE consultant, an Ohio State University professor and long-time preschool educator, conducted reviews of all Pre-K classrooms by meeting with each Pre-K teacher individually at the beginning of the school day and observing each classroom from student arrival time to nap time. She utilized the *Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (3rd Edition)*, (ECERS) created by the University of North Carolina and used throughout the U.S. by trained observers as a valid and reliable tool. The areas observed and rated included (a) space and furnishings, (b) personal care routines, (c) language and literacy, (d) learning activities, (e) interaction, and (f) program structure. The results of the review are described in each of the Action Steps and in the Next Steps.

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: MCS continues to strive towards its goal of all Pre-K classrooms being highly accredited at Level 4 by the state's *Paths to Quality* (PTQ) and the National Association of Early Childhood Education (NAEYC) for national accreditation. All classrooms are certified as Level 3 at this time, with Huffer's classroom at Longfellow accredited at Level 4 in SY 2022-23 and 2023-24 (Table1.5).



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	2023- 24	Desired Level
1. East Washington	---	2	3	3	3	3	4
2. Grissom	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
3. Longfellow*	---	3	3	3	4	4*	4
4. South View	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
5. North View	---	---	3	3	3	3	4
6. West View	---	---	3	3	3	3	4

*Longfellow is managed by Heffer and was the original Pre-K program in MCS schools.

MCS is proud that the Pre-K programs in all schools are at *PTQ* Level 3, with Longfellow at Level 4. According to the [State and National Descriptors](#), Level 3 programs are:

- “Operating in good standing and having been recognized by the state of Indiana as having met all required health and safety standards” - Level 1.
- “Demonstrate a commitment to improve program quality, offering opportunities for children to advance their growth and development through a consistent daily schedule, planned activities for children, while providing relevant program information for families” - Level 2.
- With staff that “implement a planned curriculum, while demonstrating the knowledge and skill necessary for planning appropriate activities and opportunities that lead children toward school readiness. . . with a significant investment in the professional development of the staff” - Level 3.

In addition to those criteria, Level 4 programs, which is only the Huffer classroom currently, reflect the following:

- “Demonstrates a commitment to the highest level of professionalism in high quality child care”
- “Are managed by a provider or director who has volunteered to provide mentoring to others in the field.”

Level 4 requires highly qualified and well-educated staff, which MCS has attempted to find and hire. Educational requirements include: (a) the lead Pre-K teachers holding an associate degree (AA) in early childhood education and (b) the assistant teachers holding a certificate as a Child Development Associate (CDA). To assist community members in obtaining the needed education, MACC provided coursework for the associate’s position beginning SY 2022-23. While this provision provided for qualified assistant teachers in the prior school year, (Table 1.6), retaining qualified staff remains difficult.

Table 1.6 Pre-K Staff with Required Associate Degrees and Certificates

Pre-K Staff	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Lead Teachers: holding Early Childhood CDA, Associate or Bachelor Degree	100%	100%	100%
Assistant Teachers: holding Child Development Associate Certificate or higher or other qualified training	50%	100%	60%



Staffing issues primarily relate to the fact that persons working with young children receive low wages—a national problem. The Bureau of Labor Statistics noted in 2022 that Indiana ranked in the bottom 20 of states regarding hourly wages for childcare workers¹ with averages in Central Indiana being \$15-19 an hour for a certified preschool teacher. Such low wages result in high-worker turnover with school districts having few allowable financial resources to increase their wages.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, Pre-K staff and district leadership will strive to complete the requirements to obtain the Level 4 *Paths to Quality* certification alongside the national NAEYC accreditation. Of note is the fact that the ability to achieve Level 4 is highly dependent on MCS' ability to hire well-educated and dedicated staff and retain them through professional development and increased wages. Thus, MCS in SY 2023-24 will:

- Continue to provide local training through the MACC in a “grow-your-own” approach to Pre-K staffing shortages.
- Review and determine sources of funding to increase the wages of Pre-K teachers and assistants.

As determined by the ECE consultant's review and the district administration, MCS will focus on increasing Pre-K staff awareness and understanding of the critical components of a high-quality Pre-K classroom, which include all of the Action Steps in this section with initial steps to be:

- Educate and train staff on the *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-3* (ECER-3) to regularly determine growth and areas of improvement needed in their Pre-K classrooms as led by the Pre-K coordinator.
- Provide professional development for staff to increase understanding of the alignment among the ECER-3, the state's rating system (PTQ), and the Indiana Early Childhood Standards.

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- ◆ **Action Step 1.3 b.** (1) Adopt and (2) implement with fidelity a comprehensive early childhood curriculum to achieve and maintain *Paths to Quality*TM (PTQ) Level 4 for all Pre-K classrooms, especially in preliteracy.

Progress Toward the Goal: (1) Completed and (2) Early Stages

Evidence of Progress #1: Adopt an early childhood curriculum - Completed SY 2021-22*

***Completion Note:** Two years ago, MCS adopted *Creative Curriculum* for its Pre-K program. However, with the new state and district emphasis on the science of reading, MCS proposed for SY 2023-24 to investigate the reading component of the *Creative Curriculum*. The review determined that the preliteracy/early reading program is solidly based on the science of reading research and will remain the curriculum for the Pre-K program.

Evidence of Progress #2: Implementation with fidelity of the adopted comprehensive early childhood curriculum.

Progress Toward the Goal: Early Stages

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes399011.htm>



Administrative and consultant classroom observations revealed a lack of implementation of the *Creative Curriculum* by the staff. Pre-K staff reflected a “childcare/daycare” view of their job roles rather than a



“pre-school” perspective which requires critical attention to cognitive and language development of the young child. The ECE consultant noted in her report that while the teachers provided ample “activities” in the classrooms, “the activities were not tied to intentional teaching and learning” – a requirement of high-quality preschool programs.

To address the learning needs of the Pre-K staff, MCS began a new schedule of professional training in January 2024 for the teachers and assistants to supplement their AA degrees and ECE certificates. In the second semester, the early childhood consultant provided 20 hours of training in areas such as: understanding the ECERS-3 criteria for high-quality ECE classrooms; strategies to support language growth and literacy development with extensions to science and math concepts; developing lesson plans; and conducting formative assessments and using the results in lesson planning.

Next Steps: Continued professional development and classroom coaching will be central to MCS’ Pre-K classrooms receiving Level 4 ratings. For SY 2024-25, MCS will contract with the ECE expert to:

- Improve staff knowledge and understanding in child development, especially in the areas of language, cognition, and early literacy (a) through routine classroom observations and (b) multiple training sessions, including in the summer.
 - Improve student exposure to preliteracy and emerging literacy through teachers’ intentional instructional planning and mandated two-a-day reading lessons.
 - Increase teachers’ development of intentional and meaningful classrooms activities through the creation of a required lesson plan template.
 - Increase principals’ ability to recognize and evaluate the components of high-quality Pre-K classrooms by using a newly developed observation form for classroom walk-throughs.
 - Improve Pre-K staff performance through the development and implementation of a new district teacher evaluation form that corresponds to the ECERS-3, *Paths to Quality*, and IDOE Preschool State Standards.
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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 the ECERS-3 classroom review conducted in Fall 2023, the subscales representing teacher practices included the areas of language/literacy, learning activities, and interactions. The three subscales received generally low marks across the classroom observations, demonstrating the need for staff to gain knowledge in the learning and instruction of children ages 3-4 to academically, linguistically, and socially to prepare them to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. In addition, a number of students with special needs are enrolled in the classrooms with teachers unsure how to meet their needs.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will focus on improving teacher instruction, in general, and teaching students with special needs and will:

- Provide training (through the ECE consultant) in implementing evidence-based instructional practices for children ages 3-5 in the areas of (a) cognitive and language development; (b) vocabulary development, and (c) preliteracy and reading skills.



- Increase staff's understanding and skills in teaching students with special needs in areas such as managing challenging behaviors and implementing appropriate de-escalation strategies as provided by the MCS special education staff.
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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: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: MCS adopted the *GOLD* assessment tool that accompanies the *Creative Curriculum* in SY 2022-23. However, use of the assessment was limited as the district concentrated on increasing the number of classrooms and hiring accredited teachers. Administrators noted in their observations that “the documentation of student learning was not apparent.” Although the *Creative Curriculum* publishers provided some training in using *GOLD* in SY 2023-24, the Pre-K staff needs intensive training to appropriately use formative assessment data for instructional decision-making.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will ensure Pre-K staff receives training, as related to the *GOLD* assessment in:

- Improving observational skills recognizing children's stages of development.
 - Recording data in *GOLD*'s online portal.
 - Producing and analyzing data and reports to determine child progress.
 - Providing reports to parents.
 - Using the data for appropriate lesson planning and best practices instruction.
-



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, being aware of new developments in research 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 2023-24, MCS continued its four-year partnership with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) with a focus on secondary school leadership. Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs), consisting of principals and master/mentor teachers, received training and onsite coaching to increase their instructional leadership capacity. Support to ILTs focused on identification of student and teacher needs based on data; provision of evidence-based supports to address the determined needs; and improvement in the quantity and quality of school communication internally and externally. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)/clusters continued to increase their role as school leaders concerning effective instructional practices.

Next Steps: Support from NIET will continue in SY 2024-25 for both elementary and secondary schools. The MCS Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education will continue to develop their roles in overseeing ILT PLCs/clusters with NIET providing support, as needed. NIET staff will support the directors to:

- Implement the newly adopted reading program, *CKLA*, at the middle schools (see Pillar III).
- Support effective instructional leadership practices in all schools through regular building-level PLC/cluster meetings.
- Improve ILTs' ability to identify student and teacher needs and provide appropriate, evidence-based supports.
- Increase the ability and effectiveness of mentor teachers to support classroom teachers in instructional practices through modeling and coaching.



- Implement a process to validate the use of specific evidence-based instructional practices through field-testing.
 - Continue to support principals and ILTs through “learning walks” which include classroom observations followed by group discussion of findings with master/mentor teachers, principals, and the secondary director.
-

- ◆ **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 2023-24, master and mentor teachers continued to develop their knowledge and skills to improve teachers’ instructional practices based on best practices and educational research. Through NIET’s trainings and support, the master and mentor teachers gained skills in (a) conducting classroom observations of teacher instruction based on areas of weakness as determined by the PLCs/clusters; (b) directing field testing of implemented high-impact classroom instructional strategies; (c) supporting teachers in establishing criteria in their lessons as a means of assessing student mastery; and (d) providing teachers with ways to differentiate student activities to increase engagement. In Spring semester, some master and mentor teachers observed PLCs/clusters in action in another school district where NIET similarly trained the staff to gain ideas for improvement.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Continue to develop the skills of master/mentor teachers to lead professional learning and provide mentoring and coaching about instruction through NIET training and support.
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Ball State’s PDS liaisons continued to assist with professional learning for teachers in SY 2023-24. Four liaisons served the six elementary schools, and two liaisons assisted at each middle school – one focusing on English language arts and one on mathematics. The focus areas for elementary schools included math, student behavior, and teaching students with special needs.

Next Steps: MCS will, in SY 2024-25, ensure that teachers receive support from BSU PDS liaisons with a focus on:

- 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: Ensuring the consistent and valid implementation of teacher evaluations is critical to improving student learning, with the ratings valid between and among the raters to achieve high inter-rater reliability. Thus, in SY 2023-24, NIET supported MCS school leaders in increasing their ability to effectively analyze instructional practices in alignment with the 2022 updated NIET teacher rubric and evaluation process. Support and training from NIET varied depending on the needs of the school leader.

For school principals, the secondary director led them in conducting walk-throughs in one another’s buildings, observing as a small group, and then discussing the observed classroom instructional practices and evidence of student learning, followed by discussing ways they would support teachers to improve in these areas. For teachers in the PLCs/clusters, NIET led them in reviewing student work, noting strengths and weaknesses followed by reflecting on the best instructional practices to use for reteaching and/or scaffolding the learning – a key skill for all teachers as presented in the MCS Evaluation Tool.

The teaching of reading is a critical piece of elementary teachers’ evaluations. Thus, the MCS Science of Reading consultants provided training on the topic not only for the teachers but also for the principals. This allowed the principals to conduct a valid review of teachers’ reading instruction for the classroom evaluations. The NIET Evaluation Tool holds teachers to high expectations with the rating of “highly effective” indicating an exceptional educator. In SY 2023-24 the combined percentage of highly effective and effective teachers reached 94 percent (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		2023-24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Highly Effective	175	59%	141	57%	137	38%	95	33%	99	32%	173	47%
Effective	118	39%	107	43%	217	59%	186	64%	194	62%	172	47%
Improvement Necessary	5	2%	0	0%	11	3%	7	3%	19	6%	18	5%
Ineffective	0	--	0	--	0	--	0	--	0		2	1%



Total	298	--	248	--	365	--	281	--	312	---	36	---
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Next Steps: As the valid evaluation of teacher practice is critical to improving student instruction and learning, MCS in SY 2024-25 will:

- Utilize NIET at the secondary level to support school leaders (a) in increasing their ability to analyze instructional practices in alignment to the teacher evaluation rubric and (b) in using the rubric results to provide appropriate professional development and coaching for master/mentor teachers specifically.
 - Provide individualized supports based on the needs of the school leader.
 - Ensure the elementary and secondary directors (a) lead building principals in joint teacher evaluations using the evaluation rubric and (b) participate in PLCs/cluster meetings to support the understanding of and the adherence to the rubric.
-

- ◆ **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: In SY 2023-24 MCS, with NIET support, continued to improve district and school leaders' ability to conduct classroom observations with similar understandings and ratings, leading to increased inter-rater reliability on the evaluation tool, *Principal Standards Rubric*. Areas addressed this year included observing and rating (a) Instructional Needs: Instruction, instructional focus, curriculum and assessment, and teacher effectiveness, (b) Student learning and content level mastery, (c) Adjusting instruction and assessments to ensure student mastery, and (d) Implementation of specific instructional strategies to engage students in learning and to meet individualized student needs.

Next Steps: MCS in SY 2024-25 will:

- Ensure valid and consistent staff evaluations by all school leaders through NIET's required testing of evaluators for inter-rater reliability.
-

- ◆ **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 and accept various cultural practices, varying perspectives, and the 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** Improve staff understanding of MCS' student and family cultures (racial, ethnic, and economically).

Progress Toward the Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2024-25, MCS again offered staff *Poverty Simulation Training* in the summer and extended the invitation to the Family Navigators, student assistant coordinators, behavior coaches and specialists, and counselors, as well as to teachers and administrators. Also, the director of diversity and a BSU faculty member provided a training session for school equity teams in the summer.

Next Steps: In 2024-25 MCS will

- Continue to increase staff understanding of culture through the *Poverty Simulation Training*.
-

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: Completed, SY 2022-23

B. Recruitment and Retention of Teachers and Educational Leaders

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

- ◆ **Action Step 2.5 a.** Explore and develop financial incentives for finding and hiring teachers new to MCS, including recognizing and rewarding exceptional teachers.

Progress Toward the Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS continued providing financial incentives to staff in various ways in SY 2023-24:



- 1) Incentive for hard-to-staff positions. This initiative served as MCS' first financial incentive, occurring in SY 2022-23, with the goal of attracting and retaining teachers in specific highly competitive subject/content areas. This included teachers of mathematics, science, special education, world languages, dual languages, dual credit courses and Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses. Teachers in these hard-to-staff areas received an additional \$1,000 per semester (\$2,000 per year) in SY 2023-24.
- 2) Incentive for "Teacher of the Year." MCS sought to recognize teachers selected as "Teacher of the Year" at each school and at the district level and added this incentive in SY 2023-24. Each school's "Teacher of the Year" received a \$1,000 increase in salary which will continue throughout their employment at MCS. From this group, the district selected one elementary and one secondary teacher as the "District Teacher of the Year," with those selected receiving an additional \$1,000 for a total of \$2,000 for the year.
- 3) Incentive for referring a highly effective teacher. In SY 2023-24, two MCS employees received a \$500 bonus for referring two highly effective rated teachers that were subsequently hired by the district and served a full academic year at Grissom and South View elementary schools.
- 4) Incentive for highly-effective teachers at schools with greatest needs. MCS sought to (a) recruit teachers rated as highly-effective from other schools (both internally and externally) and (b) retain the highly-effective rated teachers that teach in the MCS schools with the greatest needs. To this end, several teachers in SY 2023-24 received a \$5,000 bonus for serving in a challenging school.

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

- Continue to evaluate the value and success of the monetary incentives.
- Sustain monetary incentives as financially able to do so.

-
- ◆ **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. A major emphasis of the *Muncie Community Schools Strategic Plan 2020-2025* was to reverse the continual decrease in staff salaries that occurred for ten years from 2007-2017. With the leadership of Dr. Kwiatkowski and the school board, salaries improved in each of the last five years since 2017, becoming equal to or better than other local school districts in SY 2022-23.

Having made a major investment in competitive teacher, support staff, and administrator salaries, the board announced that annual raises will continue in the future and noted that the greatest increases will be for those teachers and principals evaluated as "highly effective." The ability to provide raises in the future will be based on multiple factors, including but not limited to the cost of living, other economic factors and maintaining a balanced district budget. Salary increases in SY 2023-24 demonstrated increases of 1.7 to 2.2 percent for teachers, support staff and administrators with teachers receiving the greatest increase (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

Staff	2021-22	%	2022-23	%	2023-24	%	2024-25	%
Teachers	\$1,300,000	8.1	\$ 2,400,000	14.7	\$ 1,496,000	7.8	\$ 497,000	2.2
Support Staff	\$209,000	4.9	\$ 279,000	6.7	\$ 219,237	4.1	\$ 102,000	1.7
Administrators	\$120,000	4.0	\$ 117,000	3.4	\$ 149,000	3.9	TBD	
Total	\$ 1,629,000 ³	7.1	\$2,796,000	11.6	\$ 1,864,000	6.5	TBD	

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.

While teacher retention depends on a number of factors, a competitive salary is a major reason that teachers remain in a school district. Thus, MCS tracks the rate of teacher retention as compared to the increases in salaries (Action Step 2.5a.). MCS notes a steady increase in teacher retention rates from SY 2016-17 to this current year (Table 2.3) which coincides with yearly increases in teacher salaries.

Table 2.3: Retention Rates of Teachers

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Teacher Count	423	364	347	361	361	360	381	403
Teacher Resignations	140	90	63	60	66	75	69	69
Retention Percent	67%	75%	82%	83%	82%	79%	82%	83%

Next Steps: The MCS Board and administration will, in SY 2024-25:

- Remain committed to providing all staff with competitive salaries and other forms of financial incentives.
- 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 the reduced fees for exercise facilities 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. This school year, 25 staff members utilized the Ball State reduced tuition program (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	2023-24
Number of staff participating	33	28	34	22	33	25

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS’s Human Resources will:

- Continue to promote the BSU/MCS partnership which includes reduced tuition rate and other discounts to new and returning teachers.

◆ **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 2023 and throughout SY 2023-24 as described in each pillar’s narrative in this update report. Some examples of professional learning opportunities included:

- Instructional practices for teaching the academic areas of math, reading and science as provided by BSU liaisons (Pillar II)
- Supports to master/mentor teachers provided by NIET (Pillar II, III)
- *Science of Reading* training (Pillar III)
- *K-5 Core Knowledge Language Arts Program*, training on the newly adopted reading/ELA curricula (Pillar III)
- *The Teaching of Civics*, a short course offered through Ball State as an optional professional development opportunity (Pillar III)
- *Project Lead the Way* training (Pillar III)
- *PCM Training*, trauma-informed crisis prevention and intervention (Pillar IV)

A significant professional learning opportunity occurred in SY 2023-24 as the Dual Language Immersion program (DLI) developed a comprehensive orientation process through *Schoology* that is tailored to new members of the MCS DLI team. This orientation is designed to acquaint teachers and staff with the MCS dual language program's philosophy, goals, and methodologies (Pillar III).

Next Steps: Professional learning opportunities will continue to be provided in SY 2024-25 in the focus areas of:

- *Science of Reading*: the implementation of *CKLA* curriculum in grades 1-5 (continued from prior year).
- *Science of Reading*: the introduction to and implementation of *CKLA* curriculum in grades 6-8.
- Differentiating instruction for students with special needs and students learning English.



-
- ◆ **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 continued to grow in SY 2023-24 with the addition of the 6th grade classroom at Northside Middle School with MCS hiring an additional bilingual teacher for the classroom.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Hire certified bilingual Spanish/English teachers as the district is financially able to do so, including for the new 7th grade classroom at Northside Middle School.
-

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

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

Progress Toward the Goal: Completed SY 2023-24

Evidence of Progress: NEW The Minority Educators Council (MEC)—comprised of MCS teachers, counselors, and administrators of color—met several times during SY 2023-24. The director met with early childhood education majors at Ivy Tech, Muncie and Anderson campuses, about future job openings at MCS.



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

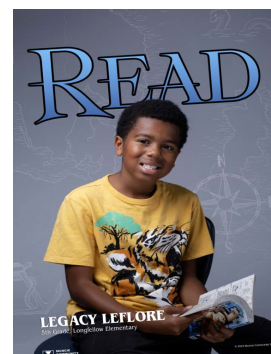
Rationale: MCS strongly believes that the environment in which learners learn and teachers teach is critical to the success of both; that students need to “see themselves” in the people in the schools and in the public messaging that the district sends; and that the district’s responsibility is to secure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

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 MSC signage and displays and in all aspects of marketing and communications.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, MCS continued to demonstrate the representation of all student groups through its social media sites and community communications. This year’s *READ 20* campaign emphasized students spending 20 minutes a day reading. To promote the campaign, the MCS Director of Communications led the selection of student, family, and community members to be photographed with their favorite books. The district displayed photos of the MCS students and staff in the schools and in local businesses, visually showing the diversity of the school system.



Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, 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: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS adopted a new reading curriculum for K-6 in SY 2022-23 and selected it, in part, for its inclusion of diversity. Administrators and teachers reviewed the stories, characters, and plots and determined a high level of diversity that corresponded to the diverse MCS student body. Also, MCS and Ball State Teacher's College purchased specific books to enhance the current selections available in classroom and school libraries.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, the district will:

- Continue to increase the diversity of curricula, materials, and lessons.

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 learning environments.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: With multiple sources of funding, MCS made significant progress in structural improvements in its building during the past two years. South View, EWA, West View, and Muncie High School received major construction projects to increase the function of the buildings and to provide better learning environments (Table 3.1). In SY 2023-24, MCS attended to revitalizing the gym floor at Northside Middle School and the continued construction of the new athletic building at Central with improvements to the restrooms, locker rooms, and concessions stand.



Table 3.1. MCS School Building Construction Projects

Completed	School and Funding Source	Purpose	Changes Made
<i>In process</i>	Northside MS - Gym built in 1970	Revitalize gymnasium floor.	Strip, sand, and refinish gym floor
2023	- MCHS Sports Facilities Built in 1950 Funds: Bonds (no change in tax rate)	<u>Project I</u> : Demolish/replace cement stadium and natural grass field	<u>Project I</u> : Built steel & aluminum stadium with artificial turf, seating 4 ft. higher, an 8-lane track, and LED lighting and new goal posts.
<i>In process</i>		<u>Project II</u> : Demolish/replace concessions stand and restrooms	<u>Project II</u> : Build a new facility for restrooms and concessions and locker rooms with restrooms.
2023	South View - Built in 1980 - Funds: ESSERS	Replace open-concept classrooms with walls	Walls built; reconfigured lobby; upgrades to HVAC and IT; new plumbing, toilets & flooring
2023	West View - Built in 1953 - Funds: ESSERS	Extend building to support increased student enrollment	Construction of a new wing with multiple student classrooms
2023	Muncie High School - Built in 1974 - Funds: Food Service	Modernize lunchroom from cafeteria to bistro-style.	New variable seating and tables for groupings; new paint with school logos; new flooring and countertops
2022	East Washington - Built in 1972 - Funds: ESSERS	Replace open-concept classrooms with walls	Walls built; reconfigured lobby; upgrades to HVAC and IT; new plumbing, toilets & flooring

Next Steps: MCS will, in SY 2024-25,

- Complete the sport facilities building, including locker rooms, restrooms, and concession stand.
- Continue to search for additional opportunities to enhance district and school buildings.

◆ **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: MCS addressed the classroom learning environment in SY 2023-24 by using School Improvement Grant funding to refresh school libraries at Longfellow, Grissom, and Southview. The schools received tables and flexible seating, in addition to books, for students to better utilize the libraries in various ways.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS 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

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

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.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In 2022, the Indiana State Board of Education required school districts to transition virtual e-Learning programs into a stand-alone school if more than 100 students enrolled. MCS complied in SY 2022-23 by creating the Muncie Virtual Academy (MVA) with an enrollment of approximately 200 students. However, the district strove to increase in-person student learning, rather than remote learning, as it is a more effective educational approach. Through these efforts, the MVA enrollment declined in SY 2023-24 to fewer than 100 students. Thus, MCS will close the MVA as a “school” and offer the virtual program on-site at the middle and secondary schools.

The “in-house” e-Learning program will serve students well with support available from counselors, Family Navigators and other support staff. The district’s agreement with *Stride Learning* as the provider of the virtual student course instruction will continue.

Next Steps: MCS will continue in SY 2024-25:

- To partner with *Stride Learning* to offer the Muncie Virtual Program 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-1. LITERACY, K-8 grades

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

Completed: SY 2019-23 with Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Program

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

In Fall 2022, MCS reviewed its current K-8 reading curriculum, *Fountas & Pinnell*, and determined that it lacked full adherence to the research undergirding the *Science of Reading* (SOR) and was not positively affecting student reading scores. To select a new reading curriculum, the MCS Education Transformation Team, (a state requirement for recipients of Indiana School Improvement Grants), conducted online searches of reading curricula that claimed alignment to the science of reading with the team selecting a probable “best choice.”

The team’s next steps included interviewing multiple reading experts across the country to garner their opinions of the best, science-of-reading-based curriculum. The team then contacted several school districts using the “best choice” curriculum to learn of their experiences. With additional input from MCS teachers, district administrators presented the selected curriculum—*Core Knowledge Language Arts* (CKLA) by Amplify—to the Muncie Board of Trustees, who approved the curriculum adoption on April 11, 2023. Notably, a year later - Spring 2024 – the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) issued a list of evaluated and approved SOR-based curriculum with *CKLA* being at the top of the list.

CKLA fully supports the teaching and learning of the five foundational components of the science of reading:

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

With the adoption of *CKLA*, MCS committed to providing all elementary and middle school teachers with support for and expectations of teaching the reading curriculum with fidelity, which, in turn, should lead to improved student reading skills and scores across the grades over time.

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



Action Step 3.6.b ELA Curriculum K-5: Implement the district-wide 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 ongoing teacher professional training supports.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: K-5 teachers' full implementation of the *CKLA* curriculum began this past school year with teachers noting that the students responded well to the curriculum with more interest and engagement in the stories and readings than with the prior reading curriculum. Teachers and principals received training from both MCS and IDOE that supported instructional practices adhering to the science of reading. In addition, the Director of Elementary Education, the principals, and the master teachers conducted classroom learning walks on a regular basis to monitor appropriate implementation of the reading curriculum and the science of reading.

1) MCS Supports for Teachers and Principals

In Summer 2023, K-5 teachers and principals attended a two-day training to understand and explore the basics of the *CKLA* curriculum. Staff learned (or relearned) the five evidenced-based skills that learners must acquire to become proficient readers.

To provide high-quality teacher support, MCS sought and hired an educator with extensive experience in the science of reading; a deep understanding of evidence-based, best-practices reading instruction; and prior experience in teaching the *CKLA* curriculum. This science of reading (SOR) expert provided training and coaching to the elementary teachers, who also received support from Marian University's Literacy Training Support Specialist.

During SY 2023-24, MCS provided multiple professional development opportunities:

- Training, by grade level, on the five reading skills from the *CKLA* expert during early release times.
- Individual classroom job-embedded teacher support by the *CKLA* expert, including 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 *CKLA* expert and the Marian University Literacy Cadre.
- Training at the Fall 2023 MCS Innovation Summit which included SOR break-out sessions.

2) State Supports for Teachers and Principals

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) offered several supports to schools and districts concerning the science of reading. The new Indiana Literacy Cadre served as a major support to MCS, as an IDOE selected district, and which is provided by two state universities with Marian University serving as MCS' partner.

The two-year commitment (2023-24, 2024-25), with funding provided by IDOE and the Lilly Foundation, includes training and support for multiple MCS participants: master teachers who serve as literacy coaches; elementary school principals; and the district's Director of Elementary Education. Cadre goals included: (a) deepening the understanding of the process of learning to read, (b) increasing knowledge of the five foundational literacy skills and the stages of development for young readers, (c) and improving instructional practices.



The Literacy Training Support Specialist from Marian provided extensive supports through weekly touchpoint meetings and bi-monthly trainings with the master teachers; through leading and participating in PLCs/cluster meetings as related to SOR; and through conducting regular classroom walk-throughs with the director of elementary to observe and evaluate SOR curriculum implementation.

Next Steps: MCS in SY 2024-25 will ensure the understanding and rigorous implementation of the science of reading and the *CKLA* curriculum through:

- Continuing as a member of the Marian University Literacy Cadre for the second year.
- Providing support regarding the reading curriculum and instruction to classroom teachers and principals.
- Providing training to new teachers at MCS by the science of reading expert consultant.
- Providing training to master teachers by Marian University.
- Adding Westview Elementary to the Marian Literacy Cadre, Year 1 as they were unable to participate the prior year due to the master teacher being on leave.
- Utilizing the Primary Spelling Inventory (PSI) for students in grades K-3 and the Elementary Spelling Inventory and Upper Spelling Inventory (USI) for intermediate grades.
- Utilizing the 6-step lesson plan (obtained through the Literacy Cadre and Reading League) to plan and implement engaging lessons to teach phonemic awareness and phonics.
- Utilizing the University of Florida's Literacy Institute to increase teacher knowledge and improve instruction in Tier I and Tier 2.
- Providing SPIRE, an OG-based resource for teachers to use with students in Tier 2 and Tier 3.
- Implementing Heggerty Bridge writing program in grades K-5. Haggerty combines grammar concepts with the writing process and uses the "I do; We Do; You do" approach.
- Creating a curriculum to be used during the summer literacy camps in grades K-3.
- Adding a Muncie Reading Program after school for grades 1-3 at the six elementary schools.

Action Step 3.6 c ELA Assessments, K-5: Identify student needs, followed by determination of appropriate instructional practices based on formative reading assessments with professional development and support provided

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: *Continued use of i-Ready.* In SY 2023-24, K-5 teachers continued to use *i-Ready* as a formative reading assessment and administered it three times (BOY, MOY, and EOY) during the year to identify student skills and learning gaps followed by reteaching or remediation of specific skills, as needed. MCS continued to contract with Curriculum Associates to provide teacher and principal support in data analysis of *i-Ready* scores, leading to daily instruction based on student areas of growth and areas of need. School leaders met bimonthly, focusing on their role in leading the reading initiative; district administrators reviewed the progress of the initiative monthly; and master teachers provided professional development to the teachers bimonthly concerning the formative assessment cycle.



Introduction of new formative assessment, DIBELS K-5. A review of the formative assessments for reading indicated the need for an additional assessment that would (a) better target student needs and (b) better align to the science of reading’s foundational skills. MCS examined several assessments and determined that *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS) best met the district’s needs and began its use this school year, 2023-24, in grades K, 1, and 2. *DIBELS* is universally used across the nation as a valid and reliable measure. The results of the twice-yearly assessment afford teachers details on individual student reading strengths and areas of need and provides corresponding and specific weekly lessons for teachers to implement. Elementary teachers reported that the lessons aligned well to student learning gaps, allowing more targeted interventions by the teachers.

Moving forward: ILEARN Checkpoints formative assessment. MCS responded to IDOE’s request in SY 2023-24 for districts to pilot their new formative reading (and math) assessment next year. The new assessment, *ILEARN Checkpoints*, for grades 3-5, is based on the state’s annual assessment *ILEARN*:

The [new] assessment plan includes what state education officials call “flexible checkpoints” for schools to administer ILEARN preparation tests...before the typical end-of-year summative tests...The exams are designed to be administered to students about every three months.²

IDOE selected MCS as one of the pilot districts with implementation of the *ILEARN Checkpoints* pilot to occur next school year, 2024-25 for grades 3, 4 and 5.

Next Steps: MCS will, in SY 2024-25:

- Implement three reading formative assessments, varying by grade levels K-5.
- Provide training for teachers and administrators to (a) implement the new *ILEARN Checkpoints* in grades 3-5 and (b) analyze the data results to remediate student learning gaps.
- Continue using *i-Ready* in Grades K-2 as a formative assessment.

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 of and skills in 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, through the Ball State PDS liaison, continued training in the teaching of writing through the National Writing Project, including (a) teaching the high priority literacy

² The Indianapolis Capital Chronicle. <https://indianacapitalchronicle.com/2024/03/21/indiana-schools-get-legislative-green-light-to-break-up-ilearn-testing-throughout-school-year/>



standards and (b) using evidence-based instructional practices. Training occurred during weekly professional development time at the building level. MCS master teachers led professional development with classroom teachers in the PLTs/clusters on the topic of best instructional practices.

The BSU PDS liaison, the director of secondary education, and the NIET consultant attended some of the cluster meetings, leading teachers in analyzing student work to identify strengths and areas of weakness, followed by planning and implementing lessons to address the weaknesses, and finally determining the impact of the implemented lessons on student learning.

Next Steps: Despite several years of teacher support to improve instructional practices, student reading skills are not improving. Thus, in 2024-25, significant changes in the teaching of literacy at the middle school level will occur with MCS:

- Purchasing the *Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)* reading curriculum for grades 6-8.
 - Developing a professional development program for middle school ELA teachers to understand and teach *CKLA*, which is designed to build student literacy knowledge and skills systematically and coherently with a focus on vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and writing with simultaneous and parallel development of content knowledge.
 - Implementing the professional development program for SRO to be led by the director of secondary education, the master teachers, and the *CKLA* consultant. The initial training will occur in Summer 2024 followed by training in September at the MCS Education Summit.
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, the MCS director of secondary education and consultants from NIET and the *i-Ready* consultant trained middle school ELA teachers in (a) examining and disaggregating student data from the *i-Ready* formative assessment; (b) determining the corresponding state standards that most need further instruction; and (c) identifying corresponding remediation and evidence-based instructional practices to reteach specific standards. The district administrative team and the *i-Ready* staff conducted monthly data “check-ins” to review areas of student needs and areas of growth.

The ELA teachers conducted the *i-Ready* assessment three times during the school year. However, the administration and NIET trainers noted that most teachers did not utilize their training to analyze the data and/or implement instructional practices to remediate students’ areas of weakness. Thus, as with the elementary school teachers, the middle school ELA teachers will administer the *ILEARN Checkpoints* in SY 2024-25, using the results to plan ELA instruction and interventions.

Next Steps: As the ELA middle school teachers struggled to use formative assessment data to identify student areas that need improvement and then create lessons and interventions to re-teach the weak areas, MCS will implement a stronger plan for SY 2024-25 by:

- Ensuring teachers’ deep understanding of the *CKLA* curriculum, based on the science of reading.
- Ensuring teachers’ planning and implementation of the *CKLA* curriculum with fidelity.



- Providing professional development in analyzing *ILEARN Checkpoint* data in terms of the five reading components and developing appropriate lessons and interventions for re-teaching.
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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 to be well-prepared for college and careers. To improve student knowledge 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, 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

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* curriculum experts from Curriculum Associates and the MCS school-based mentor and master teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2023-24, K-5 classroom teachers received professional development in the teaching of math from *i-Ready/Ready Math* curriculum experts from Curriculum Associates and from MCS school-based mentor and master teachers. During progress checks, some teachers reported needing more time in the daily schedule to teach mathematics.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Continue to provide professional development for K-5 teaching of math from Curriculum Associates curriculum experts and from MCS school-based master and mentor teachers.
- Review and revise the elementary classroom schedule to increase math instructional time to occur at the same time across all schools.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.8 c. Math assessments, K-5:** Analyze results of the K-5 mathematics *i-Ready* formative assessment followed by teachers implementing changes in instruction and content reflective of the data results of students' mathematics learning gaps with support for teachers provided by the mentor and master teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, MCS continued to use *i-Ready* as the formative assessment in K-5 classrooms for mathematics. *i-Ready/Ready Math* curriculum experts from Curriculum Associates and the MCS school-based mentor and master teachers conducted trainings on administering the assessments and on analyzing the results for teacher planning. As with literacy, MCS will become an early adopter of the *ILEARN Checkpoints* as IDOE selected the district to pilot the math formative assessments in SY 2024-25.



Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Continue to provide support to K-2 teachers in the use of *i-Ready/Ready Math* formative assessments to analyze the results to create and teach appropriate lessons that will address student learning gaps.
 - Provide training for teachers and administrators to implement the new *ILEARN Checkpoints* in grades 3-5.
-

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 aligns with Indiana Academic Standards with indication of the ILEARN Blueprints and create a district-wide curriculum map.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed SY 2022-23

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: On Track

Evidence of Progress: During SY 2023-24, MCS continued to utilize the BSU PDS math liaison and the MCS master teachers to support middle school math teachers on implementing effective instructional strategies. The mentor teachers field-tested specific strategies and shared the results during the ILTs/cluster meetings. The classroom math teachers then duplicated the strategies in lessons and shared the outcomes in the ILTs meetings and with math department and middle school staff members.

The middle and high school math teachers reported the successful use of the recently developed instructional calendars which listed the order of presentation for the math topics, concepts, and standards. Lastly, the math teachers developed a schedule for introducing Algebra students to the website of the Khan Academy, a non-profit educational organization providing free online courses, lessons, and practice in Algebra. Students reported finding Khan to be a useful resource.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Continue to provide support for math teachers in the use of best instructional practices.
- Ensure math teachers implement the math instructional calendar with consistency across the school.





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

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: For SY 2023-24, MCS 6-8 grade math teachers continued to use the monthly *Reveal Math™* module assessments to measure student performance on high priority standards and student mastery of the curriculum. MCS Director of Secondary Education, ILTs, the Ball State PDS liaison and NIET consultants provided support in interpreting the formative assessment data for teacher planning, instruction, and intervention. The two middle school Algebra teachers and the high school mathematics master teacher created common, end-of-semester Algebra exams to be used by all Algebra teachers to provide consistent and rigorous expectations across all classrooms.

As with elementary school math, MCS middle schools will become an early adopter of Indiana's *ILEARN Checkpoints* as a pilot district of the twice-yearly math formative assessment in SY 2024-25.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Lead Algebra teachers in data analysis of the end-of-semester Algebra exams to evaluate their own teaching and student learning.
- Guide teachers in the use of the monthly *Reveal Math™* module assessments for determining student growth on high priority standards and mastery of the curriculum and for teacher planning and instruction.
- Provide training for teachers and administrators to implement the new *ILEARN Checkpoints* formative assessment.
- Continue to provide 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: *Completed SY 2023-24

***Completion Note:** MCS accomplished a major goal in SY 2023-24 by completing the curriculum map for the Algebra course. The map represents the SY 2022-23 adopted Algebra textbook and demonstrates its alignment to the new Indiana State Math Standards. In an effort to increase student and family understanding of Algebra content and curriculum, MCS staff developed a simplified curriculum map for dissemination and explanation. During the year, math teachers continued to edit the curriculum map to reflect the new IDOE Mathematics Standards during department meetings.

Next Steps:

- Supervise and ensure the use of the common end-of-semester Algebra exams.
- Provide teacher training, by the master math teacher, in data analysis of the end-of-semester Algebra exams for teachers to evaluate their own teaching and student learning.



Action Step 3.10 b. Math instruction, high school: Increase teacher and administrator knowledge of and skills in teaching and learning mathematics through PLTs/cluster meetings as led by school-based master and mentor teachers.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: To assist high school math teachers, the MCS master teachers conducted observations and led discussions of best instructional practices during the schools' PLC/cluster meetings in SY 2023-24. The math teachers introduced students to the Khan Academy website as a support for juniors, preparing for the SATs.

Next Steps: With the completion of the curriculum maps, MCS will in SY 2024-25:

- Implement *Khanmigo*, a new tutoring support provided by the Khan Academy, in all Algebra classrooms.
 - Continue utilizing the *Khan Academy* to support students learning Algebra and for SAT preparation.
-

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: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Ball State engaged with MCS during SY 2023-24 to enhance student and teacher civic awareness and education through a grant the university received. The grant, *Civic Renewal through Education for Agency, Tolerance and Engagement (CREATE)*, allowed opportunities such as additional curricular resources for 6th grade teachers that aligned to the MCS civics curriculum map; student field trips to local, state, and national government facilities and historical sites; and monthly professional development for teachers of civics.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, Ball State will continue to provide opportunities for MCS students and teachers related to the teaching and learning of civics.

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 now often require STEAM skills as a basis for employment. 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: In the prior year, SY 2022-23, MCS adopted a new middle school science curriculum, *Inspire Science*. Thus, its implementation in the classroom begin this year, 2023-24. To improve teacher implementation, MCS provided two days of teacher training in the summer from the curriculum publisher, McGraw Hill.

During the school year, the master teachers and building principals supported and monitored the teachers’ implementation of the curriculum focusing on hands-on learning experiences occurring at least once a week. During early release time, the science teachers met as a cohort to discuss the teaching of the curriculum. They also attended the MCS Education Summit and spent time mapping the curriculum beyond the first nine weeks of school to improve the consistency and rigor of the curriculum.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will focus on the continued comprehensive implementation of the science curriculum including:

- Reviewing and revising the science schedule across the two middle schools to allow designated times for conducting the science laboratory lessons.
- Continued set-aside time for teachers to work together for planning and instruction.
- Continued oversight of the weekly science lab activities by the master teacher and building principal.

-
- ◆ **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

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- ◆ **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

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- ◆ **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.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: A dedicated PLTW lead teacher now serves in each elementary school to coordinate the use of the modules; to co-teach the modules with the classroom teachers; and to guide teachers in implementing the PLTW module schedule. As they are certified to conduct teacher training,



the PLTW lead teachers provided professional development for new K-5 teachers this school year. On early release days, the master PLTW lead teacher provided PD to the other five PLTW teachers on implementing PLTW hands-on instructional strategies.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Develop a scheduled time and place for PLTW lead teachers to meet as a cohort to increase the consistency of their teaching of the modules and share best instructional practices for PLTW lessons.
 - Continue to support PLTW lead teachers in developing their knowledge and skills regarding PLTW content and instruction.
 - Create a calendar to better coordinate PLTW module alignment to the reading curriculum, *CKLA*, in both lessons and topics with the calendar being developed by the PLTW master teacher and the school-based master.
-

- ◆ **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 the MCS lead PLTW teachers conducting the training.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, the six PLTW lead teachers participated in and completed training to become certified as PLTW Lead Launch teachers. With the certification to provide professional development, the PLTW teachers began training current teachers and new hires. Having internal trainers saves the district both time and money.

Next Steps: MCS will utilize the elementary PLTW lead teachers to:

- Provide training to newly hired teachers and to support current teachers.
-

- ◆ **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

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: In SY 2023-24, MCS pursued the goal of all middle school students completing the three STEAM-related courses during the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, Innovators and Makers, App Creators, and Medical Detectives. By completing the courses, MCS projected that student interest in high school STEAM courses would increase. However, as in prior years, scheduling difficulties precluded the meeting of this goal. Northside Middle School added a PLTW course in Design and Modeling and in Green Architecture with Southside Middle School offering Robotics, but not as a PLTW course (Table 3.2). The level of enrollment in these two new courses indicates students’ interest in the subject areas and therefore, MCS will continue to pursue this Action Step.

Table 3.2. PLTW Student Enrollment: Northside and Southside Middle Schools

PLTW Courses	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
6th - App Creators	85	215	364	322	233
7th - Innovators & Makers	181	257	262	317	217
8th - Medical Detectives	128	249	290	281	277
6-8th - Design & Modeling and Green Architecture	--	--	--	--	290
6-8th - Robotics (not a PLTW class)	--	--	--	--	278
Total	394	721	916	920	1,295

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, for students enrolled the middle schools, MCS will:

- Continue to require middle school students that attend school in-person to complete the three PLTW courses during their middle school years.
- Focus on creating middle school schedules that allow all students to complete the courses, as led by the secondary director and the middle school principals.

Evidence of Progress #2, High School: In SY 2023-24, MCS strove to reach the goal of providing significant and appropriate PLTW courses for high school students to prepare for college and careers. Despite the effort, enrollment declined this year but may be explained by staffing issues as the computer science teacher moved from the high school to another MCS school for the spring semester and the class could not be offered for the second semester (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3. PLTW Student Enrollment: Muncie Central High School

PLTW Course	2019 - 20	2020 – 21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Biomedical	25	30	32	¹	¹
Engineering & Design	26	28	54	76	61
Computer Science	--	32	125	160	94 ²
Total Enrollment	51	90	211	236	155

¹Offered but student enrollment insufficient to sustain a class.

²Offered only first semester, not second.



Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will, for high school:

- Continue to provide PLTW courses to prepare students for college and careers.
 - Fully staff the computer science courses for both semesters.
 - Determine needs and make plans to fulfill the requirements of HEA 1243 as passed by the Indiana State Legislature that “all high school students must successfully complete instruction on computer science to be eligible to graduate.”³
-

- ◆ **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 - Music: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Music Education. SY 2023-24 marks the second year of MCS offering a band class or club for 5th graders in all elementary schools. The band club met either before or after school or during the school day, depending on the student population and the schedule. MCS provided a stipend to compensate the music teachers for their time for teaching before or after the school day. The number of students enrolled in band class/club was 98 for this year but with all K-5 students learning about their musical skills at the district-wide, elementary Band-a-Rama concert in the Spring.

To provide for professional development, music teachers formed a cohort in SY 2023-24, meeting on early-release days and at the MCS Educational Summit. Led by the mentor music teacher, the cohort focused on learning, sharing, and reaching agreements in curricula and instruction.

Next Steps: Music Education. MCS will, in SY 2024-25, focus on two areas regarding music education:

- Continuing to provide professional development for music teachers as a cohort.
 - Determining and implementing ways to increase enrollment in the band, including through the annual Band-a-Rama event.
-

Progress Toward Goal - Art: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Art Education. Art teachers formed a cohort in SY 2023-24 and met during early-release days and during the MCS Educational Summit. The cohort, which was led by the mentor art teacher, focused on their curriculum and instruction. The art teachers organized the district-wide, pre-K-12 art show for the community in the Spring.

Next Steps: MCS will, in SY 2024-25, for art education:

- Continue to provide professional development for the teachers and times to meet as a cohort.
 - Strengthen the art education program by adopting a new curriculum.
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³ <https://legiscan.com/IN/text/HB1243/id/2872271>



D. LEARNING SPANISH AND ENGLISH AS NEW LANGAUGES

Overview. MCS understands the importance of children learning multiple languages – and the earlier the better. The language programs at MCS offer students educational experiences that prepare them for future academic and life success in a multicultural and multilingual world. MCS’ Dual Language English/Spanish Immersion Program and the English Language Learner Program provide non-native speakers of English and of Spanish the opportunity to learn those languages. MCS provides two supports for English language learners: (a) the MCS Newcomer Program, which serves as an entryway into the American public school system and (b) the MCS Welcome Center, which acts as a gateway for parents and other family members for student enrollment, assessment, and support.

Strategy 3.14: Extend opportunities for learners to obtain dual language proficiency in Spanish and English through the *Dual Language Immersion Program*.

- ◆ **Action Step 3.14.** Determine and provide curricula, space, materials, and staffing to extend the *Dual Language Immersion Program* 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; at Northside Middle School, SY 2023-24 Grade 6; 2024-25 Grade 7; and 2025-26 Grade 8.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In the 2023-24 school year, the MCS Spanish Dual Language Immersion Program (DLI) expanded to 6th grade at Northside Middle School. Planning for expansion to the middle school level began the prior year and included a team of elementary and secondary stakeholders.

Enrollment in the DLI program continued to grow in SY 2023-24 with native Spanish-language speakers arriving from countries such as Peru, Chile, Columbia, Mexico, and Honduras. Thus, the student demographics in SY 2023-24 reflected the changes with 70 percent of enrollees being non-native Spanish speakers and 30 percent native Spanish speakers. The increased student diversity enriched the learning experience for native English speakers and improved the educational access and opportunities for native Spanish speakers. The program continued to strive with more than 20 students on the waitlist for DLI Kindergarten and 1st grade for the next school year.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will, for the Dual Language Immersion Program:

- Provide curricula, space, materials, and staffing to extend the dual language program to the 7th grade at Northside.
- Continue professional development for middle school dual immersion teachers to increase their understanding and consistent use of best practices instruction for language learners.
- Implement a new dual language immersion model for 7th grade with students receiving (a) two or three core academic courses in Spanish and English with their cohort peers and (b) other academic courses in English with their grade level peers.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the new dual language immersion style model for 7th grade students, ensuring it aligns with the dual language program goals and student needs.
- Plan for the expansion of the dual language program to 8th grade for SY 2024-25.



Strategy 3.15 Develop and implement with fidelity dual-language English-Spanish curricula across content areas; utilize evidence-based language and learning instructional strategies; and implement formative & summative assessments to determine student 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 version).

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: Over the last three years, the director and staff of the dual language program selected and implemented curricula for the DLI program in language arts and mathematics. In SY 2023-24, the staff focused on implementing the two sets of curricula, especially the Spanish language arts curriculum, Amplify's *Caminos*, for grades K-6, which is based on the science of reading, as is the English language arts curriculum. For K-6, the district utilized *Eureka Squared* as the Spanish math curriculum.

Next Steps: MCS will address the DLI program curricula in SY 2024-25 by:

- Providing DLI teachers with training in the literacy curriculum, *CKLA*, as provided by the publisher, *Amplify*.
- Continuing weekly PLC/cluster meetings focusing on SOR curriculum implementation provided by the director of elementary education with support from the middle school master teachers.
- Utilizing English as well as Spanish in teacher instruction of mathematics.

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: Utilizing evidence-based best instructional practices in all classrooms is a requirement for all MCS teachers, including DLI teachers. To meet this goal, in SY 2023-24, dual language experts from the Global Education Initiatives (GEI) at Indiana University conducted three observations of the DLI classroom; coached teachers on ways to improve their instruction in both academic content and language development; and presented a written evaluation of the DLI program as guidance for the director. In addition, some of the teachers attended a week-long summer institute at IU.

Next Steps: MCS will continue, in SY 2024-25 to:

- Provide DLI teachers with observations and coaching of their classroom instructional practices towards continual improvement as implemented by GEI.

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- ◆ **Action Step 3.15 c. Assessment:** Utilize three 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: In SY 2023-24, the Spanish/English dual language program and the learning English program continued to establish consistent and scheduled processes to conduct and utilize the results of student assessments, both formative and summative. The schedule and instruments correspond to those used in regular K-8 classrooms with some additions to provide information on the learning of Spanish and English for new learners of the languages.

In the DLI classrooms, students completed formative assessments based on their grade levels and varying by English and Spanish:

- Grades K-5: *iReady* Reading and Math (English version); *DIBELS* Reading (English version)
- Grade 6: *iReady*: ELA (English version) and Math (Spanish version).

DLI teachers and the school-based support teams analyzed the assessment results to determine gaps and areas of weakness to provide reteaching and remediation at three critical points in the school year (BOY, MOY, EOY).

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will

- Implement the *ILEARN Checkpoints* formative assessment in DLI classrooms.
 - Provide training for teachers and administrators to analyze data results from the state's new *ILEARN Checkpoints*.
 - Continue using *i-Ready* in Grades K-2 and *DIBELS* in grades K-5 as formative assessments.
 - Provide continued training to DLI teachers in analyzing assessment data to determine student strengths and gaps, followed by planning and implementing corresponding instructional practices and lessons.
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Action Step 3.15 d. Establish a student learning community that values multicultural engagement.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In 2023-24, MCS initiated several actions to recognize the value of international and local cultures. The Director of Diversity led the Multicultural Community Fair event in Spring 2024. Families, teachers, and staff created tables representing their various cultures including artifacts and information in areas such as culture, language, and food. As a second action, the director of English learners desired to engage students and their families with a recreational activity and selected the sport of cricket with equipment purchased this school year. The next step will be for the district and Ball State to enter into an agreement for MCS to utilize one of the BSU cricket fields on a scheduled basis.

As mentioned earlier, the MCS Welcome Center serves as a gateway support for foreign students new to the United States. The Center opened in August 2023 as a collaboration between the directors of the dual language immersion program and the English language learner program. The center, located in Northside Middle School, operates as a single full-service location for students and families to complete enrollment and assessments and to receive supports.

Next Steps: To provide opportunities for international and/or multicultural student and family engagement, MCS will, in SY 2024-25:

- Establish times and places and obtain equipment for playing cricket.



- Enter into an agreement with Ball State to utilize a cricket field.



- Continue to provide the MCS Welcome Center for international, migrant and refugee students and their families.
 - Evaluate the Cultural Fair and determine ways to increase the number of participants, the number of cultures represented and the number of activities.
-

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

Action Step 3.16 a. Ensure English learners in middle and high school receive support linguistically, culturally, emotionally, and academically to transition to MCS and the United States.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: English learners arrive in Muncie from a variety of countries and cultures and with a continuum of prior school experiences—from none to extensive. Girls may have less prior schooling than boys. And many come with painful memories of war, famine, and loss of family members. MCS established several supports for middle and high school English learners including those identified as “Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education” (SLIFE).

Established three years ago, the MCS Global Academy (newcomer program) continues to serve English learners that are recent immigrants, refugees and/or SLIFE. The full-day program in a self-contained classroom allowed students in SY 2023-24 to move into general education classes at their own pace with the goal of increasing the number of hours each week in those classrooms. The MCS Global Academy received high marks from an IDOE review this year

To celebrate student success, linguistically and academically, the district created a unique MCS Graduation Celebration in 2023, which occurred again in May 2024 with four Afghan refugee seniors graduating. The celebration included experiences such as a family photo booth, live Afghan music and dancing, and a take-home library of English books for each family.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, the EL director and staff will:

- Continue to promote and implement fully the MCS Global Academy.
 - Determine other supports that might assist middle and high school English learners.
 - Continue to hire/utilize classroom teachers that are either fluent in other languages and/or have their English language learning (EL) endorsement.
-

Action Step 3.16 b. Establish appropriate English language curricula and best instructional practices for English learners.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: As with many school districts across the U.S., MCS continues to realize substantial increases of students enrolled as English language learners. Evidence includes the fact that MCS students currently represent 64 language groups, an increase of 26 new language groups since SY 2018-19. There is a total of 235 students now enrolled in the English language learner (EL) program. MCS



currently utilizes a “push-in/pull-out” program for EL students where they receive varied amounts of EL-support depending on student needs and teacher availability.

This past school year, the teachers of ELs utilized the same district-adopted reading curriculum used in all K-6 classrooms, *CKLA*. For English language arts/reading at the secondary level, teachers of English learners used National Geographic’s *Perspectives* for the students approaching English proficiency and National Geographic’s *Global Issues* for students with the highest levels of English proficiency.

Next Steps: With the English language population increasing each year, all K-7 teachers need to gain knowledge about English learners who are or will be routinely entering their classrooms and of the best instructional practices for teaching ELs. MCS will begin to address this goal in SY 2024-25 as it will:

- Provide professional development for all K-7 teachers on the processes of language acquisition of English learners and the best instructional practices for instructing those students.
- Provide training to the master teachers on differentiating instruction for English learners in the regular classroom.
- Continue to implement the English learner reading/ELA curriculum with guidance and oversight from the director.

E. PHYSICAL AND NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

Strategy 3.17. Improve K-5 learners’ nutritional and physical health through physical education classes 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

- ◆ **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

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



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

- ◆ **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

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed

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 affords income-eligible students up to four years of undergraduate tuition at participating Indiana colleges and universities. Beginning this year, the State of Indiana automatically enrolled income-eligible 8th grade students in the program. With the transition, IDOE noted that errors occurred with not all student information being transferred. Project Leadership staff worked with IDOE to increase the percentage of identified MCS students, leading to 78 percent of eligible students at Northside and 84 percent at Southside entered in the state’s 21st Century Scholars database (Table 3.4). The staff will continue their efforts in SY 2024-25 to ensure the enrollment of 100 percent of eligible students.



Table 3.4. Indiana 21st Century Scholars: Enrollment

	2020-21			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24*		
	Eligible	Enrolled	Percent	Eligible	Enrolled	Percent	Eligible	Enrolled	Percent	Eligible	Enrolled	Percent
Northside Middle	93	82	85%	110	108	98%	126	111	88%	124	96	78%
Southside Middle	134	101	75%	109	80	73%	121	73	60%	145	122	84%

*As identified and recorded by IDOE.

Next Steps: MCS, in SY 2024-24, will

- Continue to monitor and ensure that all eligible Free-and-Reduced Lunch students are enrolled in Scholars Track to reach 100% enrollment.
- Provide supports for students completing the various requirements to remain an eligible Indiana 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: In SY 2023-24, MCS, using funding from IDOE’s *Explore, Engage, and Experience* grant, continued to provide supports for students to develop their individual *Career Action Plans* (CAPs). The hiring of a high school career coach by Project Leadership this year provided a central point of contact and oversight of this important area. Notably, the career coach, students, and others developed a new career curriculum with the coach overseeing its implementation this school year.

The curriculum includes students in grades 9-12 (a) completing the district-adopted aptitude and career guidance assessment, *YouScience* and (b) individually developing their *Career Action Plan* (CAP). This year, MCS piloted the materials and process for student creation of the CAPs with 103 juniors and seniors participating. For the pilot, only students that had an “out period”— meaning having at least one available period to take this course—participated. The completed CAPs proved to be successful with students (a) identifying their specific careers of interest; (b) realizing the types of careers and clusters that correspond to those interests; (c) gaining specific information about the careers through guest speakers, such as in healthcare and construction, or in being an entrepreneur or veterinarian; and (d) experiencing a career through job shadowing, with 13 students participating.



Next Steps: The focus on improving student awareness of, interest in, and planning for specific careers will continue in SY 2024-25 as MCS will:

- Implement the career curriculum with all students grades 9-12.
- Ensure the completion of *YouScience*, the aptitude and career guidance assessment, by all students entering grade 9 and other students that are new to the high school.
- Provide the resources and support for all juniors to create a *Career Action Plan* during their advisory period and one-on-one meetings with the career coach.
- Increase the number of students participating in work-placed experiences.

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

- ◆ **Action Step 3.22 b.** For Grade 8, provide a new course—*Preparing for College and Careers*—focusing on career options and college planning 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 SY 2023-24. In the course, students learned of the 16 career clusters; completed a field trip to Ball State to experience campus life; attended the local career fair at the Horizon Convention Center; and served as community volunteers. In addition, MCS redesigned the course to improve alignment to student interests and needs with both enrollment and completion rates improving in SY 2023-24 (Table 3.5) from the prior year.

Table 3.5. Preparing for College and Careers: Enrollment and Completion Rates—8th Grade

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Enrollment	95	213	146	235
Completion Rate*	87%	70%*	40%	67%

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will continue to strive to reach the goal of preparing students for their future after high school, noting that class scheduling often conflicts with students’ ability to enroll in the course. Thus, the district will:

- Build the master schedule to allow the majority of 8th grade students to enroll in *Preparing for College and Careers*.
- Provide the course in *Preparing for College and Careers* in 7th grade for those students planning to enroll in Spanish in 8th grade to address the current scheduling conflict.



- ◆ **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 2023-24, MCS offered two CTE pathways: (a) the Purdue Engineering Program, with students earning college credits through Purdue University’s Polytechnic Anderson campus and which continued to be offered at Muncie Central High School and (b) the new Industrial Maintenance: Electrical program at the Muncie Area Career Center (MACC). Through these pathways, students (a) gained exposure to 21st Century manufacturing technologies and conceptual frameworks which modern engineering and manufacturing workplaces value and (b) earned college credits to advance their post-secondary educational goals (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6. MACC CTE Pathways for Grades 11-12: Automation & Robotics, Engineering & Technology, and Industrial Maintenance

CTE Pathway	Course	Student	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Automation & Robotics	Industrial Automation & Robotics	Enrollment	25	21	(not offered)	----
		Completion rate	73%	100%	----	----
Engineering & Technology	Advanced Career & Technology Education	Enrollment	14	20	5	7
		Completion rate	71%	100%	100%	100%
Industrial Maintenance : Electrical	Principles of Advanced Manufacturing	Enrollment	*	*	*	5
		Completion rate	*	*	*	60%
	Advanced Manufacturing Technologies	Enrollment	*	*	*	5
		Completion rate	*	*	*	60%
	Industrial Maintenance: Electrical	Enrollment	*	*	*	5
		Completion rate	*	*	*	60%

* Initially introduced in SY 2023-24

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).

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will continue to offer two CTE pathways under the MDATA umbrella: (a) Industrial Maintenance: Electrical and (b) Engineering and Technology. The director of MACC, in conjunction with the MDATA instructors and the steering committee, will:

- Continue to collaborate 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.
 - Continue efforts to develop 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: MCS continued to realize increased growth in its catalog of dual credit and dual enrollment CTE courses in SY 2023-24. The courses, available to students at the high school and the career center, provide college credit and assist students in meeting Graduation Pathways requirements and completion of the Early College Elective courses.

In addition, some courses allowed students to complete short-term post-secondary certificates (e.g., Automotive: Maintenance and Light Repair Certificate; Health Science: Certified Nursing Assistant Certificate; Construction: Electrical Specialist; and Construction: Carpentry Specialist). Program completion may lead to students receiving a post-secondary Technical Certificate in a CTE program after completing one or two additional courses. In SY 2023-24, the number of dual credit CTE courses offered by MCS increased from 56 to 65 (Table 3.7)

Table 3.7. Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment CTE Courses Offered

Courses Offered	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Number	33	52	56	65

Enrollment numbers demonstrate student interest in the new CTE dual credit courses. A total of 107 students enrolled in the courses in SY 2023-24, an increase of 24 students from two years ago (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8. Enrollment in Post-Secondary Certificates

Certificates	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Automotive: Maintenance & Light Repair	---	33	33	36	32
Health Science: Certified Nursing Assistant	27	31	25	35	44
Welding: Structural Welding	8	12	16	12	16
Construction: Electrical Specialist	---	---	9	7	5
Total	35	76	83	90	97

Next Steps: To utilize Indiana’s Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) course frameworks, which provide students with additional college credit opportunities, MCS will, in SY 2024-25:

- Continue to implement new CTE courses with embedded college credit at MCHS and the MACC.
- Implement new dual credit courses in Digital Design, Fire and Rescue, Software Development, HVAC, and Welding.

- ◆ **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 SY 2023-24, MCS implemented the state-required transition of CTE pathways courses from Perkins V to Next Level Program of Study (NLPS). Table 3.12a. shows the past enrollment and completion rates using the Perkins V courses for the three school years from 2020-2023.

Table 3.9a. CTE Perkins V 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

In SY 2023-24 with NLPS courses fully implemented, notable changes occurred from the Perkins V transition (Table 3.9b), including (a) new titles for some courses, (b) two new pathways: Business Administration and Hospitality & Tourism; and (c) new coursework levels, called “Principles,” “Concentration A” and “Concentration B.” Table 3.9b shows the enrollment and completion rates.

Table 3.9b. NLPS Courses: Enrollment and Completion Rates

CTE Level I and II Courses	2023-24					
	Principles		Concentrator A		Concentrator B	
	Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Completed
Human & Social Services	108	56	34	31	32	27
Education Professions	6	6	13	12	5	5*
Business Administration**	92	103	53	82	68	89
Hospitality & Tourism	241	233	90	81	8	11
Total	447	388	190	196	113	132

**Education Profession* coursework is not available for NLPS Concentrator B but is available through Ivy Tech Dual Enrollment option.

***Business Administration* coursework included students participating in the MCS Graduation Academy and the MCHS Pathways for Graduation.

NOTE: The number of students “enrolled” and the number of courses “completed” vary as certain CTE courses are completed by additional students via the online recovery credit program.



Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Complete the transition to the *Next Level Programs of Study* (NLPS) course frameworks for the first- and second-level courses in its CTE Pathways.
- Continue the entry level class, “Exploring Education,” for grades 9 and 10 as an introduction to the NLPS *Education Profession: Principles and Concentrator* classes.
- Explore “Education Professions” as a pathway to be taught by high school dual credentialed teachers along with Ivy Tech’s dual enrollment teachers.

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 2023-24, all MACC seniors participated in the Career Development Workshop, with 148 students attending. Activities included (a) learning about different jobs and careers in a specific field; (b) completing a resume-writing workshop conducted by Ivy Tech Community College; and (c) practicing interviewing with local employers.

MCS and MACC students also attended the College and Career Expo, with over 50 employers, post-secondary providers, and community agencies providing information at their booths. Students learned about educational, employment, and career opportunities and completed a survey at the end of the day to provide staff with ideas for next year’s event.

New opportunities for high school students to increase their job placement and employability skills included (a) connecting with local employers in job shadowing and work-based learning internships; (b) interacting with area employees and employers about specific careers; and (c) participation in field trips to various work environments (Table 3.10).

Table 3.10. MCHS Students Participating in Opportunities to Increase Job Placement and Employability Skills

2023-24
155

At the end of the school year, the MACC hosted its second annual “Signing Day” event to celebrate the post-graduation aspirations of its seniors. The MACC’s post-secondary partners—employers, educational institutions, and representatives of the armed forces—attended as families and friends witnessed the students signing their letters of commitment. Post-secondary partners celebrating MCS students transitioning from high school and the career center to the next phase of their professional journey included (a) educational institutions: Ball State, Ivy Tech, and Indiana University; (b) the military: the Marine Corps and the Air Force; and (c) multiple trade unions.



Next Steps: To increase students job placement and employability skills, in SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Expand the opportunities for juniors and seniors to develop their skills and knowledge towards employability and job placement.
- Continue to develop experiences for juniors and seniors to participate in job shadowing, work-based learning, and internships.

- ◆ **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) continued, in SY 2023-24, to provide many job-embedded learning experiences for CTE students through partnerships with local businesses and organizations. The MACC added new internship opportunities in the Automotive pathway and several programs added new employer partners for internships. In addition, five students enrolled in Muncie Central’s new pathway, “Education Professions.” The number of students participating in job-embedded learning experiences continued to remain high (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11. CTE Number of MACC and Central Student Internships

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
142	125	167	195	198

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, the MACC staff 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.
- Continue to offer the “Education Profession” pathway and provide additional career internships through collaboration with: (a) the Vice President of the Greater Muncie Chamber of Commerce, who serves as an intermediary to MCS; (b) Project Leadership; and (c) MCS career coaches and staff.

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 through Advanced Placement courses (AP), 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 both 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 3.12.a. shows the AP course exams taken and passed by MCHS students. Tables 3.12b and 3.12c display AP enrollment by ethnicity, economic status, and gender,

Table 3.12a. Advanced Placement Courses: MCHS Exams Taken and Passed

AP Exams	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Exams Taken	---	---	---	241	258
Exams Passed	151	127	101	122	140
Percentage of Exams Passes	---	---	---	51%	54%

The following tables display AP enrollment by ethnicity, economic status, and gender. (Table 3.12b and Table 3.12c).

Table 3.12b. 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	11% (147)	1,341	12% (161)	1,300	11% (144)
Black	24%	9% (13)	24%	9% (14)	24%	11% (16)
Hispanic	4.0%	6 (9)	6%	10 % (16)	6%	11% (16)
Multiracial	9%	7% (10)	10%	6% (9)	11%	8% (11)
White	62%	77% (115)	59%	75% (122)	59%	69% (101)

Ethnicity	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Student Group	Enrolled in AP	Student Group	Enrolled in AP	Student Group	Enrolled in AP	Student Group	Enrolled in AP
Total	1,261	9% (115)	1,330	8 % (100)	1,258	10.% (129)	1,310	12% (159)
Black	23%	4% (5)	24%	11%	24%	9%	22%	14%
Hispanic	5%	11% (13)	5%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Multiracial	12%	14% (16)	13%	11%	14%	16%	15%	15%
White	57%	66% (76)	57%	71% (71)	54%	67%	52%	



Table 3.12c. 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	69%	29% (44)	70%	29% (47)	59%	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		2023-24	
	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP	Student Groups	Enrolled in AP
Total	1,261	---	1,300	---	1,258	129	1,310	159
FRL	59%	33% (39)	59%	31%	71%	47%	69%	31%
Female	46%	51% (59)	46%	52%	48%	56%	49%	50%
Male	54%	49% (56)	54%	48%	52%	44%	51%	50%

Next Steps: MCS will continue, in SY 2024-25, to:

- Review enrollment in Early College and/or AP courses with a goal of increasing enrollment and completion rates to closer mirror the demographics of the high school student population.
- Partner with AP-TIP from Notre Dame and UCAN from the University of Indianapolis to provide student resources and strategies for success in Advanced Placement courses and the Early College program.

◆ **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: In SY 2023-24, MCS continued to provide opportunities and supports for Muncie Central high school students to complete the Early College (EC) program. The program enables students to complete an associate degree while also completing the Indiana Academic Honors Diploma by 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 number of students who complete the program, MCS (a) reviewed and updated course offerings based on student interests and needs and (b) examined the positive impact of offering a financial incentive to dual credit course teachers. To increase the enrollment rate in the Early College program, staff from Ivy Tech described the program to all middle school students in Spring 2024. Ivy Tech staff also 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 information about the Early College (EC) program with incoming dual-credit admitted freshman to build enthusiasm for their upcoming high school experience. The assistant high school principal determined to “champion” the program and met with incoming freshman, steering them toward EC programs by utilizing the BSU grant, *Attract-Prepare-Retain*, which is specific to increasing student interest in education and teaching careers. Tables 3.13a and 3.13b display Early College program enrollment by ethnicity, economic status, and gender.

Table 3.13a. 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	24%	18%	24%	23%	24%	15%
Hispanic	4%	7%	6%	7%	6%	4%
Multiracial	9%	8%	10%	10%	11%	10%
White	62%	65%	59%	60%	59%	70%

(Continued Table 3.13a)

Ethnicity	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Student Groups	Enrolled in EC	Student Groups	Enrolled in EC	Student Groups	Enrolled in EC	Student Groups	Enrolled in EC
Total	1,261	303	1,300	301	1,258	278	1,310	316
Black	23%	15%	24%	16%	24%	16%	22%	16%
Hispanic	5%	3%	5%	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%
Multiracial	12%	12%	13%	10%	14%	13%	15%	17%
White	57%	69%	58%	69%	54%	64%	52%	59%

Table 3.13b. 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%



(Continued, Table 3.13b)

FRL & Gender	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Student Group	Enrolled in EC	Student Group	Enrolled in EC	Student Group	Enrolled in EC	Student Group	Enrolled in EC
Total	1,261	303	1,300	301	1,258	278	1,310	316
FRL	59%	-	59%	47%	71%	48%	69.2%	52%
Female	45%	57%	46%	58%	48%	50%	49.2%	53%
Male	54%	42%	54%	42%	52%	50%	50.8%	47%

The quality and success of the MCS Early College Program continues to be recognized by others. 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. MCS continued, in SY 2023-24, for a third year to assist the three high schools in establishing a fully endorsed Early College program.

Additionally, for a second year, the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis, granted the MCS Early College program a full endorsement with MCHS adhering 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 and opportunities for high school administrators and counselors to meet with middle school students regarding the benefits of EC, as a means of increasing student enrollment.
- 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.
 - Offer the dual credit course, Digital Applications, once again.
- Increase family involvement in the recruiting and marketing process with the utilization of UCAN grant funds.

- ◆ **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: Efforts continued in SY 2023-24 to increase the number of students and the number credits they earned through the Early College Program. In SY 2023-24, students earned 3,413 credits—838 credits more than the prior year—with 40 students receiving associate degrees, the highest number ever achieved by Muncie seniors. These accomplishments led, in turn, to the highest savings accrued in projected future college tuition costs of \$580,210 (Table 3.14).



Table 3.14: EC Program: College Credits, Degrees Earned, and Tuition Savings

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Credits Earned	3,377	3,488	3,135	3,261	2,575	3,413
Tuition Saved	\$ 455,940	\$ 508,416	\$ 471,560	\$ 499,889	\$456,800	\$580,210
Indiana College Core (ICC) Degree	23	10	23	16	18	15
Associate degree*	23	28	17	27	21	40

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

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Continue to increase the number of students granted Indiana College Core and associate degrees through the Early College program.

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 (a) the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Course Standards; (b) the technical certification dual credit sequences; (c) industry certifications; and (d) embedded work-based learning recommendations—making edits and changes in the plans as needed.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MACC officially adopted the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC) *Next Level Programs of Study* (NLPS) course frameworks for all program in the prior school year, 2022-23, which served as a transition year for multiple courses. This SY 2023-24, MCS, as required by the State of Indiana, utilized NPLS as the sole source of course outlines and standards for all CTE pathway plans.

The adoption of the *NLPS* pathways allows MACC to provide more opportunities for students to earn dual credits and to obtain industry-recognized credentials—the centerpieces of the GWC initiative to improve CTE statewide. 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. In collaboration with Ball State, MACC offered “Education Professions” at the high school as an additional course aligned to *NLPS*.

Next Steps: MACC will, in SY 2024-25:

- Continue to strengthen the alignment of the CTE pathway plans to (a) the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Course Standards; (b) the technical certification dual credit sequences; (c) industry certifications; and (d) work-based embedded learning recommendations.
- Continue to provide courses and experiences for students to obtain short-term and technical certificates through Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University with expanded opportunities to attain new certificates in Early Childhood Education, HVAC, Welding, and Criminal Justice.



- 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 in collaboration with Ivy Tech, HVAC, and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) that are aligned to the *NLPS* pathway frameworks.
 - Continue expanding CTE options for students at Muncie Central High School.
-

- ◆ **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, 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. Thus, MCS continually reviews its catalog of courses and certifications to respond to student interests and local employment needs. To increase student and family awareness of CTE, MCS created a series of videos a few years ago to share student testimonials about the program offerings and the outcomes after receiving college credit and/or credentials to potential students and their families.

To extend the marketing of the CTE pathways program, in SY 2023-24, the staff produced a new brochure highlighting the various pathways, including information about dual credits, certifications, work-based learning, and project salary ranges for the career pathways. Staff disseminated the brochures to Muncie Central and all other MACC affiliated high schools. In collaboration with Ball State's grant initiative *Attract-Prepare-Retain*, MACC staff conducted outreach efforts to high school students and families concerning the new Early Childhood Education and Education Professions pathways.

Next Steps: MACC staff will, in SY 2024-25,

- Continue to use the videos and brochures as marketing tools, sharing with middle school students and their families in a renewed effort to build career awareness among younger students.
 - Continue to implement the marketing campaign outlining the new Muncie Delaware Advanced Technologies Academy (MDATA).
 - Continue to create and implement educational programs to increase student and family awareness of nontraditional employment opportunities.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 3.25 c.** Expand the capacity of the Graduation Academy and MCHS Online and other 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. The district provided a new student opportunity in SY 2023-24 through *The Crossings*, a non-profit, local entity. In partnership with MCS, *The Crossings* offered credit recovery and workplace learning in an



offsite setting by providing academics, job training, and character education. This state-accredited site employs certified teachers and professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds to support the learners. The results for SY 2023-24 showed students earned 198 credits.

The MHS Online Program for Credit Recovery provides a second opportunity for students with results for student enrollment, credits received, and graduation earned shown in Table 3.15. SY 2023-24 resulted in an increase in both enrollment and completion rate.

Table 3.15: MCHS Online Program for Credit Recovery: Enrollment, Credits, and Graduation

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Students enrolled	84	101	179	82	91
Credits earned	282	467	894	426	627
# Graduated after program	17 (20%)	17 (20%)	29 (16%)	25 (30%)	29 (32%)

A third opportunity, the Graduation Academy, allows high school students to attend classes during the school day or during summer school. Students may concurrently enroll in new courses and pursue recovering prior course credits. Learner progress is closely monitored and celebrated. The number of students enrolled increased by 39 students in SY 2023-24 (Table 3.16).

Table 3.16: MCHS Graduation Academy for Credit Recovery: Enrollment, Credits, and Graduation

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Students enrolled	89	124	90	115	154
Credits earned	523	704	632	1,259	1,495
Graduates	27 (30%)	66 (53%)	33 (37%)	64 (57%)	66 (43%)

Next Steps: In SY 2023-24 MCS will provide the online program and the Graduation Academy and will:

- Continue to partner with *The Crossings* to offer credit recovery and workplace learning in an offsite setting.
- Initiate a new alternative program at Ivy Tech for MCS students in lieu of expulsion.

◆ **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: To increase student understanding of the benefits of attending college, MCS implemented several opportunities in SY 2022-23. Based on results from the *YouScience* aptitude and interest assessment, MCS identified students that scored highly in business assessments and invited them to attend BSU College of Business’ career visits for students to learn about the degrees and careers in the fields of accounting and property management. MCHS also partnered with the BSU College of Sciences and Humanities to provide weekly speakers in student advisory classes about career opportunities and pathways to degree completion in their respective areas of study. In addition, numerous MCS high school students toured the Ball State campus through the GEAR UP program and the Bridge to College grant activities.



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

- Continue to develop the program and offer expanded opportunities to MCHS students to be a part of the BSU experience.
 - Create a direct admission process from Muncie Central High School to Ball State University for students holding the required GPA and being on track to achieve the Core 40.
-

- ◆ **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 2023-24, MCS provided opportunities for high school students to learn about HBCUs monthly in their advisory period led by teachers and the director of diversity. Some students attended the annual HBCU College Fair in Noblesville, IN and the *Step Afrika* event at Butler University with support from the BSU CREATE grant. In March, twelve Muncie Central students joined other Indiana high school students in touring four HBCUs during spring break: Central State University (OH), Tennessee State University, Kentucky State University, and Central and Wilberforce University (OH).

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, 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 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.
-

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: MCS and its partners continued to provide numerous student learning supports and enhancements in both the Afterschool and Summer Programs in SY 2023-24. Reflecting the Action Step, the programs support student learning in the areas of literacy, math, science, and technology. Programs for high school students provided opportunities to add credits and courses through blended/online learning and MCS’ Push to Graduation.

As shown in Table 3.19, the specific programs supporting the Action Step vary over time in response to student interests and needs and the capacity of the district and community to meet those needs and interests. In responding to the importance of science of reading initiatives, MCS introduced the *K-2*



Literacy Camp with 115 students enrolling. For the high school students, the *College and Career Club* offered project-based learning aligned to the career clusters and onsite visits to the district’s partner businesses and to Ball State. Multiple other opportunities continued from previous years (Table 3.17).

Table 3.17. MCS Afterschool and Summer Student Opportunities: Enrollment

Extended Learning Opportunity	About/Focus Area	Attendance			
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1. Grissom Gold (YMCA) Grades K-5; Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy SEL 	55	43	50	40
2. Camp Adventure: Literacy and Science Grades 4, 5; Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy, writing, math Outdoor activities 	45	44	64	80
3. Robotics Camp Grades 5-6; Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills for engineers, coders, programmers With <i>Lego Mindstorm</i> kits 	34	20	28	13
4. IREAD-3 Literacy Grade 3, Summer By invitation only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personalized, targeted reading instruction Lessons specific to I-READ 	129	170	156	92
5. Refugee Enrichment Camp - Grades 6-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English reading and math One-half day for 8 weeks 	---	45 K-5: 20 6-12: 25	30 K-5: 10 6-1: 20	7 K-5: 2 6-12: 5
6. Math Exploration (w/Ball State) Grades 4-9, Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math through real-world explorations 	---	12	14	30
7. College & Career Club Grades 6-8, Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects by career clusters Business partners and Ball State visits 	--	--	--	11
8. MCHS Blended/ Online Learning and PUSH to Graduation Grades 9-12; Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance in Graduation Pathways/Course Recovery Online or in-person learning 	241 (210 credits)	272 (225 credits)	237 (165 credits)	257 (250 credits)
9. Marching Band Camp Grades 9-12, Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for band contests 	70	72	92	92
10. K-2 Literacy Camp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science of Reading skills 	--	--	--	115
Total number of students involved in MS summer and afterschool opportunities		574	73678	671	

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25 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.
- Continue to provide multiple opportunities with the focus on literacy, K-3.



- ◆ **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 MCS community partners provided extended summer learning opportunities in literacy, math, and science. Ball State offered three opportunities with the Boys and Girls Club, the YMCA, and the Ross Center offering physical activities and other opportunities. (Table 3.18).

Table 3.18 MCS with Partners After School and Summer Student Opportunities: Enrollment

Extended Learning Opportunity	Partner	About/Focus Area	Attendance			
			2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1. Longfellow MP3 Grades 1-5 Afterschool; Summer	Ball State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Literacy & Math ○ Games and crafts 	67	57	66	75
2. Camp Adventure: Literacy and Science Grade 3; Summer	Ball State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading, writing ○ Outdoor activities, e.g., archery, fishing 	44	69	76	57
3. Literacy Grades 1-8; Summer	Motivate Your Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic success and leadership 	--	--	--	55
4. Youth Creative Writing - Grades 2-12	Ball State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creative writing workshop 	---	9	12	44
5. Youth Poetry Writing Grades 4-8	Ball State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore language and words 	---	7	14	--
6. Weekend Writing Warriors - Grades 4-7	Ball State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Writing workshop 	---	9	12	--
7. Girls’ STEM Camp Grades 6-8	Ball State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ STEM activities 	1	1	3	--
8. Summer Day Club Grades K-12	Boys & Girls Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical activities ○ Eating healthy 	88	215	140	125
9. Y Summer Day Camp Grades K-5	YMCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical activities ○ Eating healthy 	127	159	140	115
10. “Reading Futures” Grades 2, 3 By invitation only	Held at YMCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intensive 55 mins. reading instruction, Science of Reading 	--	--	22	--
9. 11. Ross Center Day Camp Grades K-6	Ross Center Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading ○ Arts and physical activities 	---	---	83 WVE 21 SVE 23 NVE 29 EWA 10	83 WVE 21 SVE 23 NVE 29 EWA 10
Total number of students involved with MS partners in summer			199	367	568	554



and afterschool opportunities



Next Steps: MCS realizes the importance of its community partners to “bridge the gap” in student learning from June-July and therefore, in SY 2024-25 will:

- Continue to seek community partners to offer robust afterschool and summer programming.
-

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

SY 2023-24 was the final year of the federal competitive grant of Indiana GEAR-UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) through Purdue University. The aim of the grant is 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.

This year GEAR-UP focused on purchasing equipment, supporting student off-site experiences, and providing professional development for teachers. Equipment purchases, with corresponding professional development, included items to expand and deepen student learning in career areas such as forensics science with the purchase of a cadaver table and cyber security with the purchase of suitable laptops.

Events for students included sponsoring the Spring Break visit to HBCUs for 13 students in three states. In the winter, 100 MCHS juniors participated in the SAT Bootcamp designed to prepare students for the test. Teachers received training concerning the new Digital SAT that students will be taking in the future. In May, the Purdue University GEAR-UP staff applied for the new grant cycle and received the award to utilize in Fall 2024.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will continue to partner with GEAR-UP to increase the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and will:

- Expand the program by creating two middle school cohort classes.
 - Continue the two cohort classes at the high school level.
 - Increase student awareness of GEAR-UP for students and their families.
-

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

Project Leadership, a 16-year community partner with MCS, provides an array of college and career readiness services for students. Focus services in SY 2023-24 included (a) career curriculum development at the middle and high school levels; (b) one-on-one career consultations with students; and (c) financial aid resources in the form of FAFSA, scholarship, and 21st Century Scholars advocacy.

Project Leadership’s (PL) Career Advisory Period Curriculum. Muncie Central’s advisory period teachers implemented PL’s *Connect College and Career Curriculum* once a week, for the first time this year. As an achieved “Next Step” for SY 2023-24, PL staff supported teachers in presenting the course and providing resources. Student surveys at the end of the course revealed growth in student knowledge about careers, writing resumes, interviewing, college costs, and other areas.



One-on-one career consultations with students. Project Leadership staff members met individually with 8th grade students in Fall 2023—50 at Northside and 19 at Southside—to discuss their college/career pathways, identify and explain available MCHS classes, and discuss post-secondary education pathways that correspond to their career interests. In Spring 2024, PL staff met individually with 8th graders—63 at Northside and 44 at Southside. In addition, the PL staff shared selected information with the school counselors to aid in developing freshmen’s class schedules.

During SY 2023-24, Project Leadership and MCS created an updated curriculum for students in the Preparing for College and Careers (PCC) course at Muncie Central, Northside, and Southside schools. Project Leadership staff met regularly with PCC instructors to continually revise the class materials.

Financial aid resources. Project Leadership accepts the important role of providing students and their families with information about financial aid resources. Opportunities to learn in SY 2023-24 included:

- Grade 8
 - *ScholarTrack Labs* for student account creation and discussions about Scholar Success Program (SSP) activities.
 - *21st Century Scholar Program* for student enrollment, using the new state-wide process as discussed earlier.
- Grades 9 & 10
 - *Scholar Success Program Labs* for students to use Indiana’s tool for logging into the required college and career readiness activities.
- Grade 12
 - *Scholarship Application Labs* for students to complete and submit the scholarship application for the Community Foundation of Muncie and Delaware County.
 - *Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID Lab* for students and their families to digitally complete and submit the required documents.
 - *FAFSA+ Services* for students to individually receive assistance in completing the application as the U.S. Department of Education instituted a new process and system this year.

Other Supports provided in SY 2023-24 by PL included:

- Grades 11 & 12
 - *Career Plan Consultations* for students to discuss their career pathways and to gather information concerning available work-based student experiences.
 - *Work-based Student Experiences* that align to student career interests and aptitudes and that provide opportunities for experiences at school; on-site job shadowing; and workplace experiences/internships. PL career coaches conducted one-on-one career consultations with 83 MCS juniors and seniors. Students selected areas of career interest with 12 areas emerging with the top three being Health Science; Architecture and Construction; and Business Management. PL staff provided student connections to workplace experiences with 23 students meeting with professionals in their selected career field; 18 students experiencing job shadowing; and 11 students participating in long-term workplace experiences (micro-internships).



- In 12th grade
 - *College Application Lab* for students to receive assistance in navigating and completing college application forms.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, Project Leadership will continue to partner with MCS to:

- Provide multiple college and career readiness services for middle and high school students.
-

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

TeenWorks Leadership partners with MCS to serve local youth by providing support for college and careers, while also engaging students in serving their local community. The summer program employed students for 6 weeks at 30 hours a week at a local non-profit. The students also attended weekly workshops to develop skills related to communication and presentations and being a valued employee. Other summer experiences included resume writing, mock interviews and attending a career fair.

The TeenWorks school-year program is an option for students in grades 10-12 and offers year-round employment and training. Employment is often “first job” positions in areas such as logistics and engineering with students assigned a Career Pathway Manager that, over time, becomes a trusted partner—an additional adult to provide support and guidance. Table 3.19 shows student participation rates in TeenWorks.

Table 3.19. TeenWorks Student Participation

2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
--	56	73	98	103	69

Next Steps: *TeenWorks* will continue its partnership with MCS in SY 2023-24 with a focus on:

- Increasing the number of MCS students involved and/or served.
-

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

For students at Southside Middle School, the non-profit City Life began partnering with MCS in SY 2021-22. City Life strives to support 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 program for middle school students. During SY 2023-24, City Life supported students at Southside Middle School during the school year and in the summer by providing over 250 tutoring sessions. City Life engaged in school and family activities such as the *Back to School Bash* and lunches for teachers.

Next Steps: City Life, as an MCS partner, will in SY 2023-24:

- Assess the effectiveness of its current tutoring program.
 - Develop a program emphasizing student development of skills and expectations.
-



Strategy 3.27 Provide transition opportunities for learners entering kindergarten and 6th and 9th grades.

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

Progress Towards Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: MCS continued the transition experiences for students entering kindergarten, 6th grade, and 9th grade in SY 2023-24. MCS conducted “Blast Off to Kindergarten” for a second year, holding the event in April and May. Teachers provided multiple hands-on experiences for their young learners with students receiving a few take-home school-based materials. The children experienced climbing on and riding a school bus around the block and practiced carrying 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 provide activities focused on students developing positive relationships and early planning for college and careers. MCS communicated about the 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 3.20).

Table 3.20. Student Participation in School Level Transition Experiences

Transition Experience	School Levels	2020-21		2021-22	
		District Enroll.	Attended	District Enroll.	Attended
Blast Off for K	Elementary schools	380	113 - 30%	415	109 - 26%
Titan Camp	Northside: 5th into 6th	176	101 - 78%	213	100 - 47%
Panther Camp	Southside: 5th into 6th	159	69 - 61%	147	30 - 20%
Bearcat Camp	Central: 8th into 9th	366	109 - 43%	359	125 - 35%

Transition Experience	School Levels	2022-23		2023-24	
		District Enroll.	Attended	District Enroll	Attended
Blast Off for K	Elementary schools	356	113 - 32%	352	132 - 38%
Titan Camp	Northside: 5th into 6th	220	116 - 58%	233	113 - 48%
Panther Camp	Southside: 5th into 6th	167	30 - 18%	171	24 - 14%
Bearcat Camp	Central: 8th into 9th	356	164 - 46%	372	178 - 48%

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

- Continue to provide engaging and informative transition events for students in K, 6 and 9.
- Investigate barriers to attendance with both students and families.

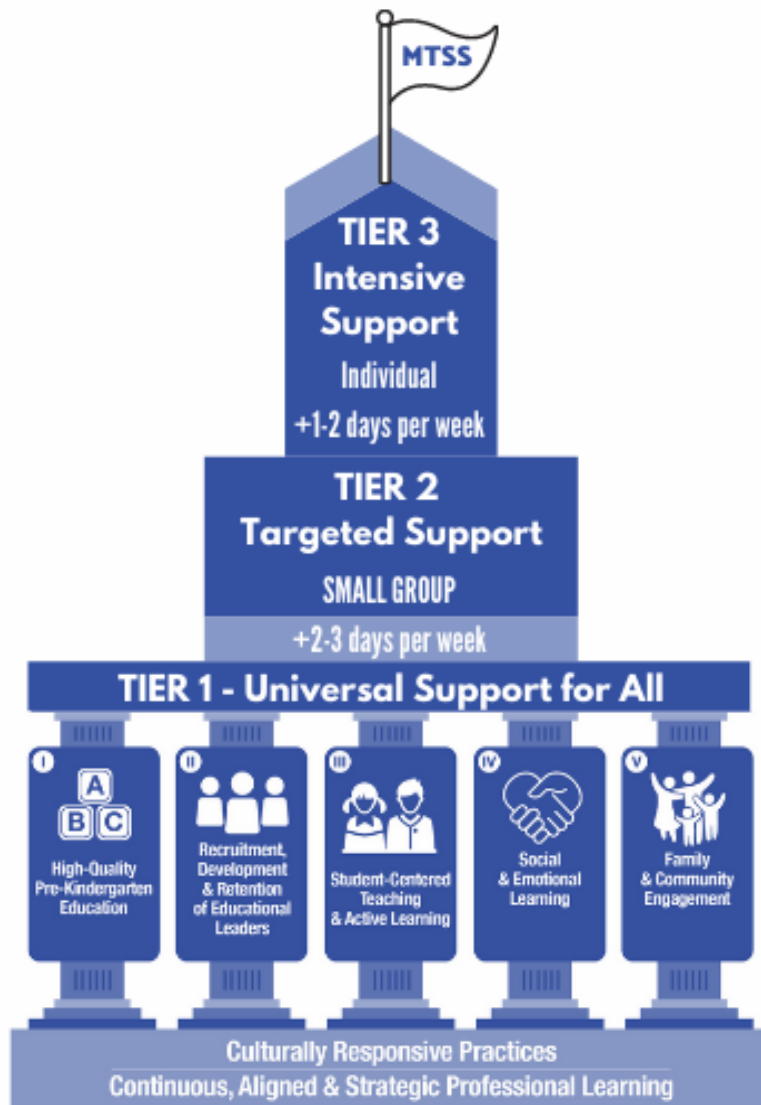


Pillar IV: Social and Emotional Learning

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. Ensuring students are socially and emotionally mature for their ages is key as MCS seeks to create safe and positive learning environments for all and to allow students to concentrate, engage in and enjoy learning. To support students in social and emotional development, MCS utilizes the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) on a district-wide level (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support





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 adopted a district-wide philosophy regarding SEL development, which included best instructional practices and interventions. For SY 2023-24, MCS continued to extend the implementation of the philosophy through staff trainings: (a) for secondary principals a book review of Dr. Ross Greene's *Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) Model* and (b) for school crisis teams training in *Professional Crisis Management* from the Professional Crisis Management Association (PCMA).

The behavior specialists also received crisis management training and PCMA's *Everyday Behavior Tools* training. The behavior specialists then served as internal trainers in the two areas for teaching the information and skills to behavior coaches and classroom teachers. During the school year, the behavior specialists adopted Dr. Greene's *Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP)* as part of their functional behavior assessments to lead to more targeted interventions and behavior plans.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Coach the staff and students in using the *Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) Model* as provided by administrators, counselors, and behavior specialists with the first step being to identify students' lagging skills, followed by determining ways to collaboratively address the unsolved problems in a systematic way.
- In Summer 2024, provide a 2-day virtual training of CPS for principals, assistant principals, behavior coaches and school counselors that have not yet completed the training.

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: With the writing committee completing the *MCS MTSS Student Handbook* last school year, this year the committee shared the handbook with others, emphasizing the use of restorative practices rather than punitive discipline. In Summer 2023 all building teams received training about the handbook with initial implementation occurring during the school year.

As planned, the writing committee added to the *MTSS Student Handbook*, including new information and considerations for diverse learners and for the use of restorative practices rather than suspensions from school. To better understand if disproportionality may be occurring with certain students or groups of students and if so, how to counter this situation, two assistant principals attended restorative practices training in Chicago, IL.



Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Train master teachers in meeting the needs of diverse learners by providing practice in observing and coaching classroom teachers in the appropriate use of universal design principles and culturally responsive teaching.
-

Action Step 4.1 c. Determine and obtain the resources needed to fully implement MTSS in each school and to provide student supports through the MTSS tiers (e.g., hiring specialized staff, continuing staff training, obtaining adequate space and materials and creating appropriate daily schedules).

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: All schools consistently held MTSS meetings and deepened their knowledge of the *MTSS Student Handbook* in SY 2023-24. As an addition this year, Ball State ambassadors attended the meetings to provide feedback to the principals. At this point in time, MCS has the resources needed to conduct targeted interventions in academics and in social and emotional development for identified students.

The extension of the “team model” in the middle schools occurred this year. The model consists of pairing a group of students with a group of classroom teachers for the basic academic courses: English, social studies, science, and math. Considered successful with 6th grade at Southside last year, the program expanded to 7th and 8th at Southside and to grades 6-8 at Northside.

Next Steps: In refining the resources needed to fully implement MTSS in SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Align the master schedules between the two middle schools to better utilize shared staff and resources.
 - Increase use of student data by the MTSS teams as provided by the district data team to make informed decisions and create targeted interventions (e.g., CogAT scores, IREAD3, ILEARN Checkpoints, DIBELS, discipline data and attendance data).
-

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

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 as outlined in the MTSS Handbook.

Progress Toward Goal: Completed 2023-24*

***Completion Note:** The handbook is a living document to be updated/edited annually as needed per changes in state or federal law and/or to better meet the needs of MCS students.

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 SY 2023-24, all school MTSS teams met regularly and continued to focus on using student data to drive decision-making. The teams routinely utilized the information and processes outlined in the *MTSS Student Handbook*. MTSS team meeting notes indicated progress in the availability of district data and in the use of the data to determine students' needs and progress. An Indiana Department of Education onsite monitoring visit in March determined that MCS principals and staff were knowledgeable about MTSS and used a shared language to discuss it and to make decisions.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Continue to participate in and monitor the effective implementation of MTSS by the MTSS school teams.
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: Completed 2022-23

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: To continue to increase teacher and administrator understanding of MTSS, in 2023-24, the four school psychologists co-led the MTSS teams in all schools. This included co-leading the MTSS team meetings and coaching the teams on the use of data-based decision-making to determine appropriate student interventions and supports. Meetings focused on the *MTSS Student Handbook* and other common resources.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Maintain use of the *MTSS Student Handbook* in the MTSS meetings as co-led by school psychologists and principals.
-

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: SY 2023-24 saw the implementation of the newly created MTSS student referral forms in the Fall. As the process includes gathering classroom level student data, MTSS team members coached teachers in gathering the most important and useful data to provide in the referral forms by classroom teachers.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will:

- Continue use of MTSS referral forms.
 - Improve teachers' ability to complete the MTSS referral forms demonstrating understanding of the data and its importance in the process of providing student identification and support.
-

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: During this third year of implementing the adopted Tier I SEL curriculum in all schools, MCS classroom teachers reported that they now understood the importance of students improving and maturing in their social and emotional development each year. Secondly, teachers stated that through the various trainings they now possessed the knowledge to implement and embed SEL concepts in their classrooms without the use of a published curriculum.

Thus, the district in SY 2023-24 replaced purchased curriculum with two options for elementary and middle schools to choose from in developing students' SEL skills: (a) Student Community Circles or (b) monthly, theme-based SEL concepts/topics taught by the classroom teacher. For the latter, the school counselor presented the monthly theme to the teachers with ideas for teaching it. The teachers then embedded the topic throughout the school day. For both options, master teachers, school counselors, and behavior coaches served as guides and coaches in all K-8 classrooms. At the high school, student



supports included the *Hope Squad*, a student-led trained group with two teachers serving as the sponsors and a secondary school psychologist supporting the teachers, as needed.



As an additional support for students, all schools established a “regulation room” and many classroom teachers created a “calm corner” in their individual rooms. Both areas allowed students to self-regulate, removing themselves temporarily from interaction with others to a quieter and less stimulating space.

Next Steps: With SEL curricula and supports established for most MCS students, the district, in SY 2024-25 will:

- Explore and select a SEL middle school curricula specialized for students in the district’s alternative school placements.

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

Rationale: MCS is dedicated to all staff employing “restorative practices” when responding to student negative behaviors. As an evidence-based approach, restorative practices help to build and repair relationships through (a) de-emphasizing punitive discipline; (b) improving student and staff communication to resolve conflict; and (c) growing students’ abilities to make good decisions, to appropriately voice their opinions, and to increase self-regulation.

Action Step 4.3 a. To improve the implementation of restorative practices by all staff, K-12 school principals and their school teams will (a) analyze student discipline and attendance (absenteeism) data; (b) analyze student academic performance in English language arts and mathematics; (c) determine patterns, correspondence and correlations between the data sets; and (d) use the findings to develop restorative practice annual goals in each of the four areas.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, school principals met with the district data team monthly to review discipline and attendance data. The group examined the data sets to determine trends and patterns and discussed possible correlations between the data points and possible root causes.

In June 2023, school principals led a day-long analysis and discussion of ELA, math, discipline, and attendance data with their assistant principals and master and mentor teachers. The following day, the principal, assistant principal, and support team members (e.g., counselors, Family Navigators, behavior coaches) met to continue the data analysis and to establish school goals in each of the areas for the upcoming year.

Towards the end of school year, the district data teams met again and determined district-wide findings by comparing multiple years of student discipline and attendance data. Attendance data revealed:

- Students identified as “No Absence Issues” increased from 43 percent in 2022-23 to 50 percent in 2023-24 – a seven percent increase.
- Students identified as “Nearly Chronically Absent” decreased from 13 percent in 2022-23 to 10 percent in 2023-24 – a three percent decrease.
- Students identified as “Chronically Absent” decreased from 38 percent in 2020-21 to 32 percent in 2023-24 – a six percent decrease.



District-level discipline data regarding behavior incident occurrences revealed:

- Administrators disproportionately assigned referrals as a form of discipline to students with IEPs.

Next Steps: District administrators and school principals will need to continue to focus on student attendance and student behavior. As many MCS staff continue to rely on discipline referrals rather than restorative practices when responding to behavior incidents, MCS will, in SY 2024-25:

- Provide restorative training for administrators, behavior coaches and school counselors for two days in Summer 2024 focusing on positive responses to students' challenging behavior.
- Coach classroom teachers and other staff in the use of the *Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) Model* to address the lagging behavioral skills of students through solving problems rather than negative discipline measures.

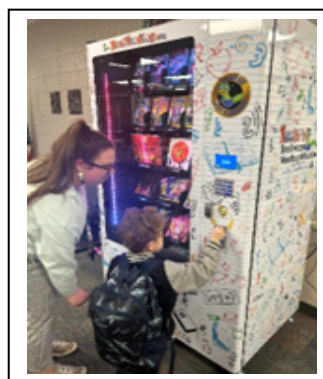
Action Step 4.3 b. Establish and increase the use of evidence-based classroom management strategies, with fidelity for all K-12 teachers through providing training and coaching to establish consistent classroom and school cultures.

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, two MCS behavior specialists, in collaboration with administrators and behavior coaches, established “regulation rooms” in all elementary and middle schools and “calm corners” in some classrooms. These newly created areas are evidence-based methods of classroom management that improve student self-regulation and positive responses to situations and events.

A collection of classroom and school data regarding student behavior occurred through the work of the behavior coaches. In weekly meetings, the behavior coaches, specialists, and administrators conducted data analysis of the current behavior interventions in use, to determine changes needed and to monitor school-level growth in meeting the annual behavior goals.

Providing incentives to increase positive student behaviors serves as a key component of classroom management. While some students respond well to praise, others need tangible incentives. Thus, in this school year 2023-24, MCS purchased book vending machines for all elementary schools with monetary support from the George and Francis Ball Foundation. The book vending machines served as an incentive for students that improved their attendance and/or academic growth.



Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, to increase the appropriate use of evidence-based classroom management strategies by K-12 teachers, MCS will:

- Provide training on the topic of meeting the needs of diverse learners in the classroom to K-12 classroom teachers and the master teachers in Summer and Fall 2024.
 - The Director of Special Education and Director of English learners will develop the training.



- The training will align with the NIET teacher evaluation rubric and the Principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
-



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.

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

Evidence of Progress: As the number of students that vape continues to rise across the country, MCS strove to reduce the number of secondary students vaping in its schools. To do so, in SY 2023-24 MCS created a disciplinary process which included educational and support components. The disciplinary process instituted in the three secondary schools included: (a) for the first instance, meeting with an administrator and confiscating the vape and (b) for the second instance, confiscating the vape and requiring the students to attend a vaping education program. The program, developed and led by the Tobacco Free Coalition of Delaware County and a physician from IU Health, required students to attend for several hours over multiple sessions. The sessions focused on the dangers of vaping and provided resources to intercede in vaping addiction.

Next Steps: With the vaping education program showing promise, MCS in SY 2024-25 will:

- Continue the vaping program in middle and high schools.
 - Determine other habits and behaviors that interfere with student learning and develop programs/supports for students.
-



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.

Family Engagement Evaluation. As this strategy states, MCS values its families by welcoming them into the schools and increasing their participation in school events. Family engagement is also a key component of the *Cradle to Career Muncie* initiative with one of its Collaborative Action Networks or CANs dedicated to this issue. In SY 2023-24, the Family and Community Engagement CAN requested that MCS conduct an evaluation of the current status of the topic and thus, the district hired *Scholastic* to conduct an evaluation in all schools. *Scholastic's Family Engagement Assessment (FEA)* sought to answer two questions: (a) how welcome do families feel in the schools and (b) how much do families feel a part of their child's learning process.

At each school, a Scholastic family engagement specialist oversaw the completion of the immersive assessment that measured school capacity to foster effective home-school relationships through the execution of the seven components: (1) physical school walk-throughs, (2) review of the school's printed materials, (3) review of the school's website and parent portal, (4) a "shopper call," (5) survey of the building administrator, (6) survey of school staff members, and (7) survey of families. The district and each school received a report addressing the results of the seven components with Scholastic providing a list of commendations and recommendations, as presented in the "Evidence of Progress" statements below.

- ◆ **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

Strategic Plan Update SY 2023-24



Evidence of Progress: With several schools creating Family and Community Engagement (FCE) teams in the prior year, MCS’s goal for SY 2023-24 was the district-wide implementation by all schools. All schools, except for one, met the goal by creating and utilizing Family Engagement Teams. On average, across the district, 7-11 FCE members attended the meetings. The participants—school staff, family members, and community organizations, (e.g., neighborhood churches)—reflected a level of diversity similar to the school’s student body. The schools’ FCE meetings occurred either monthly or up to four times during the year with the members helping to plan, organize, and implement family events, such as a “Family Prom” (see Action Step 5.1 c).

The establishment and use of the FCE Teams adheres to two of *Scholastic’s Family Engagement* goals: (a) Information: The school has programs and procedures to inform families about available community assistance and (b) Empowerment: Families and teachers meet and work together.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will continue to develop the school-based FCE teams with:

- Building-level administrators providing regular reports concerning (a) the ongoing status of their FCE team, including its ability to maintain an appropriate participant representation that corresponds to the student diversity of the school and (b) the dates of upcoming meetings.
- Attention by the building-level administrator to areas identified by the Scholastic survey:
 - Train staff on family engagement.
 - Develop and implement minimal standards of communication for principals and teachers to use in *Parent Square*.
 - Provide times for data sharing with families and “teaching tips” to assist their children.
 - Empower families through Family and Community Engagement Teams which provide them with opportunities and resources.

-
- ◆ **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 understands the importance of family and community volunteers in its schools and in SY 2023-24 utilized volunteers to pursue its mission of all students being proficient readers by the end of Grade 3. As such, MCS recruited and trained volunteers to assist elementary students in literacy in small groups and individually. Community partners supporting literacy included: Heart of Indiana United Way; Muncie Civic; 8twelve Coalition; Altrusa; and others. Other literacy supports consisted of MCS book giveaways and special reading guests. Muncie Civic selected the play *Charlotte’s Web*—a high interest story for elementary students—and provided an opportunity for multiple groups to support students in literacy-activities such as practicing reading lines of the play.

MCS provided reading training for volunteers specific to the needs of their learners. The training for volunteers of 2nd and 3rd grade students included learning the basics of the science of reading, information on IREAD, and receiving tutoring support materials. In addition, master teachers gathered specific tutoring materials for volunteers corresponding to literacy learning needs of specific students. In total, 25 reading volunteers faithfully served in the lower grades of the six elementary schools to improve students’ reading skills and abilities.



Some schools implemented the recommended “Next Step” for this year by completing registration for *All Pro Dads*, a monthly gathering in elementary schools for dads or other significant men in the students’ lives. The children and men engaged in meaningful conversations and activities centered around a character-based curriculum. One school implemented the program this year, with two schools planning to initiate the program in SY 2024-25.

MCS continues to build its volunteer program through programs for families and community. The district increased the number of parents and grandparents volunteering to assist in field trips and school events this year with the district planning to continue this effort as means to improve on the *Scholastic’s Family Engagement Goal: Empowerment: Schools provide families with education and volunteering options.*

Next Steps: The MCS volunteer program will continue the specific supports developed this past year and devise additional ones for SY 2024-25:

- Create specific ongoing, targeted volunteer opportunities related to assisting MCS in achieving its goals, such as a targeted literacy volunteer program.
- Provide training and materials for volunteers to support students academically, helping MCS to achieve its academic goals.
- Continue to support elementary and middle schools in implementing the *All Pro Dads* program.
- Increase the number of volunteers through partnering with the neighborhood associations.

-
- ◆ **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: The district completed its first full year of “Big Idea Night” in SY 2023-24. Occurring monthly at each school, the “night” included food giveaways, for both family and staff, from the Second Harvest Food Bank with a short presentation from school staff regarding curriculum and instruction on how to support learners at home.

A review of the program revealed families’ desire to reduce the number of school information nights which currently occur once a week. MCS will consider holding the event every other week. However, the weekly food giveaways are critically needed in the community and will continue every month. Family responses to the Big Idea Nights remained strong with the program considered to be a success. The Big Idea Nights correspond to *Scholastic’s Family Engagement Goal, Information: The school has programs and procedures to inform families about available community assistance.*

Other family events conducted this year included at least one “Family Night” in all schools with resulting in a notable increase in attendance, The elementary schools provided individual events, such as:

- EWA: Family Prom
- Grissom: Sweetheart Dance; Black History Month
- Westview: Family Night; Spring Carnival
- Longfellow: Black History Month
- North View: Taco-About Literacy Family Night; Trick or Treat/Pumpkin Carving Contest
- South View: Fall Festival for Families – 300 in attendance with First Presbyterian Church serving 900 hotdogs.



Next Steps: MCS will plan a rigorous schedule of family events in all schools in SY 2024-25 and:

- Continue to hold “Big Ideas Nights” in all schools in conjunction with Second Harvest Food Bank give-away and with other community partners.
 - Continue to provide various “Family Nights” at elementary schools.
 - Increase ways to communicate with parents about specific school information as indicated in *Scholastic’s Family Engagement* goal “to help families learn about school goals, policies, and procedures; to inform families about their child’s classroom and activities; to keep families current on their child’s school performance; and to learn about programs and procedures that involve families with their child’s academic achievement.”
-

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

Progress Toward Goal: Early Stages

Evidence of Progress: In SY 2023-24, for the third year, MCS held parent-teacher conferences once a year in all the schools. As with the prior years, parents chose the format of the conference: in-person at the school, on the telephone, or virtually on the computer. MCS noted that the percentage of families participating continued to be lower than desired and thus the district will continue to explore ways to meet *Scholastic’s Family Engagement* goal - Information: Families are kept current on their child’s school performance.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, MCS will strive to:

- Increase family participation in teacher-parent conferences.
 - Increase staff understanding and implementation of student-led conferences at all school levels as directed by the administration.
 - Instruct students in learning how to share their accomplishments with others.
-

Action Step 5.1 e. Establish Parent Advisory Councils and Student Advisory Councils in every school to 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: Prior to SY 2023-24, some MCS principals established Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) and Student Advisory Councils (SAC) with a goal for this year being that all schools develop the two councils:

- *Parent Advisory Councils (PACs)/Family and Community Engagement Teams (FCE).* In meeting the goal for all schools to establish PACs/FECs, all but one school met the goal (see Action Step 5.1a). In some schools, the Family and Community Engagement (FEC) team served as the PAC.
- *Student Advisory Councils (SACs).* All schools but one established Student Advisory Councils (SAC) this school year with members including 9-22 students per school. The MACC hosted two groups to boost the level of “students voices”: (a) the SAC and (b) the Student Leadership Council. All SACs meet regularly to gain input from the students.



Next Steps: In SY 2023-24, MCS will improve the PACs and SACs through:

For PAC/FCE

- Refine the development and utilization of the PAC, ensuring that the principal leads the meetings and that the meetings occur regularly.
- Ensure the creation of a PAC in the one remaining school.
- Conduct multiple listening sessions by the MCS Director of Public Education/CEO with the PACs/FCEs to enrich and extend information and communication.

For SAC

- Refine the development and utilization of the SACs, ensuring that the principal leads the meetings and that the meetings occur regularly.
- Ensure the creation of the SAC at the one remaining school.
- Conduct multiple listening sessions with the MCS Director of Public Education/CEO and the district-wide student advisory board to listen to their concerns and ideas.

Strategy 5.2 Enhance supports for students and their families.

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

Progress Toward Goal: On Track

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

In SY 2020-21, MCS and Meridian Health began a partnership to meet the health needs of MCS students and staff by establishing a health clinic at Southside Middle school through funding as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). With a strong response from the MCS community, the partners established health clinics in all schools by SY 2022-23. These wrap-around services utilize certified nurses to provide primary medical care and social workers for behavioral and social healthcare.

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). While use of the nursing services decreased from the prior year, behavioral science services almost doubled with social worker visits increasing as well.

Table 5.1. Patient Visits at MCS Health Clinics

Service Visits	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	Southside Middle		All schools	
Primary Care (medical services)	14	379	141	189
Nursing Services (approximate)	NA	NA	67,500	49,500
Behavioral Science Services	1,358	1,223	2,420	4,578
Licensed Clinical Social Worker	239	229	1,197	1,567
Flu Shots	233	98	59	20
COVID Vaccines	155	0	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.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25 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

In partnership with Marian University and the City Connects program, MCS continued to refine its wrap-around service, *Family Navigators*. The Navigators coordinate the wrap-around services for students and families, helping them “navigate” the services available at the school and in the community. With the Navigators adding Longfellow this school year, all six elementary schools and the two middle schools currently provide this support.

Funding for the *Family Navigators* occurred through multiple sources including the Office of the Muncie Mayor, Marian University, and multiple grants. The 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 2024-25, MCS will coordinate with the *Family Navigators* program to:

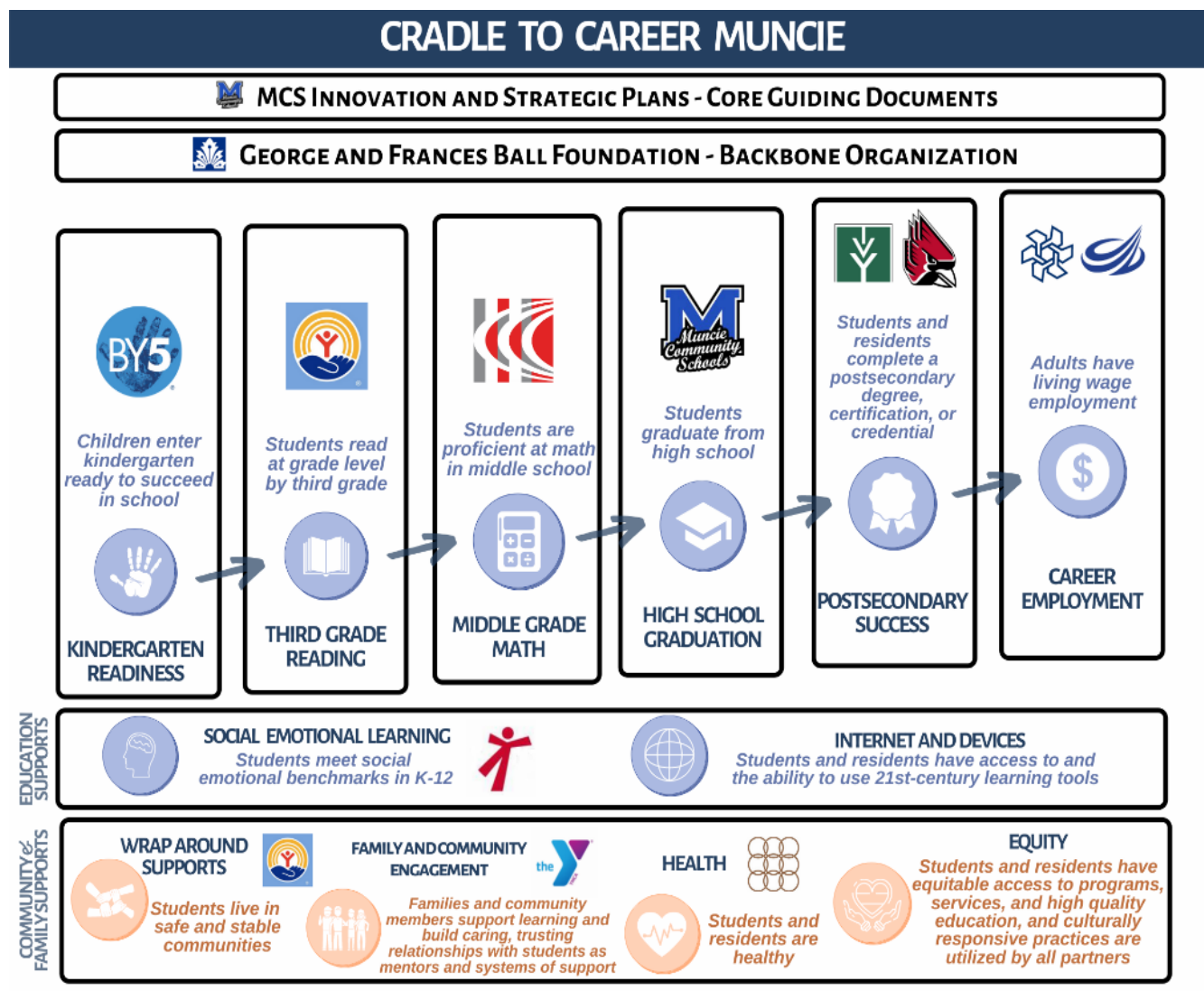
- Continue to improve the processes and supports for families and students.
-

- ◆ **Action Step 5.2 b.** Create and implement the neighborhood *Cradle to Career Muncie* initiative to provide children with health and 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 (CANs). 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 a key 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 CANs 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, some of the CANs completed a number of actions toward the achievement of their goals and as related to MCS. To address the need for data-based decision-making, MCS, in collaboration with the George and Francis Ball Foundation, hired a three-member data team in SY 2022-23.

Next Steps: In SY 2024-25, the George and Francis Ball Foundation will:

- Continue to serve as the backbone organization for *Cradle to Career Muncie*.
 - Continue to oversee the CANs as they collaborate with the district in taking actions in line with the MCS Strategic Plan, bringing together early education, K-12, higher education, and social service systems to create a better future for Muncie students.
-

Collaborative Action Networks, CANs: SY 2023-24 Strategy Implementation

Over the past two years, the CANs established goals and strategies to address their specific areas. In SY 2023-24, many of the CANs implemented one or more of their strategies while other CANs remained in the initial stages of strategy development. MCS provides a description of the four CANs that implemented strategies in SY 2023-24.

1) CAN: *Kindergarten Readiness*

Goal: Children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school.

Strategy A: *Support for ECE providers through professional development opportunities.*

The Kindergarten Readiness CAN focused on Strategy A in SY 2023-24 by providing 230 hours of training for early childcare and education providers in Delaware County. A child psychologist usually provided the training with other professionals, at times presenting in their area of expertise. Providers attending the trainings included Cardinal Clubhouse, HeadStart, Huffer, Mitchell, New Beginnings, Precious Little Angels and United. Educators from the public schools did not participate. The 18 trainings included topics such as Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Real Life, Autism and Developmental Delay, Beyond Just Reading Stories, and Speech and Language Red Flags in Preschoolers.

Strategy B: *Coordinate engagement between providers and kindergarten teachers.*

Led by BY5, the CAN conducted two meetings for preschool and kindergarten teachers called “Bridge to Kindergarten” but attendance was low with 13 PreK teachers attending; no MCS kindergarten teachers attended.

Strategy C: *Advocate for sufficient “seats” in High Quality PreK programs.*

The Kindergarten Readiness CAN served as a thought partner with MCS to investigate spaces and places for additional PreK classrooms as limited space is available in the schools.

Strategy D: *Survey effort for ECE providers.*

The George and Francie Ball Foundation, serving as the backbone of the CANs, administered a PreK providers survey to determine the needs and barriers concerning early childhood education in the community in coordination with the CAN.



2) CAN: *Third Grade Reading*

Goal: Students read at grade level by third grade.

Strategy A: Tutoring program support.

In prior years, the Heart of Indiana United Way (HIUW) directed the *Read United* volunteer tutoring program. This school year the MCS Volunteer Coordinator led the school-day program with students attending based on *IReady/ILEARN* data.

Strategy B: After-school program coordination.

HIUW continued to coordinate the MCS afterschool providers, holding monthly meetings with them to increase understanding of one another's programs with the goal of increasing trust, collaboration, and referrals. Attendees at the monthly meetings included the multiple programs described in Pillar III and other interested community organizations, such as the Muncie Public Library, the Ross Community Center, and the Firefly Family Resource Center.

Strategy C: Book Access - Book selection program, book vending machines, and more.

In SY 2023-24, the Third Grade Reading CAN, through HIUW provided a multitude of books, literacy kits, and early literacy resource through three events: presentation of the play *Charlotte's Web*; Big Idea Nights; and Summer Book Give-Away.

In Fall 2023, HIUW worked strategically with the Muncie Civic Theatre in its production of the classic novel *Charlotte's Web* resulting in notable outcomes:

- Almost 1,000 copies of *Charlotte's Web* purchased and presented to:
 - 3rd and 4th fourth grade MCS students.
 - Spanish versions to dual language students and first language Spanish speakers.
 - Classroom library copies to 1st, 2nd, and 5th grade teachers.
- Purchase of tickets for MCS families to attend the play without cost.

During the school year, this CAN established an opportunity for families to obtain free children's books during each elementary school's "Big Idea Night" (see Action Step 5.1 c). With 90 children receiving books for infants to 5th graders, the setting served to increase family participation in the process of selecting and "shopping" for books. K-3rd grade students that were unable to attend the Big Idea Night selected their books the following day at school.

The Summer Book Give Away Program occurred at Grissom, Longfellow, and South View elementary schools with over 6,500 books distributed to students in Grades K-3. Teachers then selected books for their classroom libraries from the 1,500 remaining books.

The Third Grade Reading CAN ensured books were both appropriate for and of interest to MCS students. They created book selection criteria with items such as: highly-requested and popular books; characters and settings representing MCS student diversity; stories exemplifying emotional development and resilience; and biographies demonstrating career pathways, opportunities, diligence, and success.

Additional activities to increase student access to books included registering children for Dolly Parton's *Imagination Library* and providing books and literacy kits throughout the community at the Community Sing, the Children's Museum Free Saturdays, and the Juneteenth Celebration.



As noted earlier, the CAN led the efforts (a) to purchase book vending machines for each elementary school to serve as a behavioral incentive and to encourage students to read (see Action Step 4.3 b) and (b) created “Book Nooks” in local laundromats for children and families to read while doing laundry.

3) CAN: Middle Grade Math

Goal: Students are proficient at math in middle school.

Strategy A: Incentives for attendance at school.

This CAN strategy is simple—students cannot improve in math if they do not regularly attend school. To improve attendance, the CAN implemented an incentive program to promote regular school attendance. Improvement in attendance rates occurred at two schools in SY 2023-24 from the prior year: Northside Middle’s rate increased to 90.4 percent and Southside Middle’s to 86.5 percent.

Strategy B: Math tutoring support

This strategy proved to be more difficult to initiate and sustain than the CAN predicted. Families and students faced many challenges in participating regularly and the district faced the issue of scheduling and organizing a group of volunteers. Thus, in SY 2023-24, the Middle School Math CAN pivoted to utilizing other organizations to provide tutoring for students both individually and in small groups. The organizations—the Boys & Girls Club, City Life, and SmartStart Tutoring—assisted 136 students in improving their math skills at both middle schools (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Middle School Students Participating in Math Tutoring Support SY 2023-24

	Boys & Girls Club	City Life	SmartStart Tutoring
Northside M.S.	30	--	41
Southside M.S.	--	13	27
<i>Subtotal</i>	30	13	68
	<i>Total</i>		136

Strategy C: Math/STEM special programs, guests, events.

As a means of increasing student enrollment, participation, and engagement in middle school math, the CAN created several events—often connected with a family event—to introduce new math topics, such as coding, and to peak interest in STEM subjects. A total of 24 Math/STEM events occurred with community partners in SY 2023-24, including: “TechSpark” weekends; “Hour of Code” sessions; MCS Coding Club; and Mobile Programming (e.g., MOM’s, Buley, Boys and Girls Club).

Strategy D: Math programming curricular supports (TechWise Academy, Club engagement etc.).

For SY 2023-24, the CAN selected specific technology items to purchase to (a) assist teachers in math instruction and (b) provide math skill development and motivation for the students. For math instruction, the CAN led efforts to purchase View Sonic Boards for Northside Middle School. For students, the CAN selected the E-Sports Team at Northside as its focus area



To improve the team’s ability to compete at a higher level against other schools, the E-Sports Team received upgraded computers and additional technology resources. The outcome became clear when the Northside E-Sports Team won the state championship for middle schools. In addition, the school reported an increased interest and participation in the E-Sports Team.

Strategy E: Transition to Middle School (6th Grade) programs

For Summer 2024, the Innovation Connector will provide a day of STEM activities for incoming 6th grade students at their transition camp.

4) CAN: High School Graduation

Goal: Students graduate from high school.

Strategy A: Project Leadership curricular program

As described earlier, Project Leadership developed the *Connect College and Career Curriculum* at the middle and high school levels and implemented it in SY 2023-24 (See Pillar III, Action Step 3.26b, Evidence of Progress b3).

Strategy B: 9th Grade On-Track Coordination

In the prior school year (2022-23), MCS and the High School Graduation CAN developed a job description for a new position, “9th Grade On-Track Coordinator,” with the role of supporting students at risk of earning less than 10 credits by the end of freshman year. In response, MCS hired the coordinator in SY 2023-24 to identify barriers preventing students from earning the appropriate number of credits; to determine root causes of the barriers; and to explore and implement appropriate solutions. Examples of solutions implemented this year include:

- Weekly check-ins: The coordinator reviewed goal achievement in attendance, grades, and/or completed work for selected students.
- Instructional setting and environment: The coordinator reviewed and provided modifications to the setting and/or learning environment, as deemed appropriate.
- Communications with parents: The coordinator provided frequent and meaningful communication with the families, including discussions of available external supports and home visits.
- The coordinator, the student, and the family worked to address the determined barriers.

The percentage of students described as “on track with at least 10 credits” increased the past two years from levels before that time, demonstrating the importance of the coordinator’s role (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: 9th Grade Students on Track with at Least 10 Credits

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
55%*	68%*	78%	75%

*Coordinator position and role did not yet exist.

Strategy C: Establishment of Graduation Tracks, Internships, Collaborative PS Programs

The activities related to this strategy are described in Pillar III.



- ◆ **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.

