

Jefferson County Public Schools
Louisville, Kentucky

**Progress Report
on
2008-09
Comprehensive
District Improvement Plan
and
Strategic Action Plan**

Prepared
by

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Superintendent

and the
Superintendent's Cabinet

April 2009

FOREWORD

This year witnessed the creation of numerous new initiatives in the district, the expansion and extension of existing initiatives, and a major restructuring of our student assignment plan. Not only did we set in place goals and strategies that will take us well into the future, but we also generated a new level of excitement and energy throughout the system.

The focus of this year has been on launching these initiatives and continuing to move the district forward in bold directions that enhance the achievement of students and the professional quality of our teaching and administrative staff. In spite of the widespread financial downturn, we have been able to structure our budget priorities so that the district continues on the path of progress we set in 2007-08.

Based on the work we have done with Harvard University through the Wallace Foundation grant, it became clear that we needed to build a cohesive and coherent sense of direction throughout the organization. Over the past two years, the Senior Cabinet has worked to bring that coherence to our overall approach. Last year we began by developing a cohesive vision statement, a set of beliefs, and a series of goals and strategies. This year we continued building coherence in executing our vision through the development of a Theory of Action, an array of leadership and teaching competencies, and a set of classroom instructional frameworks that bring our vision to the classroom level. The Theory of Action has become a critical linchpin in explaining how we believe we can be most effective in framing our work and our new initiatives.

We have collected all these critical documents and packaged them into one booklet that articulates how each statement flows to the next in a cohesive and coherent way, defining in clear and graphic terms the way we see the culture of the Jefferson County Public Schools shaping the way we learn, teach and lead. This booklet has been distributed to all faculty and administrators, and will be provided to all new staff hired in the district. It sets us apart from other districts, helping our employees and prospective employees understand that we are committed to a larger vision and that we are dedicated to an approach that will most effectively create a high-performing culture and instructional program for students and teachers.

In presentations to faculty and the community, we have used this framework so that others can appreciate how our various initiatives are designed to build on our Theory of Action. For example, in order to address the first point in our Theory of Action and to create classroom and school communities that are more caring and culturally-responsive, we have successfully launched CARE for Kids in 28 elementary schools and all the sixth grades in our middle schools. Another set of 27 elementary schools will begin the program next year as the middle schools move the program into the seventh grade. We have created freshman academies to better support the transition to high school and to personalize the high school environment. As part of the freshman experience, we implemented a new civics course that engages students in important learning about civic responsibility, while providing them with experiences that expand their sense of social responsibility toward others and the community at large. We have placed thirteen new nurses in our most challenged schools to enhance the health care and attendance at these sites, and we have provided extensive professional development in cultural competence to better support how we approach the diversity within our schools.

Core to our Theory of Action is its second facet, which stipulates the provision of high-quality, personalized instruction that challenges and engages students in authentic work. Our elementary redesign initiative serves as a pilot for this comprehensive approach, including such key elements as an average class size of twenty pupils and extensive professional development for the faculty in differentiating instruction, so that all students are appropriately challenged. At many of our schools, we have added other interventions that are also focused on personalizing instruction and appropriately challenging students. From the piloting of *Response to Intervention*

at many of our elementary schools to the addition of *Thinking Reader* at the middle school level to the expansion of RICH math at our high schools, we have continued the theme of individually tailoring instruction and intervention to the particular needs of the student.

In fact, the restructuring efforts at the high school level are targeted at this aspect of the Theory of Action. The freshman academies with the ninth-grade civics course begin this more personalized approach to high school, but our school-to-career initiative takes it a step further by providing students with the opportunity to join a school of study that reflects their interest and that is shared with like-minded students. In addition, the trimester system adopted by over half our high schools provides students with the opportunity for advancement in specific academic areas of interest, for exploration of career/technical interests, and for immediate remediation, if needed, so students can stay with their class. Finally, by having two of our schools join the Virtual High School as a district pilot, we have added over 200 advanced and specialized courses that will be available to students at those schools, giving them the opportunity to interact with students in other states who have similar interests.

The third element in our Theory of Action entails ensuring equitable access for all students to a consistent, inquiry-based curriculum. Again, the initiatives of this year have further strengthened our curriculum and made it more student-active and engaging. We implemented a new inquiry-based math curriculum in 76 of our elementary schools, with another 4 schools coming on board next year. All our middle schools are using a curriculum that is consistent with and builds upon this elementary curriculum. To complete the continuum, this year our high schools selected a new math program for implementation in 2009-10 that will carry the momentum into the high school level. Similarly, in science, we now have program consistency from pre-K through high school, using programs that are notably stronger than those we used in the past and that engage students in high levels of thinking and conceptual development.

We also continued to enhance our work in reading and social studies. Although **Every 1 Reads** reached its final year, the program proved of such power and effectiveness that our partners committed to launching a next phase of the initiative. In addition, based on a review by national experts in reading, we have made significant adjustments that will not only enhance the teaching of reading, but place a major emphasis on the development of writing skills and content-area reading. In the area of elementary social studies, we have launched the development of an extraordinarily innovative program—*One Community, One Nation*—that will engage students in deep understanding of the meaning of community, culture and civics and will provide them with the knowledge, disposition, and inspiration to be active and engaged citizens.

The school-to-career initiative at the high school also has the potential to significantly enhance both the academic and technical course offerings in a way that bolsters the quality of all our high schools. Through partnerships with businesses and community organizations and via collaboration among high schools with similar themes, we anticipate the development of high school cultures that support students through graduation and beyond by providing them with the skills and attitudes necessary to be successful in work and college settings.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the essential element in providing equitable access for all students—our revised student assignment plan. Over the past year, we have worked at multiple levels to ensure that our student assignment plan enhances both diversity and quality while maintaining choice, predictability, stability and equity for parents. Month after month, we have worked with design teams for our new and revitalized elementary magnet schools and programs so they have the best opportunity possible to provide high-quality, exciting programs that will attract students and parents from across the county. At the same time, we have developed a middle and high school student assignment plan that will meet our diversity guidelines while bringing greater cohesiveness to the satellite areas in West Louisville. Although it will take four to five years to see the full impact of these changes, we are confident that we have set in motion a plan that will strengthen the quality of all our schools and model the diversity to which we aspire.

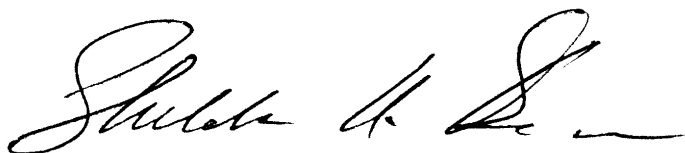
Finally, our Theory of Action tells us that leadership is critical to making all this happen, so we have invested significant energy and resources in providing high-quality professional development for our leaders. As a

district, we believe that we need to move toward collaborative practice that creates strong professional learning communities. If principals and others leaders don't model this approach, it won't happen at the teacher level. For the past year, we have supported principals so they have the opportunity to work in cadres or cohort groups, visiting each other's schools and discussing their observations of the strength of instruction they observe. At the same time, we have placed an emphasis on strengthening our Instructional Leadership Teams and providing training to our resource teachers in such collaborative practices as lesson study, so we can build collaboration throughout the organization. If we work as a team, we can accomplish so much more than through reliance on individual efforts. Our leaders are intellectually grasping and personally committing to that concept, and they are creating conditions to support it within their schools.

There are many other accomplishments from the 2008-09 school year that we could highlight, from restructuring our early childhood programs to enhancing the use of technology to increasing family involvement. A generous grant from the Gheens Foundation enabled us to launch the Gheens Institute for Innovation to promote, support, research, and evaluate innovative approaches to education—and to pursue significant external resources for these purposes. In addition, our legislative efforts helped support a large-scale change in our state assessment system that will serve us well in the future. Those accomplishments and many others are detailed in the following document.

Although we have had a laser focus on our goals and strategies, we have also contended with several significant issues confronting the district. We had to address the impact of a significant economic downturn and delineate potential reductions in programs throughout the district. While this process was exceptionally difficult, some of the reductions, such as in vehicle use, will assist the district for years to come. In addition, we had to deal with a highly contentious issue over teacher non-renewal. This matter, too, ended quite productively with an agreement that addresses the needs of both the administration and the teachers association. We had to cope with the tragic death of a student athlete, carefully studying our policies and practices related to athletic activities in high temperatures. Each of these situations created times of tension and difficulty. However, we are ending the year having made significant progress even in these more challenging areas. Finally, we received the report we commissioned from Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to help us think through strategic policy issues. Many of the report's recommendations involve advocating for legislative policy changes. We will continue to analyze this document and develop a set of actionable proposals over the coming weeks.

The district has laid a strong foundation for the future. The initiatives we discussed last year and launched this year will yield even greater expansion and productivity next year. In spite of the challenges of 2008-09, I am optimistic that we will continue to strengthen JCPS and foster a national reputation for excellence in urban education. As always, we look forward to your feedback and welcome your input as we move ahead with plans for 2009-10.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheldon H. Berman', written in a cursive style.

Sheldon H. Berman, Ed.D.
Superintendent

SHB:jb

Goal 1: Enhance Effective Teaching

We will enhance teaching by engaging teachers in reflective practice that in turn engages students in challenging, rewarding, and authentic academic work. Effective teaching and high expectations will enable each student to attain high levels of performance and will facilitate the closing of achievement gaps. Effective teaching is personalized and inquiry-based, fosters student understanding, and requires students to extend their conceptual thinking individually and with other students.

Strategy 1: Strengthen Literacy Development PK-12

We will continue our literacy initiative to strengthen reading instruction through classroom-based assessment, the implementation of a balanced literacy approach, and embedded intervention strategies. We will focus specific attention on integrating writing across all curricular areas, supported with exemplars of student writing, assessment rubrics, and portfolios of student work.

Sponsor: Lue Peabody

Progress Made 2008-09:

The four-year **Every 1 Reads** initiative was scheduled to end with the completion of the 2007-08 school year. Because of the success of this unique program, **Every 1 Reads More** was launched. Throughout this year, we have expanded the enhancements and interventions to support literacy instruction in our schools. We continue to provide professional development for **Every 1 Reads** volunteers and AmeriCorps members. *SuccessMaker* reading intervention has been provided to serve Tier III students at 120 sites: all of the Title I schools, plus schools with the Childcare Enrichment Program (twelve licenses per site, including materials and training). The *Thinking Reader* program has been expanded from one middle school to six. The *Read 180* program has been updated in all 25 middle school sites, including additional software, student books and diagnostic reports for differentiated instruction.

Our elementary literacy review was conducted in October by a three-member external review team. The review team stated that they were impressed by the commitment, energy, and professional knowledge of district staff. They concluded that the literacy curriculum in JCPS is well understood by teachers and is delivered with considerable confidence and enthusiasm. They suggested that even though our literacy curriculum is high-functioning, we should consider specific areas and changes in methodology in order to extend and maximize the program's quality.

We met with literacy resource teachers, principals, and literacy leaders from every school and developed a plan to address the recommendations in this report. Our plan includes using the 5-Block framework to support the teaching of content (such as science and social studies) in an integrated approach, developing professional learning communities at the building level, restructuring and enhancing the self-select reading block, revamping vocabulary instruction, moving students to deeper levels of comprehension, revising the existing writing curriculum, and designing professional development to support these areas.

As a result of the literacy review, literacy resource teachers, writing cluster leaders, and selected early primary classroom teachers are collaborating to establish end-of-year writing expectations. They are also identifying corresponding benchmark pieces of writing for kindergarten through grade three. A variety of analysis tutorials have been developed to support and promote more accurate evaluation of student writing at the intermediate and middle school grades. Content area specialists and literacy specialists have begun working together to explore strategies for using writing to deepen students' content knowledge. These strategies will help create a

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learning community that understands the value of writing as a process for thinking, as a means of active classroom engagement, and as a way of interacting with the community at large.

An English curriculum for grade eleven has been created, presented and distributed. This curriculum incorporates research-based methods reflecting economic, cultural, and racial diversity, including opportunities for formative assessment and analysis of student work. All units revolve around social justice themes. Literacy staff collaborated with other district staff in planning various initiatives such as the *Facing History* project for freshmen, Project One-to-One (an initiative to use technology to develop writing), and implementation of lesson study around *Everyday Editing* (a project supported by a book study that involves using text to teach students the appropriate use of grammar and mechanics).

This year, literacy resource teachers, literacy leaders, and writing cluster leaders participated in professional development that focused on improving practice in both inquiry and discussion-based learning (e.g., using data analysis to improve learning, lesson study, use of mentor text, Literature Circles, vocabulary instruction, differentiation). The expectation is that school-based professional development will be provided by a content leader and/or resource teacher using information from one or more of these sessions. Literacy resource teachers also participated in a book study of Engaging Readers and Writers with Inquiry, and collaborated with other content specialists and resource teachers to develop a common understanding and framework for how to use inquiry in each subject area. This approach will be modeled and presented to teachers during our summer institute.

During this school year, *Response to Intervention* (RTI) was expanded from 8 schools to 19 schools. *Response to Intervention* is a systemic reform process for increasing literacy achievement, with an emphasis on intervention to prevent or reverse reading failure. Professional development about the process has been provided to all elementary principals, resource teachers (literacy and exceptional child education), and staff at participating schools. Professional development for counselors is taking place this month, and other sessions are slated this summer for teachers and administrators. The RTI process will help schools make better decisions about placement of students in interventions, how to monitor the effectiveness of the interventions, and how to recognize appropriate adjustments when needed.

All three levels continue to support a balanced literacy approach in a multi-tiered structure. Over time, we have reduced the proportion of novice-level readers from 18 percent to 10 percent, and we continue to assess, modify, and revise our processes to improve our programs and support structures. We strive to ensure that optimal literacy instruction for each student is provided by informed, competent teachers. Our goal is to prevent serious language and literacy problems through the provision of increasingly differentiated and intensified instruction, coupled with instructionally relevant assessment.

Strategy 2: Improve Math and Science Instruction

We will strengthen the mathematics and science curriculum to the level of world-class standards through implementation of inquiry-based instruction that engages students' natural curiosity, develops deep understanding of concepts in math and science, and emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving skills that shape high-level thinking by expanding the number of math resource teachers and professional development opportunities to support the implementation of Investigations in Number, Data, and Space, 2nd edition (Investigations 2) at the elementary level, Connected Mathematics 2 (CMP 2) at the middle school level, and Rigorous Instruction through Changed Habits (RICH) math at the high school level. In addition, we will move forward with a thorough selection process for a new high school math program consistent with Investigations 2 and CMP 2 to provide a consistent scope and sequence in math from K through 12.

Sponsor: Pat Todd

Progress Made 2008-09:

JCPS, JCTA and the GE Foundation continued to make progress towards meeting the goal of establishing a common K-12 core curriculum in math and science, supported by high-quality, differentiated professional

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development. The Management Capacity, GE Volunteerism and Evaluation components of the grant are directly tied to our partnership with the local GE Appliance Park. Changes in the business structure at Appliance Park limited our work on these three components. The project managers replaced local GE personnel as liaisons with the GE Foundation, maintaining regular contact and updates regarding our work. Meanwhile, the curricular work in math and science continued at an aggressive pace and with a good deal of success.

In January 2009, we filled the position of Director of Analytical and Applied Sciences, selecting a person who has extensive experience with the inquiry-based math and science programs we are implementing in JCPS. The new director's engineering background with Raytheon, combined with a long affiliation with the National Science Foundation, will be instrumental in helping us develop a coordinated approach to ensure the long-term successful implementation of the new math and science curriculum programs.

Science

District support for K-8 implementation of science modules continued throughout the year. Resource teachers were assigned to schools to provide district and school-based support to classroom science teachers and administrators. Professional development was differentiated to meet the needs of new and experienced teachers. Sessions included introductory implementation of the curriculum, science notebook writing, formative assessment strategies, and analysis of student work. Follow-up sessions throughout the school year continued to build on these topics. The district continues to successfully and efficiently maintain the process of managing and refurbishing the kits of classroom materials through a centralized science module warehouse. Needs for tangible supplies and materials are monitored on a regular basis by the district science team, science-module warehouse personnel, and classroom teachers. Resource teachers work closely with classroom teachers and the district science specialist to refine and revise curriculum pacing.

The efficacy of the K-8 science curricula, now in its third year of implementation, has been positively affected by the work of the elementary and middle school science resource teachers. The school-based professional development and co-teaching that the resource teachers provide has benefited all levels of teaching and student learning. Elementary resource teachers report that, through collaboration, they have guided reluctant teachers to become faithful implementers. Middle school resource teachers and classroom teachers have observed improvement in student science notebook entries, indicating deeper conceptual understanding and ability to write scientific explanations.

The elementary and middle school science resource teachers provide school-based professional development designed to move teachers to higher levels of facilitation of inquiry. This includes coaching individual teachers to assist them with initial implementation of the curriculum, working with experienced teachers to assist them in refining their practices, and providing job-embedded professional development at schools. The current assignment of elementary resource teachers allows all schools to have access to a science resource teacher through scheduled visits. The Gheens Academy leadership team continues to work with elementary schools to optimize the effectiveness of individual science resource teachers at multiple school sites.

The district has established a collaborative relationship with the Lawrence Hall of Science at University of California (UC), Berkeley to improve science module implementation and student learning. A plan has been designed to implement the Full Option Science System (FOSS) Assessing Science Knowledge (ASK) formative assessment cycle in elementary schools. The plan will phase in the ASK cycle in all elementary school science classrooms over five years. A grant proposal has been submitted to the National Science Foundation to fund this project. In preparation, district science teams have participated in several professional development sessions designed to increase their module content knowledge, their understanding of how students and adults learn, and their ability to recognize the effective use of formative assessment.

The first year of the high school science curriculum included new materials and professional development for three courses—Integrated Science 1A, Integrated Science 1B, and Biology. Working in collaboration with the curriculum developers, the district offered professional development sessions that addressed introductory implementation, alignment to the classroom instructional framework, and instructional time management during a seventy-minute trimester class. With regard to tangible classroom supplies (e.g., for conducting observations and experiments), needs analysis and distribution are integrated seamlessly into our current science module

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warehouse refurbishment system and are supported by the high school science resource teachers. Resource teachers completed informal observations in all three courses at several high schools, resulting in follow-up co-teaching sessions with classroom teachers. These co-teaching opportunities allow the high school science resource teachers to gain a teacher's perspective on the implementation of these courses, and lead to ongoing refinement of pacing, materials management, and the provision of professional development.

Feedback from resource teachers, high school classroom teachers, and principals indicates that both teaching and student learning are being affected. Principals report that, for the first time, they are observing all students actively engaged in science. Teachers indicate that the additional time and effort required to implement the inquiry-based curricula are worthwhile because they see their students responding positively. Resource teachers have observed implementation in many classrooms across the district, enabling us to identify next steps. Professional development needs to continue to move both teaching and student learning to higher levels.

Math

The implementation of a new math program—*Investigations in Number, Data, and Space 2*—at the elementary level has shifted the role of the teacher from being the driver of instruction to being the facilitator. With guidance from the teacher, students take responsibility for their learning, which leads to a deeper understanding of the mathematics content and their ability to approach problems. Students demonstrate a new-found comfort in the classroom in sharing and defending their ideas with evidence from their work. Classroom observations, lesson study, and videotaped lessons show clear examples of true student discourse. Focus groups of classroom teachers report students at all levels can access the mathematics of the lessons.

Implementation of *Investigations in Number, Data, and Space 2* has been supported in 76 regular elementary schools with curriculum materials, targeted professional development, refined pacing guides, and dedicated resource teacher assistance. Professional development sessions included a 2½ day summer institute, “just in time” unit follow-up, and technology tools to support the program. Monthly focus groups of elementary teachers provided feedback to the district math team on implementation issues such as pacing, materials management, mastery, and assessment. Professional development planned for 2009-10 reflects the feedback from the focus groups, elementary math resource teachers, and classroom teachers. In addition, professional development on implementation strategies will be provided to all teachers at the four additional elementary schools that have voted to adopt *Investigations in Number, Data, and Space 2* for the coming year.

Implementation of *Connected Mathematics 2* has been supported in all of the comprehensive middle schools with curriculum materials, professional development, pacing guides, and resource teacher assistance. Professional development included “just in time” district sessions facilitated by classroom teachers and resource teachers, as well as sessions facilitated by the curriculum developers at a Users Conference and a Leadership Conference at Michigan State University. Monthly focus group meetings with classroom teachers and teacher leaders continue to shape revisions on pacing, identifying classroom management challenges, and refining assessment practices. A 2009 Middle School Summer Math Institute will offer professional development sessions to address these topics, in addition to technology, implementation, and differentiated instruction.

Data from the first-year implementation of *Connected Mathematics 2* in grades six and seven shows the number of sixth-grade students scoring at the novice level on the Kentucky Core Content Test decreased by one percent, while the number scoring at the distinguished level increased by two percent. In addition, the number of seventh-grade students scoring at the apprentice level decreased by three percent, while the number scoring at the proficient level increased by one percent. Students in eighth grade at all district middle schools began using *Connected Mathematics 2* in the 2008-09 school year. Completing the entire three-year program at the middle school level should produce even greater gains in mathematics.

High school teachers continue to refine their instructional practices in mathematics through participation in *Rigorous Instruction through Changed Habits* (RICH) professional development. RICH professional development is built on the premise that teachers start each lesson with a rigorous problem. Students work on the problem individually, then in groups, before student strategies are shared with the whole group. Throughout the professional development experiences, teachers learn how to recognize high-level tasks and how to maintain academic rigor by assessing and by advancing questions. Video-recorded lesson studies provide ample

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evidence that, when teachers approach problem-solving in the RICH manner, students develop the ability to persevere through the struggle necessary to master rigorous, high-level mathematics. Teachers report that the transition to inquiry-based teaching has led to students being more engaged in their own learning than they were with a more traditional approach to instruction.

Approximately 30 percent of our high school math teachers have participated in RICH. Representatives from this group reviewed inquiry-based high school math programs. Their feedback led to a materials review process to identify one program to be considered for funding through the GE Foundation. The three-month review process included teachers from all high schools and resulted in the recommendation of *College Preparatory Mathematics* (CPM) as a common core curriculum in Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II. All high schools were invited to adopt *College Preparatory Mathematics* and, as of April 16, twenty comprehensive high schools have voted to implement CPM for the 2009-10 school year.

Resource Teachers

The district has developed a leadership structure to support science and mathematics resource teachers. Resource teachers meet weekly to collaborate, discuss best practices, refine content knowledge, and plan for professional development. These sessions are led by the Analytical and Applied Sciences staff with support from experts in the field of brain research, inquiry, and curriculum development. How people learn and how inquiry-based curricula support student learning are constant themes in all professional development. In an effort to ensure that teachers meet the learning needs of all students, collaboration with ECE and ESL resource teachers and specialists is scheduled regularly. Particular focus has been placed on supporting ESL students in an inquiry environment, and this focus has led to collaboration with Dr. Jenny Bay-Williams, a teacher educator from the University of Louisville in the field of mathematics.

In an effort to support elementary teachers as they implement inquiry-based programs, we will offer a 2009 Elementary Summer Conference. Common norms, cross-content definitions of inquiry-based best practices, and cross-content connections have been refined by all content areas and now guide our professional development planning and implementation. Techniques for materials management, cooperative grouping, questioning skills, and formative assessment practices are being highlighted in all content area professional development sessions.

Strategy 3: Apply a Diagnostic Approach to Teaching and Learning

We will improve instruction by fostering a diagnostic approach to teaching and learning and providing professional development in the diagnostic use of assessment tools. We will promote daily classroom practice by teachers and students to examine work and to adjust instruction and interventions in order to accomplish intended instructional outcomes. We will revise the district's assessment landscape to reflect a balanced system that provides formative and summative student performance information to teachers, administrators, and instructional personnel for collegial reflection, collaboration, and the differentiation of instruction.

Sponsor: Bob Rodosky

Progress Made 2008-09:

We have made tremendous strides in applying a diagnostic approach to teaching and learning. We began the school year by revising the district's assessment landscape (a matrix of the tests administered by grade level and subject area). First, we reduced the number of Core Content Assessments (CCA's) administered in reading and mathematics at the elementary level. Second, we completely eliminated our three-times-a-year use of the Predictive Assessment Series (PAS) tests in grades three through ten. Third, a group of teachers working with The Princeton Review developed a beginning-of-the-year diagnostic reading test for grades three through ten. This test was implemented and scored through our Classroom Assessment System and Community Access Dashboard for Education (CASCADE). It gave teachers immediate diagnostic analyses of skills at the item distracter and individual student levels. Replacing the PAS tests with this single diagnostic test saved the district approximately \$500,000. The combination of these three changes in our assessment landscape eliminated unnecessary testing and provided more useful information on individual students' skills, thereby enabling our teachers to make more effective use of classroom time.

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In preparing for the legislative session, we developed a paper that presented our vision of what accountability testing in Kentucky should look like in the future. This paper was shared with the Kentucky Department of Education, the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, the Kentucky School Boards Association, the Kentucky CEO Superintendents Network, and legislators. In addition, we presented testimony on our vision to the Kentucky General Assembly's Senate Education Committee. The paper called for changing the accountability/testing system from a school status model to a student growth model; redesigning the test to be more diagnostic and useful to teachers, principals and curriculum leaders; limiting the amount of time devoted to accountability testing by focusing the system on the NCLB content areas; aligning the alternate assessment more closely with the students' individual education plans; and developing measures that give greater credibility to authentic student performance. After our position was developed, we worked on a legislative agenda that included proposed changes in Kentucky's accountability/testing system as reflected in our vision paper. We collaborated with legislators and other Kentucky education groups to pass Senate Bill 1. The bill calls for less testing, clearer and fewer content standards, more diagnostic information on individual students, and an accountability system based on student growth.

Throughout the school year, we have encouraged the expanded use of data in professional learning communities at the school level. Results from common assessments are being used by groups of teachers to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in delivering instruction. Teachers are helping each other by looking at results and then working collegially and collaboratively to improve each other's practice. A major goal of this collaboration is to raise the challenge level of the work students are asked to do. To make this process more efficient, we revised and upgraded the CASCADE testing/data system to provide more useful reports to teachers, principals, priority manager, and assistant superintendents. We developed new Core Content Assessments for Investigations 2 that incorporated assessment items from the Investigations 2 assessment program. All questions were reviewed by the mathematics staff and resource teachers prior to posting the assessments on the CASCADE system. Work continues on developing true diagnostic assessments reflective of Investigations 2 that will be accessible to teachers through CASCADE for analysis of individual student work and class trends. The CASCADE upgrades also included revising the report metrics so the data correlates better with year-end accountability results.

We are beginning to introduce in our district the concept of assessment for classroom learning strategies. In late April, Rick Stiggins—nationally renowned consultant from Educational Testing Service—will present the strategies to principals, resource teachers, and district leaders. Then, in October, he will offer a half-day presentation for all instructional staff. Assessment for learning calls for the regular use of formative assessment in classrooms. It also requires the involvement of students in developing and applying criteria for judging and taking ownership of their own work. Implementing these strategies will require a significant investment in professional development, deep commitment by staff, and a fundamental shift in our traditional approach to assessment.

Finally, we are beginning a collaborative project with the Joint Committee on Standards for Evaluation, which is composed of representatives from 18 professional organizations at the national level. This project will start in August 2009. Seventh-grade math and science teachers will participate in professional development and ongoing collegial support focused on strategies to effectively implement formative assessment in the classroom. Data from student assessments will be used to determine if the strategies are effective. This benchmarking project builds on the work the district has planned with Rick Stiggins.

Strategy 4: Advance Instruction through Technology

We will strengthen and expand our technology infrastructure and support services to students, parents, staff, and the community by improving instructional tools through research of best practices, by providing technology resources that increase efficiency and effectiveness, and by enhancing communication capabilities through the provision of timely information for decision making. We will assist teachers to become adept at incorporating software and hardware into their classroom practices in ways that increase student engagement and understanding by providing professional development and access to digital resources.

Sponsor: Cary Petersen

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Progress Made 2008-09:

In order to advance instruction through technology, we have undertaken initiatives in four areas: improving our technology infrastructure, expanding the electronic tools available, providing professional development and support necessary to use these tools well, and the development and implementation of user-friendly systems.

Technology Infrastructure

Just prior to the beginning of the 2008-09 school year, we completed the Technology Integration Project (TIP). TIP provided every teacher with a tablet PC, a multimedia projector, and professional development to promote the use of computers for instruction. At the same time, we upgraded 43 schools with over 4,400 computers for students' use. Additionally, we coordinated the attachment of multimedia projectors to classroom ceilings at more than 84 schools. These changes have made the classroom lessons more engaging, and teachers are better prepared to address the needs and interests of twenty-first-century learners.

Electronic Tools

We have improved the district's web site by establishing portal access for parents and students and by improving blogging, wiki, and podcasting capabilities. We have designed models, provided training, and promoted the utilization of blogs, wikis, podcasts, and syndication folders in instruction (using JCPS Media Server and JCPS Online).

In order to judge our district's technological effectiveness at the classroom level, we developed an ongoing model to evaluate the instructional efficacy of new hardware and software. Under this model, new technology products are implemented in a classroom with support and monitoring from an Education Technology Teacher. If positive results are obtained, the technology is expanded to additional classrooms. In situations where the technology is believed to increase student achievement in a specific content area, a formal pilot project is implemented and the Department of Accountability, Research, and Planning conducts a formal evaluation. Within this framework, we can test and refine new technology for the classroom. Establishing the technology magnet at Roosevelt-Perry Elementary School will be one of the first large-scale tests of the new model. This school will generate information that will aid us in providing tools to all schools, particularly those schools that have struggled with meeting all of their goals.

Several pilot projects were initiated with the intent of improving instruction. One of these projects aims to improve students' writing skills by using one-to-one computing and Microsoft Word as classroom tools. Preliminary work began with designing the scope of the project, and identifying the middle and high school teachers who will be involved next year. Another project involves piloting the use of iPod Touch devices and tablet PCs in a math class at Louisville Male High School (the 180-degree classroom) to determine whether this form of technology provides academic benefits.

We continue to expand new learning opportunities, including the addition of physics to College NOW! and an online typing tutor for all elementary and middle school students. We purchased Interactive Video Units to provide videoconferencing capabilities from school to school; between schools and the Cultural Consortium (Walden Theatre, Actors Theatre and the Louisville Zoo); and, in one case, from a school to a private residence to enable a homebound student to participate in classes. The videoconferencing equipment is also used for online book studies and to conduct training. In the fall of 2009, we will pilot Virtual High School (VHS) instruction at Eastern and Atherton, which in turn will make more than 200 advanced and specialized courses available to the students at these two sites.

Professional Development and Support

Last summer, technology-related professional development was provided to over 4,000 teachers through our TIP and Technoversity training sessions. We also provided PD to our Technology Resource Teachers (TRTs) and Education Technology Teachers (ETTs). During the school year, 50 principals participated in TIP for Principals workshops to improve their understanding and oversight of technology use.

User-Friendly Systems

Goal 1: Enhance Effective Teaching

We also expanded access to available electronic tools by establishing the portal to Infinite Campus, JCPS Online, and Career Cruising, thereby facilitating efforts by students, parents, and staff to improve student work. To make these systems easier to operate, we created identical user interfaces for JCPS Online and Career Cruising by employing user information originating from a common source (the district master database), and then synchronizing the staff and student log-ins to these disparate systems.

In addition, we incorporated results from the Computer Applications Skills Assessment (CASA), which is the students' technology test, into Infinite Campus. This step allows us to track the progress of students districtwide in mastering technology skills.

Overall, considerable progress has been made this year in using technology and related resources to help teachers engage students and to extend support services to students, parents, staff, and the community. We will continue to pursue emerging applications of technology to enhance student outcomes and to increase the district's cost effectiveness.

Strategy 5: Strengthen the Early Childhood Instructional Program

We will strengthen and enhance our early childhood program to promote a high-quality learning experience that addresses the whole child. We will support teachers in the effective implementation of Breakthrough to Literacy, promote positive social interactions through Adventures in Peacemaking and Songs of Resilience, and increase staff learning opportunities to effectively implement the inquiry-based math program to prepare the child for successful transition to our district's kindergarten classrooms.

Sponsor: Theresa Jensen

Progress Made 2008-09:

This year, we engaged in several initiatives to better prepare children attending our early childhood programs for success in district elementary classrooms. We supported staff through ongoing professional development in the effective implementation of the nationally recognized social development programs *Adventures in Peacemaking* and *Songs of Resilience*. Aligned with the CARE for Kids initiative and designed by Educators for Social Responsibility, *Adventures in Peacemaking* is a developmental approach to teaching young children effective, nonviolent ways to resolve conflicts. This is a key to promoting the healthy social and emotional development needed for successful transition to kindergarten. *Songs of Resilience* supports social-emotional development of young children by building resiliency skills via music and movement. Children learn these life skills through songs such as, "I Can Do It," "I Keep Working 'til I Figure It Out," and "I Can Count On You." In order to support transition to kindergarten, the *Songs of Resilience* materials and professional development were also provided to interested kindergarten teachers in district elementary schools. This year, most kindergarten teachers are using the program. In both our early childhood and kindergarten classrooms, we are seeing the positive effects of these two programs. Young children are using the programs' strategies to make better choices and develop self-control. This change in classroom culture resulted in a 29% decrease in student referrals for inappropriate behaviors in our early childhood classrooms over the past year. Our recent monitoring visits yielded evidence of responsive classroom climates where students' engagement in their own learning increased, student confrontations decreased, and students' meaningful participation in their classroom and community was enhanced.

This year, we expanded our outreach to families through the Fatherhood Male Initiative, Community Forum, Family Fun Days, and Wee Read Family Literacy Nights. Our goal was to help families make positive connections with their children in the school setting and to extend learning activities into the home. Attendance at these events and parent participation in teacher-family conferences increased 46% over the previous year.

Supported by a grant from the Gheens Foundation, we expanded professional development for early childhood educators in designing and implementing effective instruction in balanced literacy and hands-on inquiry-based mathematics. These programs provide an effective foundation for our elementary literacy program and our Investigations 2 math program. Each month, our early childhood (ECH) resource teachers provide follow-up training, modeling, and co-teaching for staff to ensure that fidelity of program implementation is maintained. Also

Goal 1: Enhance Effective Teaching

this year, we expanded the practice of using formative assessments through student work sampling to clearly understand what students know and are able to do. This diagnostic use of student learning informs our teaching staff and provides a targeted view into each classroom for intentional realignment of instructional practices to meet the varying needs of our youngest learners.

In March 2009, we collaborated with Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to apply for an Early Reading First grant to further support classroom instructional staff in effective literacy development. This multi-year grant targets two objectives: establishing model early childhood classrooms across the district, and improving instructional practice through extensive tiered professional development in oral language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, early reading, and print awareness/writing. If funded, this work will be strategically focused on supporting transitions for young learners to kindergarten, particularly into those schools that are not meeting goals. Grants will be awarded later this year for implementation beginning in the 2009-10 school year.

As we develop, implement, and refine these initiatives, we are making connections for our students to extend their thinking both individually and with others. Our goal is to enable each child to attain higher levels of performance and to meet with success in district elementary schools and beyond.

Goal 2: Enhance Effective Leadership

We will provide a leadership development system that recruits, selects, prepares, supports and retains highly effective principals and leaders. We will equip these leaders with the knowledge and skills to be designers of high-performance schools, characterized by a positive, collaborative culture where quality teaching maximizes student learning, growth, and development.

Strategy 1: Nurture a Professional Culture

We will foster a culture of professional growth by supporting collaborative reflection, dialogue, and team building to enhance student understanding, connection, and meaning. We will support leaders in implementing a standard classroom instructional framework, structuring staff opportunities for reflection on instructional practice, strengthening the administrator and teacher evaluation process, and expanding staff leadership opportunities.

Sponsor: Joe Burks

Progress Made 2008-09:

Our Theory of Action for creating a new professional culture continued to engage leaders in a variety of opportunities for learning through reflection and collaboration. The JCPS “Leadership Competencies and Core Practices for a Great School” guided principals’ growth plans, and structures and protocols for cohorts and cadres of administrators were refined to influence collaborative reflection and collective action. Principals within cohorts/cadres established individual performance goals, and then regularly met to collaboratively reflect on one another’s progress, jointly learn from one another, analyze continuing challenges, and commit to adjusted strategies. In fact, principal cohorts/cadres became “strategic sounding boards” and consultants for one another as they regularly visited other schools, objectively critiquing classroom practice and raising questions about instructional leadership and how to drive the district’s Theory of Action deep into the organization. Schools that were not meeting all their goals received additional support. Each was assigned a Priority School Manager to mentor the principal, collaborate on revision of restructuring plans, and monitor implementation of those plans. The ensuing exchange of ideas and collaborative support throughout the year resulted in collegial accountability and sustained commitment to individual growth goals, and became a vehicle for expanding the collective leadership knowledge base. It also served as a model of collaborative practice as administrators encouraged such practices as lesson study and critical friends groups.

In addition to the common competencies and collaborative accountability for leadership growth, we refined a common Classroom Instructional Framework (CIF) as our blueprint for leveraging instructional change for all grade levels and subject areas. The improved CIF helped to promote the district’s Theory of Action by cultivating a challenging, inquiry-based curriculum delivered within the following lesson components: Establishing Engagement, Fostering Connections, Deepening Understanding, and Making Meaning. All three levels (elementary, middle, and high) found that the CIF influenced the implementation of best practices; encouraged a common instructional language; and set the stage for meaningful, collegial feedback. As a result, administrators and teacher-leaders significantly increased their learning walks into classrooms, their follow-up reflections and conversations about instructional implications, and their commitment to adjust practice and raise the “challenge level” in every classroom every day.

Finally, administrators reviewed and continued to strengthen the employee evaluation process by fostering more effective growth plans; practicing more quality observations; engaging in more in-depth, post-observation conferences; providing specific, targeted, reflective feedback; and crafting more meaningful, written recommendations and challenges for continuous growth. The superintendent personally visited principals’ meetings at each level. He guided the discussions on improving our systems to challenge, develop, and support

Goal 2: Enhance Effective Leadership

staff to “not stop” their desire to grow and improve their effectiveness. In addition, the superintendent modeled these evaluation practices in his evaluation of Cabinet members.

Goal 2: Enhance Effective Leadership

Strategy 2: Enrich the Quality of Leadership

We will improve the quality of leadership exhibited by principals and other administrators through focused leadership development strategies based on the “Leadership Competencies and Core Practices,” and through professional development that emphasizes the use of collaborative strategies to enhance instructional quality and move our district vision forward.

Sponsor: Bill Eckels

Progress Made 2008-09:

Most of last year was devoted to the creation of our district framework for leadership development. This school year, all leadership development programs—as well as all recruitment and hiring practices—have been fully aligned with this framework. This has been our first full year of implementation.

In order to foster coherence and consistency as we enrich leadership development in the district, we refined the “Leadership Competencies and Core Practices for a Great School” (LCCP) and the “Principal Leadership Competency Continuum” (PLCC). We then combined these two items into a document that outlines each individual competency in detail. The LCCP provides the general framework of knowledge a principal must be able to put into practice in order to be successful. The PLCC provides a developmental guide to help aspiring leaders grow into future positions, and to assist current principals in refining their leadership skills. Together, these documents provide district leaders with a guide to support and enrich principal growth and development through professional development in alignment with the JCPS vision. All elementary and middle school principals have been given the opportunity to have their Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) work with Harvard’s WIDE (Wide-Scale Interactive Development for Educators) World online learning system to develop their own leadership competencies and core practices.

The LCCP framework is divided into the four attributes of a great school: Focused People, Focused Purpose, Focused Processes, and Focused Culture. Twelve leadership disciplines are prioritized under these four attributes, and each is defined by a rubric of leadership performance standards. From the 12 leadership disciplines stem Four Core Practices that define the most essential work of the principal, i.e., fostering the teaching and learning behaviors believed to be most promising for our school system. The Four Core Practices are: Building a Community of Learners, Tracking Proficiency, Learning from Student Work, and Improving Teaching. The refinement of the “Developing Focused Culture” section of the PLLC accurately communicates the intended competencies and includes CARE for Kids, ethical behaviors, improved school-to-career opportunities, civic responsibility, and community service opportunities.

The LCCP has been used to plan professional development for aspiring and current principals, assistant principals, counselors, and resource teachers—especially for those schools not meeting their goals. Key applications included the Instructional Leadership Teams’ participation in Harvard’s Wide World online learning during 2008-09, in lesson study groups, and in the planning of high school Freshmen Academies.

Work with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Wallace Foundation to align the LCCP and the Kentucky Cohesive Leadership Continuum in the study of professional learning communities has supported the Aspiring Leader Preparation programs, such as Introduction to School Leadership, Principals for Tomorrow, Counselors for Tomorrow, JCPS Principal Internship, and partnership programs for certification with the University of Louisville, Bellarmine, Indiana University Southeast, and Spalding. All of these institutions include LCCP in their principal preparation programs, using it when co-designing and co-teaching program content. The School Administrative Managers (SAMs) project, which is also part of the Wallace KyCLS grant work, has likewise benefited from the LCCP framework. Ongoing professional development provided to both the SAMs and the SAMs sites’ principals has been aligned to the LCCP and the Four Core Practices as well, providing even more enrichment to support the role and responsibilities of the school principal.

The JCPS Principal Screening Process is now totally online. The principal selection process—including recruitment, screening, and assessment—is aligned with LCCP and PLCC. By aligning the screening process to the LCCP framework and using an online format, newly hired district principals will have a clear understanding of the JCPS leadership vision, professional development, and support expected for leading successful schools.

Goal 2: Enhance Effective Leadership

Thus, by aligning all preparation programs for aspiring principals, all professional development for current principals, and the principal screening process with the “Leadership Competencies and Core Practices for a Great School,” the training presented by different district providers will serve as a lever to enrich the quality of leadership and raise student achievement.

Strategy 3: Enhance the Leadership Capacity of Instructional Leadership Teams

We will support principals and Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs), as they build communities of practice within a collaborative school culture where all learners succeed, by expanding the Harvard WIDE World: Teaching for Understanding program to all district principals and ILTs. We will assist principals and ILTs to design, implement, and monitor strategic action plans with measurable goals—plans that align school and classroom culture, curriculum, instruction, assessment, resources and professional development.

Sponsor: Bill Eckels

Progress Made 2008-09:

All planners and providers of professional development for school leaders and district administrators have been trained in how to align their Effective Instructional Leadership professional development with the LCCP. JCPS leadership training can be approved under Kentucky’s Effective Instructional Leadership Act (EILA) only if the session references the LCCP. All JCPS administrators who attended the annual Administrators Retreat became more knowledgeable about the LCCP, thus providing support to the goals of the Network Assistance Team/Vertical Alignment Network (NAT/VAN). As the next step of this systematic approach, the LCCP is currently being aligned with the certified employee evaluation program.

The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) component of the Wallace Kentucky Cohesive Leadership System grant provides professional development through the Harvard WIDE World: Teaching for Understanding program. This program has been offered as support for instructional leadership teams at all school levels—but especially for those schools not meeting all of their goals—in order to assist principals and assistant principals in leading their ILTs to leverage instructional change/effectiveness in their communities of practice.

The lesson-study approach, which is congruent with the LCCP and supported through WIDE World, has been implemented to improve collaborative dialogue around analyzing student work and teacher practice. Harvard WIDE World is an instructor-led, coach-supported, online and on-site professional development program developed at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The program is designed to work with school systems to help large numbers of educators understand how to apply proven research on effective teaching in their own classrooms. The program provides pathways for school leaders, teacher leaders, and coaches to learn collaborative teamwork and lesson-study strategies and then apply them to new or existing lesson plans. Educators from around the world participate in the online environment to provide insight and feedback to teams. ILTs enrolled in WIDE World this year hail from Bates, Engelhard, Frayser, Hawthorne, Kerrick, Atkinson, Dunn, Lowe, Minors Lane and Okolona Elementary schools, Crosby and Lassiter Middle schools, and Doss and Valley High schools. The principal interns led the ILTs of their respective schools in WIDE World activities during the first semester of their internship. As a result of these wide-ranging efforts, we believe that we are well on our way to improving student achievement by enhancing the leadership capacity of Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs).

Strategy 4: Improve the Quality of Aspiring Leadership Development

We will prepare aspiring leaders to be designers and implementers of high-performance schools by focusing on cultural leadership, instructional leadership, and managerial experiences. We will prepare aspiring leaders to engage in collaborative strategies that create diverse, caring, and culturally-responsive school communities by including CARE for Kids and Responsive Classroom components in their preparation module. We will strengthen programs that foster a leadership team reflective of diverse cultures by including a cultural responsiveness preparation module that will examine community service-learning opportunities.

Goal 2: Enhance Effective Leadership

Sponsor: Bill Eckels

Progress Made 2008-09:

The “Leadership Competencies and Core Practices for a Great School” constitute the framework for developing aspiring school leaders. To this basic foundation, other professional development modules are added, addressing such areas as cultural responsiveness strategies, the provision of embedded PD, ethical leadership, instructional leadership, employee relations, CARE for Kids, and budget development.

Use of the aforementioned document to coordinate and lead the planning of professional development for aspiring principals, assistant principals, and counselors—with an emphasis on those schools that are not meeting their goals—includes attending the Kentucky Leadership Academy, participating in the Kentucky Instructional Leadership Team Network program (KILT), and development of leadership skills while serving as interns to successful principals for one year. Because many of the JCPS school-based and district administrators rise through the ranks within our own district, we are able to assist these aspiring administrators in developing the skills they will need to be successful leaders.

Prior to this year, the screening process was based on best practices as demonstrated via simulations, role play, and written responses. Now, the recruitment of principal candidates is aligned with the LCCP through the use of intensive online screening and valid scoring practice. Because the process is completed entirely online, including the candidate’s responses to video scenarios, the process is more user-friendly and eliminates the need to come to the VanHoose Education Center at a set time. The revised scoring procedure yields better inter-rater reliability and the candidate competes only against himself/herself.

We continue to refine all development programs for aspiring leaders and ILTs, basing our work on the Theory of Action. A specific area of focus for next year will be embedding the rationale and process for student service-learning opportunities.

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

We will foster an organizational culture that builds community among families, businesses, organizations, and schools. We will stimulate the creation of caring, respectful, and culturally-responsive classroom communities that empower all students and employees to be successful and to have a voice and opportunities to practice leadership and civic engagement.

Strategy 1: Strengthen School Culture and the Character Development of Students

*We will strengthen school culture, advance character development, and promote the social and emotional growth of students by creating inclusive, caring school communities that nurture respectful, supportive relationships among students, educators, support staff, and parents. We will embed opportunities for character development in the daily life of the school by implementing *Adventures in Peacemaking* in our pre-kindergarten classrooms; *CARE for Kids* in our elementary and middle schools; and *Freshman Academies* and *Facing History and Ourselves* in our high schools.*

Sponsor: Lue Peabody

Progress Made 2008-09:

This year we made significant strides in launching and/or strengthening the implementation of several programs designed to enhance school culture and student character. We implemented *Adventures in Peacemaking* in all our pre-kindergarten classrooms. Twenty-eight elementary schools and almost all sixth-grade teachers have implemented CARE for Kids. Freshman Academies have been established in six of our high schools and a new high school course, *Exploring Civics: Facing History and Ourselves*, is being taught in 21 high schools. To support quality implementation of these programs, 475 district support staff, 650 early childhood staff, 1566 elementary school staff, 771 middle school staff, and over 95 high school staff have participated in professional development and received curriculum materials and ongoing follow-up support. Preliminary data around referrals, attendance, and teacher surveys indicate that we are transforming our schools. Given the magnitude of our district, this is a remarkable accomplishment—one that has required a great deal of planning and organizational support.

Ongoing professional development and classroom support were planned and are being provided for the implementation of CARE for Kids by early childhood teachers, resource teachers, and the staffs of 28 elementary schools and 25 middle schools. Five after-school follow-up sessions were provided at each participating school during the 2008-09 school year. Five one-day professional development sessions were presented for elementary leadership teams and middle school CARE for Kids leaders. In addition, consultants and resource teachers provide monthly walk-throughs and consult with school staff on implementation issues.

Information was sent to schools in January 2009 about participating in the CARE for Kids initiative next year and in professional development this summer. An additional 27 elementary schools have been approved to participate, while the number of middle schools that are participating as school-wide programs has increased from two to seven. Seventeen more middle schools have teams of teachers from all grade levels participating in *Developmental Designs for Middle Schools 1* (DDMS 1) this summer. In addition, we have a one-day professional development session planned for all teachers of grades six through eight who could not participate in the DDMS 1 week-long professional development. Of our twenty-four middle school principals, nineteen have already participated in the DDMS 1 professional development and five are scheduled for this summer. Professional development being offered this summer by all content areas is incorporating CARE for Kids principles and practices into the sessions.

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

Feedback on CARE for Kids implementation has been collected at all sessions from program leaders, teachers, and principals. Formal walk-throughs are currently being conducted. This information—along with results from the Comprehensive School Survey, suspension data, referrals, attendance data (student and teacher), and 2009 KCCT results—will be analyzed to determine level of implementation, effectiveness of the program components, and any changes or adjustments that need to be made.

The CARE for Kids and DDMS 1 initiatives constitute our major programs for character development at the elementary and middle school levels. However, we are also working to strengthen school culture across the remaining grade levels. *Adventures in Peacemaking*—a nationally-recognized, developmental approach to teaching young children effective and nonviolent ways to resolve conflict—is being implemented in all early childhood classrooms. We have seen a 29 percent decrease in student referrals for inappropriate behaviors because young children are using the program’s strategies to make better choices and to develop self-control. Our high schools are implementing Freshman Academies, an approach that establishes smaller learning communities and fosters collaborative relationships among adults and students. Through a high school course, *Exploring Civics: Facing History and Ourselves*, students are learning the dangers of being indifferent and the value of civility, which in turn is promoting civic engagement and critical/creative thinking in classrooms. In addition, as part of this program, students are engaged in individual or group service-learning projects that demonstrate the students’ commitment to making a difference in their community. All of these research-based programs support not only the intellectual growth of our students but also their social, emotional, ethical, and civic learning. JCPS remains committed to graduating students who are prepared to assume roles as responsible and civic-minded members of the world community.

Strategy 2: Enhance Cultural Competency

We will promote a district culture in which individual differences are respected and valued by offering professional development that supports and enhances the staff’s cultural competency and world view. We will provide opportunities for students to learn in heterogeneous groups, and to study about people from backgrounds representing the cultural spectrum, by means of student cultural exchanges, both in person and electronically. We will work to close the engagement gap and the empowerment gap through CARE for Kids/Developmental Design activities, personalized instruction, and classroom support for teachers in the use of culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy.

Sponsor: Bernard Minnis

Progress Made 2008-09:

To strengthen the district’s commitment to diversity, and to prepare for the expanded definitions and concepts of culture and diversity necessitated by the United States Supreme Court’s 2007 decision and the resulting new Student Assignment Plan, the superintendent re-established the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Poverty Programs in 2007-08. Led by an assistant superintendent, the department’s responsibilities are to coordinate the district’s achievement gap initiatives, assist with dropout prevention efforts, examine data related to minority students and disproportionality issues, and make recommendations to address them.

To tackle the achievement gap, the department and the JCPS Title I Office collaborated with the University of Louisville (UofL) to conduct the National Conference on the Black Family in America. The theme of the conference was the “Achievement Gap in the Black Community.” National experts in the field of the achievement gap spoke to the conference participants. The superintendent presented at the opening community workshop, becoming the first JCPS superintendent in the 36-year history of the conference to address it. Staff from JCPS, as well as Title I parents, attended the three-day event. The department is collaborating with the Department of Accountability, Research, and Planning in data collection and analysis to identify schools with large gaps, as well as schools that are “gap closers.” A white paper will be developed to elucidate the scope of the problem and make recommendations. Meanwhile, collaborating with the JCPS Title I Office and the Louisville Urban League, the department will continue its Street Academy pilot project to reduce the achievement gap by serving inner-city, low-income males in grades four through six.

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

Professional development was designed to assist staff in acquiring knowledge about culture and diversity. During the 2008-09 school year, we presented or coordinated 247 professional development sessions in the areas of school climate and culture, diversity, and cultural competence. A total of 7,588 employees participated in these workshops, of whom 1,713 were classified employees and 5,875 were certified.

Four cultural competence sessions were incorporated into the district's new-employee induction training, reaching 364 new teachers and 46 new classified employees. In 2008-09, we focused on preparing teachers to change how they view students and their cultures. To support the success of this effort, the department implemented two Cultural Competence Institutes. The intent of these institutes was to infuse concepts about cultural competence into the CARE for Kids initiative training, and thereby to help teachers work effectively and successfully with students who come from diverse backgrounds. The first Cultural Competence Institute, in the fall of 2008, targeted specific schools and was attended by 44 certified and 5 classified employees. The participating schools conducted self-study audits in cultural competence. The second Cultural Competence Institute targeted district resource teachers and attracted 129 attendees. Professional development on cultural competence was also provided to members of the superintendent's Cabinet.

We developed a collaborative relationship with Sister Cities of Louisville in order to promote opportunities for students to learn in heterogeneous groups, and to study about people from international communities by means of student cultural exchanges—both in person and electronically—with our sister cities around the world. A Memorandum of Agreement between JCPS and the Metropolitan Directorate of Education, Tamale, Northern Region of Ghana was approved by the Board of Education in June 2008. A Memorandum of Agreement between JCPS and the Jiujiang, China Education Bureau will be completed by the close of the 2008-09 school year. The goal of these agreements is to develop links among administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community organizations to foster “people-to-people” contacts that support and enhance administrators’, teachers’, and students’ cultural competence and world view.

We continue to collaborate with community organizations such as the Kentucky African-American History Center; Crane House; Jewish Community Federation of Louisville; Council of Islamic Organizations of Kentucky; Muhammad Ali Center; Muhammad Ali Institute for Peace and Justice at the University of Louisville; the Jefferson County Race, Community and Child Welfare Advisory Board; and the National Black Family Conference in America to provide multicultural programs and performances for JCPS staff and students. A seven-year partnership continues with the Repertory Company from the UofL Department of Theatre, a group that performs cultural plays in JCPS schools.

We provided diversity/multicultural and global education resources for schools through the JCPS Multicultural Connection website. In collaboration with the JCPS Center for Environmental Education, the department publishes *Global Connections: Staying in Touch with Culture and Environment*, a monthly online newsletter. This collaboration has also developed “Open-Air Marketplaces around the World,” an exhibit and teaching unit available online. Professional development is available, including a guided tour of a photographic exhibit and a review of teachers’ guides.

In an effort to “grow-our-own” culturally competent teachers, the district has fostered several initiatives. One approach has been to recruit minority students to teaching, as well as to encourage non-minority students to attend Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). A \$20,000 (per recipient) college scholarship program continues to encourage students to pursue teaching careers. The initiative is funded through the JCPS employees’ fundraiser to benefit the United Negro College Fund. Over \$50,000 was raised during the 2008-09 school year.

The superintendent recently added the new position of Special Assistant to the Superintendent to focus on the development and strengthening of linkages between JCPS and the broader African-American and minority communities. The Department of Diversity, Equity and Poverty Programs will work closely with this new office, charting a forceful course of collaboration that ensures the district's internal and external initiatives move in tandem on behalf of diversity.

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

Strategy 3: Provide Leadership Opportunities for Students

We will develop and enhance students' leadership skills by engaging them in developmentally appropriate and personally relevant activities such as service learning, peer mediation, conflict resolution, civic participation, and cocurricular/extracurricular activities.

Sponsor: Sandy Ledford

Progress Made 2008-09:

We again experienced an increase in student participation in extracurricular and cocurricular activities. For the second consecutive year, the largest growth was at the middle school level with increased participation in baseball, softball, cross country, volleyball, flag football, and track. High school participation also made gains again this year. To promote greater participation, we developed several community partnerships, including those with Bellarmine University, University of Louisville, Shively Sporting Goods, Republic Bank, Chick-Fil-A and Class Act Federal Credit Union. Our emphasis continues to be to provide opportunities for all students to participate. An added stress on a "no-cut" policy, whenever possible, helped us increase overall participation.

There are two new 21st Century Schools at the elementary level, Shelby and Semple, along with continuing participation by Western Middle, Thomas Jefferson Middle, and Okolona Elementary. This excellent initiative provides programming after school for students of all ages. Sites serve both the students in the school and in the surrounding community. This program has varying offerings from school to school in the areas of academics, athletics, and clubs.

Throughout the year, our district-level leaders for counseling and for the Family Resource/Youth Services Centers focused on enhancing leadership opportunities for students. In the fall, counselors were surveyed to determine the level of implementation of student leadership programs, including the existence of student councils. District leaders also shared with Instructional Leadership Teams and school staff the importance of student leadership and the superintendent's vision for it. Two books, *Student Council Advisor Handbook* and *American Student Council Association Great Ideas for Student Activities, 2nd Edition*, were given to elementary and middle school counselors to assist them in establishing viable student councils. Focus groups were held with pre-K through high school students to obtain student input on how they view leadership and what they think it should look like in their schools. The results of these focus groups are currently being compiled and prepared for sharing. Additionally, the middle school office surveyed principals to determine the level of student leadership involvement at each middle school. These results, along with the input from the student focus groups, will be used to guide our future work in the area of student leadership. More elementary and middle schools than ever before have established student councils, and several of these councils are serving as their schools' leaders for service-learning projects.

At the high school level, we continued to meet regularly with the superintendent's student advisory group. One student from each high school was selected, and each had to be an officer of an organization or of a grade level (an elected position). We sought student voice on how we could strengthen college readiness for each of our high school students. Our students arrived at four primary conclusions. First, starting with ninth grade, high schools should provide a continuum of opportunities and experiences to educate and guide students about college expectations and requirements. Second, each student needs increased preparation and support for taking college entrance exams. Third, students need regular time throughout high school to meet with an advisor for guidance and support. Finally, students need a lower student-counselor ratio and should keep the same counselor throughout high school. In our final meeting of the 2008-09 school year, the student representatives will collaborate on how and to whom they will present these ideas and their rationale, in order to move from theory to action.

In order to promote service learning, the Volunteer Talent Center identified community agencies that offer service-learning projects for individual students or student groups, organized around grade level and academic focus, and developed a format to use in listing the agencies. A directory, entitled "Service-Learning Opportunities: A Guide to Local Agencies," has been developed and will be distributed during the summer to all department chairs and school counselors. Also, arrangements are being made to create a website with access

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

to community site project listings. The directory will be updated on a regular basis as revisions and additions are made.

Students in grades four and seven continued to participate in Junior Achievement's Enterprise Center activities, attending either Biz Town or Finance Park. The attendance figures for this year will not be available until the end of the school year. However, based on preliminary estimates, nearly 100 percent of seventh graders and about 90 percent of fourth graders participated this year.

Beginning in August 2008, we implemented CARE for Kids at 28 elementary and 24 middle schools. Class meetings and Circle of Power and Respect (CPR) are major components of CARE for Kids this year. Therefore, most of the professional development provided to teachers and administrators focused on the program's philosophy, as well as the activities associated with the class meetings and CPR.

Next year, the opportunities for student leadership will expand in a new direction as we begin field testing the first phase of our emerging elementary social studies curriculum. Each grade level of the planned *One Community, One Nation* curriculum will include an opportunity for student leadership and civic engagement. A culminating assessment will involve students in a project that demonstrates their understanding of the importance of diversity and participation to "make a difference." For example, in the third-grade curriculum, which will be piloted in several schools in the fall, a "Make a Difference" fair will be held in which each school will develop and display educational materials demonstrating the responsibilities and rights that community organizations have to make a positive difference in the community. Through a partnership with Metro United Way, students will learn first-hand the importance of collaborating with local organizations to identify community needs, volunteer to make a positive difference in the community, and promote the common good. The feedback we receive from this experience will assist us in formulating additional student leadership opportunities for other grade-level components of the new social studies curriculum.

Strategy 4: Strengthen Family Participation/Involvement

We will improve family involvement and parent education by expanding Parent University, implementing the parent component of CARE for Kids, extending outreach into the communities where our families reside, and offering parent involvement activities via PTAs, FRYSCs, and community partners.

Sponsor: Marty Bell

Progress Made 2008-09:

The district's parent involvement committee provided a number of opportunities to expand parent involvement activities. A parent involvement training tape was developed for use by principals, teachers, and PTA officers to promote additional parent activities in the schools.

Two parent-friendly training presentations were developed and provided to elementary principals in the summer and fall of 2008. The first session, entitled "The Cornerstone Project: Successful School Experiences," was presented at the elementary principals' meeting and also sent electronically to all principals to use with their staff. The second session, "Parent-Teacher Conferences: Let's Talk Success," was distributed electronically to principals just prior to the district's first parent-teacher conference day. In addition, a parent involvement training session was offered to the "Principals for Tomorrow" cadre.

The JCPS Parent Involvement Group worked with the Louisville Urban League and the 15th District PTA to provide a Parent Leadership Academy, open to all parents, but specifically targeting parents from the following schools: Wheatley, Foster, Byck, Coleridge-Taylor, Maupin, Portland, Atkinson, Roosevelt-Perry, King, Western Middle, Western High, and Shawnee. The Family Resource Centers of targeted schools promoted and recruited parents to participate. The Urban League Summit kicked off the Parent Leadership Academy with the National PTA's CEO as the keynote speaker. The Parent Leadership Academy was a series of parent workshops conducted on six consecutive Saturdays at the Louisville Urban League. Presentations included The Power of First Impressions; Establishing and Building Positive School Relations; Report Card Reading; Preparing for Parent-Teacher Conferences; Understanding ECE and Special Needs; JCPS School Choice; Organizing the

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PTA; What is SBDM and Why Should I Care?; Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) Test Taking; The Parent Portal; Partnering with Family Resource/Youth Services Centers, Neighborhood Place, and Community Schools; and It Takes a Village. Fifty-two parents attended these sessions.

A district math specialist presented information regarding the *Investigations 2* math program to the Community-Based Organizations Network (CBO's). Participants received resource and website information to support this math program, including homework and daily practice. JCPS supplies Community-Based Organizations with written math tips that support the agencies in their work with students and to share with the students' parents.

A variety of programming and events have been offered to students and their parents through the Community Schools Programs, the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grant program, and the Childcare Enrichment Program (CEP). Examples of these activities include working in a community garden, parent/child art classes, health and fitness classes, and financial workshops for families.

The Parent Portal for JCPS has been designed and field tested. Parent Portal combines two state software programs—Infinite Campus and Career Cruising—with JCPS Online, and is accessible via our district homepage. The site is now in full implementation stage and is being accessed by parents. Thus far, 12,000 parents have signed up to use the Parent Portal. We expect this number to increase next year as local schools and district publications continue to promote its availability and demonstrate its advantages.

Two Parent University sessions were held with 550 parents attending the sessions. These workshops targeted parents of students in grades four through eight, and some presentations were also aimed at the students themselves.

Measures of parent support and involvement in the district include the number of parent-teacher conferences, the number of members in the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and parents' responses to the district's Comprehensive School Survey. During the 2008-09 school year, local school/district staff held 142,443 parent-teacher conferences. The 15th District PTA has 56,360 members and maintained a membership in all JCPS schools. On the Comprehensive School Survey, 89 percent of parents responding to the survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "My school provides a caring and supportive environment for parents."

Title V hosted 21 parent workshops for over 1,778 parents, and the 15th District PTA conducted three districtwide events for over 1,000 parents. More than 170 parents were trained to serve on SBDM Councils. Over 900 parents served in leadership roles in local PTA's. Family Resource/Youth Services Centers, Title I parent involvement programs, and schools hosted over 2,841 parent involvement events this year. JCPS Adult Education conducted classes for 2,308 parents, of whom 744 were parents of ESL students. More than 200 families participated in the Adult Education Family Education Program. The JCPS Homeless Education Assistance Program assisted 7,900 students and their families. The ECE Department conducted the Parents as Partners Conference for parents of students with disabilities. Over 64,000 families received services through Neighborhood Place, and more than 5,178 children were clothed through the PTA Clothing Assistance Program. Neighborhood Place is being honored as one of the 16 finalists for the "Innovations in Government Award" conferred by Harvard University. We mailed nine issues of *Parent Connection* to the home of every JCPS parent. The JCPS website parent page provides a variety of parent support programs, including a resource site for ECE parents.

Strategy 5: Offer Highly Attractive Schools

We will enhance the community's perceptions of our school district as the best choice for all students in grades Pre-K through 12 by informing parents and the community of the district's new programs. We will ensure that every school is highly attractive and provides academic rigor in personalized learning environments by implementing CARE for Kids and I Am JCPS programs. We will pursue community and business support for the magnet programs that are part of the new student assignment plan, and for the School-to-Career Task Force recommendations, to ensure that these programs are attractive and effective.

Sponsor: Marty Bell

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

Progress Made 2008-09:

To promote our district and district programs, the superintendent is active and visible in the community. The superintendent made presentations to community groups such as Leadership Louisville, the Jefferson County legislative delegation, business associations, Rotary clubs, community-based organizations, *The Courier-Journal* Editorial Board, etc. The superintendent made 48 presentations to organizations. Over 280 press releases were provided to the media. The print coverage in local, state, and national media has been 86 percent positive or neutral toward the school system.

The telecast program *Inside JCPS* features the superintendent discussing educational issues with local and national guests. Shows were produced and broadcast on Metro TV and KET. *Our Kids* was produced monthly throughout the calendar year to highlight students' success and what they are learning in the classroom. The program also featured stories by student reporters and aired on Metro TV, KET, Insight 2, and LouNet/WMYO. Web news feature stories were posted each week of the calendar year, showcasing student, staff, and district achievements at the state and national levels, as well as video clips of student and school activities from the *Our Kids* television program.

To add to the attractiveness of high school programming, six new dual-credit articulation agreements were added to the 92 continuation agreements already in place. These agreements cover a total of 19,532 students.

To enhance our system's customer-friendly approach to our patrons, over 900 employees participated in the "I am JCPS" customer-service professional development program. Star Performer Awards were presented to 182 employees for exceptional customer service. The "secret shopper" program was also initiated to improve customer service. Forty schools have received the highest possible "five-star" rating.

According to the results of our recent parent survey, the proportion of our parents who report they regularly receive information about JCPS programs and services stands at 89 percent. In addition, 90 percent of our parents are very satisfied with the school their child attends. In measuring the public's view of our district as being the best choice for K-12 education, we are extremely pleased to report that this year our market share increased to 82.1 percent, a significant 2 percent increase over last year.

All 22 of the new elementary magnet schools developed promotional materials. The district ran 750 television ads during school enrollment periods. The superintendent's Vocational/School-to-Career Task Force completed its study of vocational education and presented a report that includes ten recommendations. The report was adopted by the Board of Education. The recommendations of the task force report are now being implemented. Five new specialist positions to oversee implementation of the five career themes have been approved by the Board. The first design team, Engineering, has been appointed and has started meeting. The design team is advising on the program of studies to be offered at Iroquois, Jeffersontown, and Shawnee high schools, which are the schools that will focus on the theme of engineering. We believe that the task force recommendations will significantly improve the attractiveness of all our high schools.

Strategy 6: Engage the Community

We will expand opportunities for individuals, businesses and organizations to volunteer, tutor, mentor, fund, and support our schools and district through such initiatives as Every 1 Reads, Add it up—Math+Science for All, the nurses in the schools project, job shadowing, and school-business partnerships.

Sponsor: Marty Bell

Progress Made 2008-09:

The **Every 1 Reads** Program has significantly increased community awareness and involvement in the schools, garnering support from individuals not previously supportive of our district. **Every 1 Reads** has trained and placed in excess of 10,750 volunteers. The **Every 1 Reads** sustainability plan was prepared and is being adopted by the partner agencies under the name **Every 1 Reads More**. A goal was established to retain 4,000

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volunteers from one year to the next. This year, 4,630 volunteers continued their service to JCPS, surpassing our goal by 13 percent.

The **Every 1 Reads** Community Engagement Committee continues to meet monthly, finding ways to recruit, support, and lend assistance to community agencies participating in **Every 1 Reads**. Currently 53 of 65 after-school programs have been endorsed as **Every 1 Reads** sites, with 27 of these also being KidTrax sites where we work with the community to monitor students' after-school participation in relation to school performance.

We are expanding opportunities for businesses to partner with our schools and are providing more opportunities for volunteers and mentors. Business and community organizations were involved this school year in a large number of supportive and beneficial partnerships (exact number to be available in May 2009). Mercer Company implemented an online tutoring/mentoring program. A total of 10,971 new volunteers were registered by the district this year. There are over 78,000 total volunteers registered to volunteer in JCPS.

During 2008, the district was awarded \$84,167,294 in grants and awards to support district priorities. In addition, from July 1, 2008, to March 25, 2009, a total of 36 competitive grant applications were submitted on behalf of the district to fund priorities. In October 2008, in partnership with the Jefferson County Public Education Foundation (JCPEF), the district purchased a five-year license for "FoundationSearch," which provides immediate notices when new foundations are formed in Kentucky. This tool should greatly enhance identification of funding opportunities to support district priorities.

The JCPEF has submitted 174 proposals raising \$766,964 thus far this year. The Casey Foundation is expanding its support of Wheatley Elementary, which is also one of the sites in our elementary redesign pilot program. The Casey initiative, Making Connections/Focus Schools, will provide a summer readiness program for 60 incoming kindergartners, plus a summer reading camp for rising second graders. The Foundation is providing Wheatley with this financial assistance to ensure children are reading on grade level by third grade and to help improve student attendance.

More than two dozen proposals have been submitted seeking support for our nurses in schools initiative. Some funding has been received, but decisions on most of the requests are still pending.

The district actively assisted the University of Louisville with its Signature Partnership Initiative. One of the partnership's goals is to enhance the quality of life for residents in West Louisville by improving their educational attainment. UofL is working in five of our schools to help reach this goal. Currently, Shawnee High, Central High, Western Middle, Atkinson Elementary, and Portland Elementary schools all have programs tied to the Signature Partnership Initiative.

In April, we added the position of Special Assistant to the Superintendent as another avenue for building strong business and community partnerships with the West Louisville community. This new role will be responsible for advising the superintendent about effective ways to communicate with the businesses, non-profit organizations, and faith-based groups in Louisville's core city. The Special Assistant will also aid in marketing to and engaging those populations that are under-represented in terms of involvement in our schools.

Strategy 7: Address Disparities in Student Outcomes

We will collaboratively employ multiple strategies—such as effective interventions, differentiated instruction, Response to Intervention, self-advocacy instruction, Thinking Reader, and increased student involvement in extracurricular activities—to help students become intrinsically motivated and take ownership of their learning. We will reinforce these efforts with high expectations and personalized instruction to assist students in becoming actively engaged members of their school communities, thereby leading to increased attendance, reduction of suspensions and retentions, prevention of dropouts, and closing of achievement gaps.

Sponsor: Sharon Davis

Progress Made 2008-09:

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

The administrative leadership team continues to believe that when students are engaged in learning and social activities, higher levels of learning occur. Targeted strategies remain in place to address social and academic disparities. Many efforts were targeted towards raising student engagement, motivating at-risk students, and promoting a sense of their being a part of the school culture.

Mentorship is a strategy that promotes the success of students who struggle socially or academically. The **Every 1 Reads** (E1R) program secures volunteers to read with students and encourage their literacy development. The Career Academies also utilize mentors to promote social and academic development. Adult volunteers meet with students at all levels to read, talk, listen, provide encouragement and share experiences.

Data was analyzed and programming efforts examined at each level to address achievement gaps in literacy, math, and science. E1R continues to be successful, applying a tiered approach to literacy instruction for grades K-8. An external review of the elementary literacy programs was conducted, including data analysis, staff interviews, and classroom observations. A plan has been put in place to focus more on writing and to include science and social studies text as content. In the high schools, *Ramp-Up* and *Corrective Reading* continue to yield positive results for struggling readers. The Research Department provides the reading specialists and resource teachers with formative data to be used for continuous program improvement.

The adoption of *Investigations in Number, Data and Space, 2nd edition (Investigations 2)* as a core mathematics program in the elementary schools was a comprehensive and extensive effort. Training was provided in the summer of 2008 and throughout 2008-09 to support implementation. Professional development sessions and conversations with teachers included topics focused on engaging learners, language strategies for ESL students, and strategies for supporting students with disabilities. The implementation of *Connected Mathematics 2 (CMP2)* at the middle school level continued, and new programs are being adopted for high school. *SuccessMaker* continues to be an integral intervention for students who lack prerequisite skills in math. Each of the programs includes inquiry-based techniques and differentiated instructional strategies that have proven effective in engaging all students.

The district is in the initial stages of introducing the concept of *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)*, which incorporates multiple strategies in presenting information, allowing a variety of ways to demonstrate understanding, and motivational strategies to engage learners. UDL puts support methods in place during the design/planning stage to ensure that the needs of all learners are considered prior to instruction, rather than waiting to see which students did not “learn” the content and then reacting to that shortfall. This pre-emptive approach is key to ensuring that struggling students experience initial success.

A UDL Steering Committee, composed of district staff and members of the University of Louisville faculty, has been established and is exploring the current resources in place within JCPS that address the theory of UDL. An example is *Thinking Reader*, which is being used at the middle school level to support struggling readers. The district was fortunate to have the founder of the *Center for Applied Special Technologies (CAST)* provide an overview of UDL to selected staff. CAST is a leading national group in the field of UDL. The district will continue to promote UDL’s research-based concepts to ensure that all staff members become cognizant of ways to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Another initiative that is designed to meet the needs of all learners is *Response to Intervention (RTI)*. Under this approach, when data reveals a concern, support is provided quickly to students before the gaps in learning increase. RTI was expanded at the elementary level. There are now seventeen elementary schools piloting RTI in reading, and resources have been shared with all schools. The district brought in a national RTI expert who shared information with elementary principals and other staff. Preliminary data indicated a 50 percent reduction in the number of students being referred to special education in the eight original implementation schools. Further data analysis revealed that students were making progress while in interventions when fidelity of implementation was maintained. RTI will be expanded to include middle and high schools under the guidance of the assistant superintendents, who are working to develop a timeline for expansion. Pilot schools will be identified and professional development will be offered at these levels, as at the elementary level. Areas of implementation will grow to include math, writing, and behavior, in addition to reading.

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

Interventions will be monitored via the RTI process by using a promising new component built into the Classroom Assessment System and Community Access Dashboard for Education (CASCADE). This component is designed to provide feedback on student progress. CASCADE data can be used to monitor the fidelity of program implementation and help us determine if certain programs need additional support. The data can also be used to determine the effectiveness of each program in improving a student's reading performance.

CASCADE continues to be an integral component of the monitoring of student performance across the district by allowing for the analysis of diagnostic, formative, and summative data at the district, school, classroom, and student levels. CASCADE also includes a tool to allow users to view targeted at-risk populations, such as students in special education, English Language Learners, and those who receive free/reduced-price meals. There were over 86,500 students with data in CASCADE being accessed by all schools during the 2008-09 school year. Support was provided to schools from district resource teachers and other staff in utilizing CASCADE for the purpose of addressing the instructional needs of students, particularly those who struggle to reach proficiency.

The district's leadership team recognizes that the key to addressing disparities and meeting the needs of all students is having a well trained, highly skilled teacher in every classroom. Intentional efforts were put in place to ensure that cross-departmental collaboration occurred when planning professional development sessions for teachers. Content resource teachers and specialists worked closely with ECE/ESL staff to provide information to teachers, plan presentations, share resources, and assist in implementing strategies for struggling students. Special professional development sessions were offered in math, science and literacy focused on the needs of special populations. Many sessions were led by classroom teachers who have demonstrated their effectiveness. The understanding and implementation of best practices around inquiry-based learning were also covered in depth at a variety of sessions across content areas.

Support is offered to all schools; however, sometimes specific schools are in need of specialized assistance. An example of this type of individualized support occurs at the middle school level. Each Title I middle school that did not meet its NCLB goals was assigned a priority school manager to mentor and support the principal, as well as a coaching team to provide ongoing support to the faculty toward the attainment of instructional goals. Each of these schools completed a self-assessment process and subsequently developed a school restructuring plan that guided their work.

The administration also continues to believe that it is imperative to provide all students with social development instruction, including service-learning activities. The *CARE for Kids* initiative was implemented during 2008-09. Ongoing support was provided to schools via resource teachers and other district staff to ensure high levels of implementation. The impact of this implementation is being monitored in part by analyzing non-cognitive data. An example is the in-depth analysis of suspension rates that was conducted by the departments of Student Relations and Safety, ECE, and Research, Accountability, and Planning. Suspensions were monitored and disaggregated to look for patterns of success and to reveal areas of concern. For example, the number of ECE students suspended more than ten school days decreased by more than 20 students compared with the previous year. This data is used by the assistant superintendents in professional development and in discussions at individual schools.

Research indicates that students who are engaged in extracurricular activities at school achieve at higher levels and have much lower rates of suspension. The middle schools expanded the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities by providing financial support for athletic directors, organizing activities, and generating interest with additional special events. As a group, the middle school principals have crafted a *Middle School Proposal for Activities and Athletics*. The purpose of the proposal is to expand opportunities for student involvement at the middle school level. One major goal stated in the proposal is to place all activities/athletics under one JCPS umbrella and to expand the actual number of activities available to middle school students. All of these efforts will continue for the 2009-10 school year.

Struggling high school students who are not engaged with their schools are at risk of dropping out. Since the precipitating factor for most dropouts can be traced to academic issues in the ninth grade, 11 priority high schools used a rubric to refine their Freshman Academy structure. The Freshman Academies were supported

Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture

and sustained by organizing them into a cohort to align their designs, collaborate on best practices, and monitor progress on reducing retentions and increasing attendance. The research department is analyzing data to determine the most effective practices in these 11 schools. Standardization of these practices across all high schools will eventually increase the four-year graduation rate. Early results show significant improvements at every school, and a final report will be developed at the end of the school year.

Since the trimester schedule allows time for remediation, enrichment, and the development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each student, six high schools piloted a weekly advisory period for students. This pilot will help the district better understand how to increase opportunities for high school students to connect with adult mentors for the promotion of student connection, meaning, and social development. It will also promote the establishment of advisory structures that increase personalization and matriculation toward graduation, along with a significant increase in college access, especially for underrepresented groups of students.

District personnel collaborated with over 400 governmental, business, civic, community and faith-based organization leaders, as well as the national America's Promise Alliance organization, to conduct a Graduate Greater Louisville High School Dropout Solutions Summit. As a result, several recommendations were included in legislative proposals, such as the recommendation to raise the compulsory school attendance age to 18.

Excellent progress was made during the 2008-09 school year in addressing the social and academic needs of students in order to reduce the disparities that exist for some JCPS students. JCPS staff will continue to emphasize at all levels that social and academic disparities can and will be reduced. This will happen as our dedicated staff and volunteers help to motivate children, offer choice, and embrace the unique learning styles of all students across our district.

Goal 4: Improve Organizational Effectiveness

We will improve organizational effectiveness by aligning district resources (i.e., human, fiscal, time, physical space) in ways that bring coherence and clarity to our efforts to improve instruction and school culture, particularly for schools not meeting all of their goals.

Strategy 1: Promote Student Diversity across the District

We will implement the elementary student assignment plan approved by the Board of Education to enhance diversity, support student success, improve instructional quality, and provide family choice within a system that supports stability, predictability, and equity. We will redesign the middle and high school student assignment plans based upon the Board-adopted Guiding Principles for Student Assignment.

Sponsor: Pat Todd

Progress Made 2008-09:

Since the adoption of the new student assignment plan on May 28, 2008, district staff members, working under the direction of the superintendent, have worked diligently to develop the components provided for in the plan. The elementary components are scheduled to be implemented for the 2009-10 school year, and therefore received the initial attention of district staff.

Work began first on the development of a new elementary application form and application process. The new elementary application form provides parents an opportunity to make four choices among the cluster schools. The previous application provided parents with only two choices. The new application organizes the cluster schools according to their location in Geography Area A or Geography Area B. The previous application did not organize schools by head-of-cluster schools vs. schools that are not head-of-cluster. The new application provides specific directions to parents regarding the order of their four choices by ranking them one through four, with two choices in Geography Area A and two choices in Geography Area B. The previous application provided minimal guidance to parents. The new application is clearly more supportive (than was the previous application) of the Board of Education's commitment to diversity and to the diversity guideline provided in the new student assignment plan. This guideline stipulates that schools, with the exception of special schools and alternative schools, shall have an enrollment of no less than 15 percent and no more than 50 percent of students who reside in Geography Area A.

Numerous parent information sessions were facilitated by district staff to educate and orient parents about the new student assignment plan, process, and procedures. Topics that were highlighted during these sessions included a description of the vision of the plan, an overview of the new six contiguous clusters, a listing of schools by Geography Area A and Geography Area B and by cluster groupings, information about the new elementary magnet schools and programs, and directions for completing the new elementary application. There were also opportunities for comments and questions.

Special parent information sessions were implemented for non-English-speaking parents. These sessions were conducted in Spanish, or with translation to other languages, and were facilitated at the Showcase of Schools. Guided tours of the Showcase were also provided, along with translators to interpret for parents and for school staff. Parent reference materials, including the district's *Choices!* book and directions for the application process, were translated into Spanish. District staff members who work with non-English-speaking parents were provided with an overview of the student assignment plan, the new cluster arrangements, the new application process, and magnet school/magnet program offerings so that they could assist non English-speaking parents.

Goal 4: Improve Organizational Effectiveness

Over four thousand letters were mailed to parents of students who are currently enrolled in the first through fourth grades and potentially would be impacted by the realignment of the clusters. The letter informed parents about the new cluster groupings, the application process, and the timeline for the application process. It also informed parents of the opportunity to “grandfather” at the student’s current school or to apply for schools in the new cluster grouping. The vast majority of parents chose to “grandfather” at the current school.

Additionally, one thousand letters were mailed to parents of kindergarten students affected by the cluster realignment. The letter informed parents about the new student assignment plan, the new cluster groupings, the application process, and the timeline for the application process. Information about the new magnet schools and magnet programs was also provided. Most important, parents learned of the impact of the new process on the assignment of their child for the 2009-10 school year. Phone numbers and contact names at the Parent Assistance Center and information about postings regarding the student assignment plan on the district web site were also provided to parents, so they could easily obtain more personal assistance or guidance.

Elementary principals and school office staff met in the new cluster groupings. The focus of these meetings was to familiarize principals and school office staff with the new cluster schools and magnet programs. The cluster meetings prepared principals and school office staff to communicate with parents about the student assignment plan and to assist them in successfully completing the new elementary application. Working with district staff, the new cluster teams completed the assignment of elementary students using the provisions in the new student assignment plan that was adopted in May 2008.

The new student assignment plan created two elementary magnet schools at Lincoln Elementary School and Whitney Young Elementary School, plus eighteen new elementary programs, as well as three elementary redesign schools and five schools offering small class size for students. Design teams were convened shortly after the new student assignment plan was adopted. Each design team consists of the principal of the magnet school or the magnet program school, selected school staff, appropriate district staff, and community representatives. Each design team also has a facilitator who supports as well as guides the planning process for development of the magnet theme. Design teams have planned curriculum, instructional activities, enrichment experiences, and student/class schedules to support the implementation of each magnet theme. Design teams have also identified community consultants or resources to support the magnet themes. Human and financial resources have been identified and provided to the design teams in order to strengthen the first-year implementation of the magnet schools and magnet programs.

The existing elementary magnet schools and magnet programs have also been reviewed. Many of the existing magnet programs have been provided with resources to revitalize the programs and to ensure their attractiveness to parents in the new cluster groupings and choice process.

Recommendations for middle and high school student assignment were first proposed to the Board of Education on March 23, 2009. District staff completed an extensive review of data to determine the most equitable assignment of students that would ensure diversity and that would support the provisions of the newly adopted student assignment plan.

The result of the data review and the planning process was to divide the county into three regions. Each region is equitably balanced by the number of students who reside in Geography Area A, students who reside in Geography Area B, and students who have qualified for free or reduced-price meals. Additionally, to the extent possible, each region aligns the middle and high schools in a feeder pattern. This configuration will support successful transition of students from middle school to high school. It will also support shared curriculum planning and professional development between middle and high school teachers who share a common cohort of students in the feeder pattern.

In order to provide for an equitable balance of students from Geography Area A and Geography Area B, each school’s contiguous and non-contiguous boundary area was reviewed. This review resulted in several adjustments of the contiguous boundaries. Additionally, the non-contiguous (satellite) boundaries were consolidated to form cohesive neighborhood areas. The consolidation of the non-contiguous boundaries will facilitate increased student participation in cocurricular activities that occur after regular school hours. The new

Goal 4: Improve Organizational Effectiveness

arrangement will also support better parent-school communication and parent involvement. Finally, this arrangement will promote coordination of social services and extended learning opportunities for targeted student populations and neighborhood areas.

Two new magnet schools were also recommended. Western Middle School was recommended to become a districtwide performing arts magnet middle school. Shawnee High School was recommended to become a districtwide magnet school for kindergarten through twelfth grade, with high school magnet programs that focus on aviation, aeronautical engineering, and energy engineering.

In order to gain parent and community feedback regarding middle and high school boundary adjustments and the creation of two new magnet schools, we conducted seven community information sessions. The seven sessions were strategically located across the three regions and the county. Each session was organized to provide an overview of the proposed regions, the alignment of middle and high schools within each region, and an explanation of each boundary adjustment. Opportunities were provided for comments and questions. District staff took the feedback from these sessions seriously. One proposed boundary adjustment at the middle school level was changed as a result of the feedback.

District staff has researched strategies for assigning students to Louisville Male High School and Butler Traditional High School. The current policy permits all students who are enrolled at the traditional middle schools to select the traditional high school that they will attend. In order to manage the enrollment at the two traditional high schools more effectively, a recommendation will be submitted for consideration by the Board of Education. The recommendation proposes that only those students who gain assignment to the elementary traditional schools would be automatically assigned to Male or Butler traditional high schools. Students who are assigned to the traditional schools at the middle school level would have to apply to the traditional high schools. Their names would be placed on the random draw list with other new applicants to the traditional high schools. Assignment to the traditional high schools would be based upon space and the diversity guideline. If approved by the Board of Education, this policy would go into effect for the students who are assigned to the traditional middle schools for the 2010-11 school year.

The 2007 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court presented our district with a significant challenge. Yet, as a result of our efforts to reaffirm the value of integrated schools, we have been able to craft a new student assignment plan that will uphold and even expand our community's strong commitment to diversity, while enhancing opportunities for learning and achievement. We take deep pride in the nearly two years of work that have brought us to this point, and in the quality of the plan that, we believe, will carry our community forward in the realms of both education and social understanding.

Strategy 2: Drive Curricular Reform

We will ensure that the district has the capacity to embrace curricular and instructional innovation, while maintaining a consistent scope and sequence that meets or exceeds the Kentucky Program of Studies, by providing strong curricular leaders at the Gheens Academy who work with curriculum-based resource teachers to strengthen curriculum and instruction in our schools. We will provide strong leadership in implementing inquiry-based curriculum and challenging and personalized instruction through implementing collaborative, embedded professional development, such as lesson study.

Sponsor: Pat Todd

Progress Made 2008-09:

Prior to the 2008-09 school year, district support staff from Gheens Academy consisted of instructional coaches assigned to specific schools. These coaches primarily supported literacy instruction at the elementary level. Beginning in 2008-09, the organizational structure was revamped to provide a more balanced and equitable approach that supports math, science, literacy, social studies, and student development in all schools K-12. The instructional coaches transitioned to become content-specific resource teachers, organized so that all elementary and middle schools have consistent access to instructional and curricular support.

Goal 4: Improve Organizational Effectiveness

The new resource teachers from Gheens Academy received initial professional development to assist with their work in schools. This work focused on content development specific to the programs used to support their area of specialty. A preliminary study has been initiated of this change process and its effectiveness in working with adult learners. Resource teachers participated in several sessions exploring pieces of the coaching process. A partnership with the University of Louisville has been established to provide training for all resource teachers in the Cognitive Coaching program. In exchange, the university will conduct research on the effectiveness of coaching in building capacity for leadership in schools.

Resource teachers have begun training in the facilitation of lesson study. Lesson study is a professional development model that focuses on enabling a group of teachers, through a research lesson, to learn pedagogical strategies that apply across content areas. As a learning community, teachers collaborate on one lesson to identify what evidence of student learning to collect. In addition, teachers identify possible student misconceptions that could occur from the design of the lesson. After teaching the lesson, they collect student evidence, compare the goals to the student outcomes, and revise pedagogical strategies to match intended student outcomes. Throughout 2008-09, resource teachers and selected classroom teachers at the elementary and middle school levels participated in pilot lesson studies. Lesson study meetings took place over two full days and included planning sessions, teaching of a lesson, debriefing and, in some cases, re-teaching. During these sessions, a video-conferencing system enabled participants to be involved in the classroom without disturbing the organic nature of a lesson. Protocols were established for looking at student work and debriefing the lesson, so that teachers could focus their reflection using evidence from students to inform practice.

Professional development to support implementation of the elementary and middle school math programs has been provided at each grade level by unit. Sessions were facilitated by district resource teachers and by consultants from Pearson Education. These sessions were made available via embedded PD throughout the school day, in addition to evening time slots. Teachers had the opportunity to study key components of concept development, workshop activities, and assessments that support their teaching. In addition, some school faculties have engaged in grade-level planning facilitated by district and school-based resource teachers.

The K-12 inquiry-based science curriculum programs have been supported during the summer, as well as throughout the school year. Introductory implementation sessions for each K-8 science module were provided for new teachers and for teachers who switched grade levels. Professional development for experienced K-8 teachers emphasized using science notebooks and effective formative assessment strategies. Because this was the first year for the new high school curricula, all professional development focused on introductory implementation of the programs, including pacing in the 70-minute trimester classroom. All science resource teachers worked with classroom teachers to improve materials management, implementation of the curriculum, and integration of effective inquiry strategies.

The 2008-09 school year marked the fourth year of the JCPS/JCTA collaboration with the GE Foundation. During this time span, the district developed and adopted a vision for teaching mathematics and science with an inquiry approach; identified and adopted common mathematics and science core curricula at the elementary, middle and high school levels; and moved towards developing professional learning communities, using lesson study as an entry point for engaging school-level staff. The implementation of new mathematics and science curricula has affected math and science instruction in a profound way. Trend data in elementary science shows the total number of students scoring at the proficient/distinguished levels increased by six percent overall, with a five percent gain among African-American students and those on free/reduced-price meals. Results in middle school science from the initial implementation year through 2008 show an eight percent increase overall in students scoring at the proficient/distinguished levels, including increases of six percent by African-American students and seven percent by those receiving meal subsidies. The math curriculum implementation began in 2007-08 for middle schools and in 2008-09 for elementary schools. We expect that improvements in mathematics test scores will soon mirror those that have occurred in science.

Moving teachers from stand-and-deliver teaching to the facilitation of learning is a multi-year commitment dependent on cutting-edge professional development that builds capacity at the school level. This rigorous approach to instruction has challenged the teachers as well as the students. Learning new inquiry-based curriculum and embracing new pedagogy means that teachers must work with colleagues and district resource

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teachers to ensure that rigorous instruction occurs. However, we see that change in teaching and learning is occurring at all levels. Teachers report students are more independent thinkers, more willing to struggle to find an answer, and beginning to make cross-curricular connections. Student discourse, where students communicate beyond simple answers to teacher questions, is becoming the norm and not an exception. In focus groups, teachers report that students “like” math and science more, now that instruction goes beyond paper and pencil exercises. During lesson study sessions, teachers noted that students were able to connect complex ideas from one unit to the next. Students retained core understandings longer than they did in their former instructional settings. While cooperative grouping and learning is an area district staff and teachers must continue to refine, teachers report that having students work together to find solutions leads to deeper understanding. Teachers use multiple formative and summative assessments from the newly adopted curricula to refine instructional practices. An intentional focus on formative assessments encourages teachers to differentiate instruction and provide more consistent feedback to students. Student discourse, inquiry-based instruction, and rich problem-solving are key components of our vision for mathematics and science instruction. Our work this year is a vital step towards the district vision for rigorous instruction that engages all students.

Strategy 3: Reduce Class Size

We will identify the resources to progressively reduce class size and provide professional development in differentiation of instruction, initially at the primary and middle school levels, to ensure that students receive the individual attention necessary to improve their academic performance, enhance their sense of connection to adults in the school, and personalize their learning environment.

Sponsors: Cordelia Hardin, Mike Mulheirn

Progress Made 2008-09:

We implemented the restructuring plan for Southern Leadership Academy and Iroquois Middle School during the 2007-08 school year. This plan included limiting class size to a maximum of twenty students. In the spring of 2008, the Memorandum of Agreement was modified to change the class-size structure at these two sites (renamed Olmsted Academy North and Olmsted Academy South) to an average of no more than twenty students per class, beginning in August 2008. An initial evaluation was conducted by the JCPS Department of Planning, Research and Accountability during the 2007-08 school year, and another evaluation is being conducted during 2008-09. The evaluations are focused on tracking the school improvement changes at the two Olmsted Academies, including lower class-size ratio, technology enhancements, expanded professional development opportunities, master teachers, and extra planning time. The primary objective of these formative evaluations is to yield recommendations that support the continued academic achievement of the Olmsted students. The evaluation design includes teacher surveys, principal and priority school manager interviews, student focus groups, and analysis of academic and non-academic outcomes. Some of the findings from the winter 2008 report are as follows:

1. Both schools show positive trends in school climate, professional development, and student relationships.
2. From the interviews and surveys, a range of concerns was voiced related to organizational restructuring and Human Resources. The role of related arts specialists under the redesign is unclear, and the selection process used by the district’s Human Resources Department to slate teacher candidates is not understood.
3. Teacher satisfaction ratings were higher than they were the previous year. The majority of teachers are still relatively inexperienced, but most returned for a second year and reported being glad that they chose to teach at their school. Teachers commented on improvements in culture, often citing CARE for Kids as having a positive impact. Classroom management is still reported as a challenge.
4. Students voiced a desire to have other students behave in ways that support instruction in the classroom, and they want students to show respect for their school.
5. CASCADE scores in reading and math appear to show positive trends, and suspension measures show encouraging trends as well.

Our demographics staff provided a capacity analysis of 20 to 1 at the elementary level, and staff members are finishing this analysis for the middle and high school levels. After developing a Request for Proposals (RFP) and

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inviting schools to apply, we selected Coral Ridge, Engelhard, and Wheatley to serve as pilot sites for the Elementary Redesign Initiative. This initiative provides an average class size of 20 students, a school nurse, and a resource teacher. In addition, extensive summer, after-school, and embedded professional development in differentiating instruction has been provided to the faculty of these schools. These resources support the schools in achieving the Elementary Redesign Vision: "Each student receives the individual attention necessary to improve academic performance in more personalized, caring, learning environments that enhance the sense of connection to their learning, their school community, and the world around them; each staff member is supported within a culture of professional growth that nurtures collegial reflection, dialogue, collaboration, and team building to enhance practice for student success; and, each family member serves as a welcome partner in supporting student learning."

An evaluation of the Elementary Redesign schools began in the autumn of 2008 to determine the impact of the initiative on school climate and culture, instructional practices, parent engagement, and student outcomes. As part of the evaluation, a mid-year faculty survey was conducted at the three Elementary Redesign schools in January 2009. The survey showed that staff perceptions of the Redesign initiative were quite positive. When asked what Redesign components have positively impacted their school, the highest rated components were reduced class size (97%), in-house school nurse (95%), and CARE for Kids (90%). Faculty noted that reduced class size has had a significant and positive impact on getting to know their students better (96%), their ability to give timely feedback on student work (93%), students getting to know each other better (97%), their use of small groups (98%), their ability to differentiate instruction (95%), and the number of students participating in class discussions (90%). Evaluation of the Redesign schools will continue through the pilot phase of the initiative and will include end-of-year staff surveys, walk-through data, focus groups, and analysis of Comprehensive School Survey results from parents, teachers, and students. These Elementary Redesign schools will provide us with the experience and data to extend the initiative to other schools in the future.

To accommodate the 20-to-1 average class size ratio at the elementary level, minor renovations were performed at Wheatley and Coral Ridge Elementary schools to accommodate the school nurse(s). Engelhard Elementary was expanded by adding a media center and four new classrooms. The old media center was converted into additional classrooms, and the three portable classrooms were taken out of service.

Our goal under the new student assignment plan is to include two class-size-reduction schools in each elementary cluster. Class-size reduction would be phased in by adding one teacher to each school each year. We have budgeted ten additional teachers to begin this process in 2009-10.

Our plan is to continue to review and evaluate schools to identify those schools that should be given priority for class-size reduction. Space capacity and funding are two of our initial concerns that must be addressed as we move toward this goal. However, given the budget constraints, we have made significant movement in beginning to reduce class size at the elementary level.

Strategy 4: Redesign the High School Structure

We will provide support to those high schools that choose to transition to the trimester schedule. This redesign includes a common class schedule with time for in-depth learning, as well as smaller learning communities with well articulated, career-interest themes. This new design will promote student connection and meaning, and will offer advisory structures that increase personalization and matriculation toward graduation, especially for underrepresented groups of students.

Sponsor: Joe Burks

Progress Made 2008-09:

In 2008-09, for the first time in years, most high school instructors began to have more quality, collaborative conversations and professional development about their craft. This change resulted from having a common instructional framework and a common class schedule. The common trimester schedule was especially effective in assisting with the new inquiry-based math and science curricula—not only because of the daily, 70-minute period that allowed for more in-depth learning, but also because practitioners across most schools could

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exchange ideas about preparation, pacing, and student learning. This first year of a new class schedule required focused district support. Through regular meetings with a steering committee of representatives from each school, we provided ongoing training and support for schools choosing the trimester, including professional development on teaching for 70 minutes, guidance for scheduling sequences of courses, and logistics for managing transitions to subsequent trimesters. In addition, since the trimester can build in time for remediation, enrichment, and the development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each student—without interfering with instructional time or contract agreements—six schools piloted a weekly advisory period for students. We are learning how to increase opportunities for high school students to connect with adult mentors for the promotion of student connection and meaning, establishment of advisory structures that increase personalization and matriculation toward graduation, and a significant increase in college access, especially for underrepresented groups of students.

Another effective adjustment in high school structure is the evolving Freshman Academy. This year, we developed a rubric to help schools with their planning, and we regularly supported and sustained the academies in 11 of our high schools by organizing them into a cohort to align their designs, collaborate on best practices, and monitor progress on reducing retentions and increasing attendance. The research department is helping us accumulate data and rate the most effective practices, and these 11 schools, along with our findings, will help us eventually standardize this design across all high schools. Early results show significant improvements at every school, and a final report will be developed at the end of the school year.

Finally, we have engaged comprehensive high school principals in drafting possible implementation plans for the bold, new, high school redesign recommendations proposed by the district's School-to-Career Task Force and the Student Assignment Core Team. High schools within each of the three regions selected overarching career themes and corresponding schools of study, and schools with a common theme were guided to refine a collective vision in preparation for the 2010-11 school year. The district hired a coordinator for the engineering-construction theme, and a design team including industry and postsecondary representatives joined the superintendent, principals, and school-to-career staff to map out possible courses, certifications, credentials, and experiences needed for each pre-engineering student to pursue a professional career pathway. Coordinators for the other four career themes should be in place by the end of the 2009-10 school year, enabling us to establish their corresponding design teams and use the engineering design as a model. We visited several schools in other states that are working on similar concepts, and we piloted some of the designs at Doss and Iroquois High schools, since they had received a federal grant to explore the effectiveness of career themes and smaller learning communities. Thus far, in comparison with other states and based on feedback from consultants, our high school redesign plan is literally on the cutting edge. Our career theme design is poised to allow each student to personalize his/her pathway toward a high-skill, high-wage career, take both advanced content and experiential courses within a related school of study, and connect with both adults and peers within a community of continuous support and advocacy. By the beginning of the 2009-10 school year, schools within each theme should have concrete plans for schools of study, initial coursework, professional career pathway designs, and desired credentials/experiences that can be promoted and marketed at the fall 2009 Showcase of Schools.

Strategy 5: Enhance Student and Employee Health and Increase Attendance

We will implement and promote a comprehensive program of school health services and health education by expanding the provision of nursing services within schools, assessing student health risk factors, and appropriately intervening to reduce students' medical barriers to education. Students and staff will be provided access to wellness and health education programs to promote better attendance and health.

Sponsor: Marty Bell

Progress Made 2008-09:

We have implemented the school nurse program in 13 schools. In addition, six nurse practitioners (ARNP) have been placed at six additional schools. The ARNPs will provide health centers in their assigned schools and also serve as clinical supervisors for the Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) at the other schools. A collaborating physician has been recruited to support two of the ARNPs. The Louisville Medical Society is recruiting two

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additional physicians to serve as collaborating physicians for the four remaining ARNPs. The district has submitted a grant proposal for funding to research the effectiveness of the pilot nursing program. Initial evaluation highlights of the pilot program reveal the following: 2,020 immunizations have been reviewed, and 1,713 vision and scoliosis screenings have been completed. There have been 4,142 student well-room visits, with 83 percent of those students returning to class. There have been 38 assists in medical emergencies, 465 phone consultations, 10 reports to Child Protective Services, and 438 teacher/parent class attendees. Attendance data is on track compared with last year's data, and the Elementary Redesign School survey results were very positive.

Three proposals were submitted in October 2008, to request funding for nurses in the schools. No decision has been made on the proposals submitted to Anthem for \$198,680 (nurses) and Norton Healthcare (\$120,000 for nurses or they supply three LPNs). A proposal submitted to Genentech for a total of \$198,797 for equipment for the nursing rooms resulted in \$26,058 of funding to date. No decision has been made regarding the remainder of the request.

Twenty-five additional proposals have been submitted to support the nursing initiative, which includes placing nurses in the schools as well as conducting research about the impact of nurses in schools.

A district Health and Wellness Committee was established to represent various district role groups. After surveying staff needs and interests, we implemented a partnership with Velocity Sports Performance to offer on-site fitness classes at schools and central office locations. A campaign was implemented to raise awareness of JCPS Plus health-related partners. A health and wellness component was added to the districtwide benefits fair. We initiated a partnership with Velocity Sports Performance and Humana to provide regular information and promotions to staff through the *Monday Memo*. Information on resources was given to principals to extend health and wellness opportunities to their staff. Every issue of *Monday Memo* over the course of the year has included health and wellness information. A health and fitness room was established at VanHoose Education Center. We are launching a lunch delivery program to central office locations in partnership with the Nutrition Services Department. A majority of the schools are offering a variety of health activities such as walking clubs, weight loss competitions, and exercise classes on site.

Strategy 6: Enhance the Capacity for Innovation and Instructional Improvement

We will launch the new Gheens Institute for Innovation in order to promote and test new and creative ideas that will strengthen collaborative professional culture, effective instructional practice, and student understanding, meaning, and connection. We will encourage a culture of innovation through district awards for teams of teachers and individuals. We will collaborate in seeking grant opportunities, conducting research and professional development activities, and promoting innovative practices.

Sponsor: Arthur Camins

Progress Made 2008-09:

Over the course of the year, the Gheens Institute for Innovation worked with the Cabinet; Gheens Academy staff; the Department of Human Resources; the Accountability, Research, and Planning Department; the University of Louisville; informal science education partners; and external partners, such as the University of California—all with an eye toward developing and supporting innovation across JCPS.

To honor the past history of the Gheens Academy and set a direction for the future, the Gheens Institute for Innovation was formally announced at a ceremony in October to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Gheens Academy. During the celebration, eight school district and community leaders were recognized as "Pioneer Innovators." We have since launched a process for annually recognizing individuals or teams of individuals in the district who exemplify creativity, leadership and educational excellence.

In our quest to promote inquiry and engagement, one of the early successes of the Gheens Institute was the procurement of a significant three-year grant from the JP Morgan Chase Foundation to develop a new civics-based elementary social studies curriculum to be known as *One Community, One Nation*. The project has a

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budget of over \$500,000, of which the foundation has formally approved the first increment of \$100,000. This is a collaborative endeavor with the Office of Civic Education and Engagement at the University of Louisville, along with numerous community partners. Currently, the UofL staff is working with the new JCPS Director of Cultural Studies to develop detailed lesson plans for grade three to be field tested in the fall of 2009. Presentations about the project have been done for the Board, the community partners and local foundations. *One Community, One Nation* has been enthusiastically received by all these groups and constitutes a significant, innovative approach to the teaching of elementary social studies.

The Gheens Institute collaborated with the newly formed JCPS Office of Analytical and Applied Sciences, curriculum developers at UC Berkeley, and researchers and science educators at UofL to submit a \$5 million proposal to the National Science Foundation. The proposal seeks to strengthen elementary science achievement through the development of leadership capacity, the use of diagnostic/formative assessment, and the development of students' science writing skills. The Institute also facilitated a proposal from the Louisville Science Center to PNC bank which, if funded, will support science education in preschool classrooms at the Dawson Orman Education Center.

We have also been meeting with representatives from UofL (Office of the Provost, College of Arts and Science, and College of Education and Human Development) to develop a \$15 million Math-Science Partnership proposal to the National Science Foundation. Our goal is to improve teacher preparation and development, support the professional development of current staff, accelerate the learning of eighth graders so they are prepared for rigorous high school work, and strengthen the implementation of our new high school science curricula.

To support our new environmental magnets, we have been working closely with the JCPS Office of Environmental Education and other Analytical and Applied Sciences staff; the principals of Cane Run and Portland Elementary schools; and representatives from E.ON US, Louisville Metro Parks, Louisville Zoo, Metropolitan Sewer District, UofL, Design Studio, Louisville Water Company, UC Berkeley, and the Boston School Yard Initiative. Our plan includes the renovation of the schoolyards as outdoor learning spaces, the regular incorporation of environmental learning activities into the science curriculum, and field studies and culminating projects at various informal learning centers across Jefferson County. Other proposals have been submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency to support curriculum development, and to E.ON to underwrite field studies, develop a volunteer corps, and provide materials for the outdoor classrooms.

The Gheens Institute for Innovation collaborated with the JCPS Office of Analytical and Applied Sciences to facilitate several professional development sessions for elementary principals on our elementary mathematics program *Investigations in Number, Data, and Space 2*. Sessions focused on familiarizing principals with the pedagogy of inquiry, and on identifying formative and summative assessment opportunities within the program.

Finally, the Institute initiated a pilot project for a one-to-one computing model to support the writing process in two eighth-grade and two ninth-grade classes during the 2009-10 school year. The Department of Accountability, Research, and Planning is working collaboratively with the one-to-one writing project steering committee to create an evaluation model for the project.

To support the district's goal of promoting equitable access to learning for all students, the Gheens Institute brought to JCPS the leading U.S. innovator for Universal Design for Learning (UDL)—the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST). On March 23, CAST president David Rose conducted several workshops with Cabinet members, principals, resource teachers, and UofL faculty on the principles of UDL and specific support tools. Collaboration with UofL and the JCPS assistant superintendents and offices of ECE, Cultural Studies, and Literacy produced plans for a range of follow-up strategies, including expansion of *Thinking Reader* to more middle schools and piloting *Thinking like an Historian* in high school. We have also submitted a "Teaching American History" proposal to the U.S. Department of Education to support the inclusion of UDL in the initial design of *One Community, One Nation*.

Another district initiative supported by the Gheens Institute is the promotion of caring, culturally-responsive classrooms. In September, the Institute's executive director conducted a workshop with principals, resource

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teachers, and other leaders participating in the CARE for Kids initiative. Entitled *Inquiry and Classroom Culture: Inseparable*, the workshop focused on how the ideas and practices of CARE for Kids could be represented in the context of our inquiry-based mathematics and science curricula. We are now developing a “Letter of Inquiry” to the Spencer Foundation’s Civic Engagement Initiative that would support and research the impact of Freshman Academies and *Facing History and Ourselves* on students’ civic engagement at the high school level.

Yet another role of the Institute is to promote effective teacher preparation, recruitment, induction, and retention. We are supporting a design team from Maupin Elementary, in partnership with Spalding University, as they prepare to launch a new magnet school theme “A School of Possibilities,” and also plan collaborative pre-service and teacher development activities. During spring 2009, design team members collaborated to teach after-school enrichment classes for Maupin students in grades K-5.

Staff from the Gheens Institute for Innovation; Human Resources; and Accountability, Research and Planning participated in two Strategic Management of Human Capital conferences sponsored by the University of Wisconsin’s Consortium for Policy Research in Education. These conferences were invitational gatherings of major urban districts in the United States to explore current research and practices related to recruiting, developing, and retaining top teacher and principal talent in large, urban districts.

The Gheens Institute’s executive director was invited to join the Board of Directors of the University of Louisville Nystrand Center. Several meetings have focused on supporting the Signature Partnership Schools. The executive director also met with a committee of UofL faculty and JCPS Human Resources staff to begin planning for engagement with the high schools that will focus their career themes around human services, education and international studies.

Although the Institute is still in its infancy, significant progress has already been made in introducing innovative concepts in social studies, science, and universal design for learning. In addition, numerous proposals have been submitted that have the potential to extend innovation in the district. The Institute is off to an impressive start and is now poised to validate its promise.

Strategy 7: Enhance Employee Expertise

We will promote higher levels of professional expertise in all areas of the organization, focusing especially on the needs of schools not meeting all of their goals and other priority areas. We will strengthen programs that recruit and support a diverse workforce throughout the district by continuing the Minority Teacher Recruitment Program, scholarship programs for JCPS minority high school graduates, and tuition assistance programs for classified employees, as well as by exploring an alternative certification program for leaders. We will provide a new-teacher induction program that offers professional development in the content areas of literacy, math, science, and social studies and in instructional processes such as CARE for Kids, inquiry-based instruction, and teaching in collaborative school cultures. We will incorporate a major component into our professional development program to prepare principals to work effectively in urban settings and in schools not meeting all of their goals.

Sponsors: Bill Eckels, Pat Todd, Bernard Minnis

Progress Made 2008-09:

We have horizontally aligned the district’s mission of improving instruction and strengthening school culture to all major components of the work of the Human Resources Department (i.e., recruitment, selection, induction, mentoring and retention).

Recruitment

To recruit teachers for 2009-10, the JCPS Human Resources Department focused its efforts on 41 college career fairs scheduled from December 2008 through May 2009. JCPS continues to offer early contracts to outstanding teacher candidates, many in the current, most critical teaching areas. The number of early-hire contracts offered is based upon longitudinal hiring data. We strive to staff the neediest schools first. When schools with the highest needs index exhaust their teacher transfer lists, the neediest schools are the first to interview teachers from the early-hire pool. Our recruitment specialists have worked very closely with principals

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to identify and fill the particular staffing needs of each school with candidates who have demonstrated exemplary character, a strong commitment to diversity, the development of the highest potential in each student, and a command of content and technology.

The JCPS Minority Teacher Recruitment Project (MTRP) has continued its aggressive recruitment of minority teachers and teachers in underrepresented populations. National Delta Sigma Phi representatives are closely monitoring the MTRP to track the district's recruitment and retention results over time in hopes of making it a national model for minority recruitment. JCPS recruiters regularly attend career fairs of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and recently supported the Showcase of HBCUs in Louisville for high school students, at which 15 HBCUs set up booths and distributed information on post-secondary opportunities for minorities. JCPS advertises job opportunities in many minority publications. To date, 17 percent of our teacher recruits this school year are members of minority groups.

JCPS is a national leader in future educator programs at the middle and high school levels. The education academies (Atherton High School and Doss High School MCA) have 69 students enrolled (17 seniors) in 2008-09. The advisory committee that oversees curriculum agreements and work delivered by these academies consists of the following postsecondary partners: Bellarmine University, Indiana University Southeast, Kentucky Community & Technical College System, Kentucky State University, Spalding University, University of Kentucky, and the University of Louisville.

JCPS is the only school district in the state of Kentucky with its own teacher certification program, called ACES (Alternative Certification for Elementary and Secondary). Through grant proposals with university partners, the district is continuing to expand its certification program in the area of natural science. This is an effort to allow teachers who are currently certified in a common science field to add a chemistry or physics certification, thereby addressing district demand in critical areas.

Student teachers placed in JCPS by local universities during 2008-09 were observed personally by a Human Resources staff member or recruiter. This process ensures that the best of the soon-to-be-graduating candidates are targeted early and offered contracts immediately, with the condition of meeting certification requirements. It also fosters positive relations with local university partners.

Selection/Screening

The newly-created JCPS Teacher Disposition Survey measures the teacher candidate's education philosophy and classroom experiences and then compares them against the district's vision and mission. Also, the newly-created JCPS Supervisor Questionnaire (administered to the candidate's most recent supervisor) drills down to the instructional and cultural environment of the candidate to determine the extent of an instructional match with the district's needs and approaches. Both of these screening tools are being used in the selection process.

Induction/Mentoring/Retention

The district's new-teacher induction institute consists of five full days of intensive orientation during the summer, dedicated to familiarizing participants with the district's initiatives. Participants are provided the knowledge and training they need to make the transition from the university to the classroom, as well as from outside Jefferson County to becoming a member of the JCPS team. The institute emphasizes social development, culturally responsive teaching, differentiated instruction, inquiry-based instruction, formative assessment, and data analysis.

In support of new and struggling teachers, the 43 mentors on the Beginning Educators Support Team (BEST) collectively have logged 4580 hours at 60 schools since the beginning of the school year. Almost half of that time was spent in schools that have not met all of their goals. Our expansion efforts in mentoring are a direct result of our findings about the factors that contributed to successful outcomes in 2008-09 (mentors were more knowledgeable, there was a reduction in early resignations, and support began before the first day of school).

All professional development for principals aligns with the LCCP and is provided through monthly meetings by the assistant superintendents. Additional professional development offered to schools not meeting their goals has included Instructional Leadership Team support through the Harvard WIDE World offerings. Additionally,

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presentations to all principals around formative assessments will be presented by Dr. Rick Stiggins in April 2009, with follow-up for all instructional staff through 2010.

The restructuring of Gheens Academy continues to facilitate the alignment of professional development with curriculum and the needs of students. For example, teachers are participating in collaborative units that share best practices coming directly from success in the classroom. In that way, professional development is embedded within the job, as opposed to presented in isolation in workshops. JCPS is committed to the continuing, deliberate, professional growth of every employee at every level.

Strategy 8: Enhance Organizational Effectiveness through Technology

We will enhance organizational effectiveness through improved data management and will increase administrative efficiency by improving technology infrastructure, support systems, and professional development services. We will enhance communication among staff, students, families, and the community through technology innovations that provide timely information in a variety of formats, such as parent portals.

Sponsor: Cary Petersen

Progress Made 2008-09:

We purchased twenty interactive video units that are now being used throughout the district for student instruction and professional activities. These devices are loaned to the schools for classroom instructional purposes and also for professional development of staff members, who use the units to “attend” local or state meetings without incurring travel costs. We are able to provide this videoconferencing capability because of a major improvement to our technology infrastructure that has increased the speed of the JCPS network to a level more than 100 times faster than what we had last year. We have been successful in attaching all but three of our conventional schools to a gigabit high-speed network. The three remaining schools should be completed by the end of April 2009. With these changes, we can improve our capabilities and reduce costs in certain areas. We provide staff with ongoing professional development and support to improve their effectiveness in the use of Microsoft Office and district administrative systems (i.e., Infinite Campus and MUNIS). Through Creating Literacy in Computer Knowledge (CLICK!), we are now offering 60 online training opportunities, including Office 2007 and internet safety, for faculty and staff.

We created a proof-of-concept dashboard, related to student attendance, which is now being refined based on input received during a recent demonstration. Appropriate statistical models are being used to remove anomalies resulting from variance in the quantity of data used in scorecards across different data sets. This process will establish the framework to build other dashboards. However, the anticipated change in attendance calculation will require modifications to the underlying data that feeds the scorecard. We are formulating plans to incorporate mainframe payroll and personnel historical data into the data warehouse, which should assist in creating dashboards relating to financial information. Once MUNIS is implemented, the data warehouse team will start working on incorporating the MUNIS data into the warehouse.

To reduce redundant data entry by staff, we have established a framework that allows application and security systems to work together. A product has been identified that will meet our needs, and we will be working with the vendor to provide assistance with implementation this summer.

With greater numbers of students and teachers using technology more than ever before, we are evaluating a method to provide sustainable technology funding. We have been working with several vendors to determine if leasing or purchasing will be the more cost-effective method to acquire the equipment we need. We have proposed to the vendors a method of leasing that would result in a cost that is less than the cost of outright purchase. At least two vendors are considering the proposal. We are also evaluating the possibility of replacement of computers, rather than maintenance, for those situations where this approach would reduce the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) by JCPS.

Another cost we are trying to reduce is the replacement of servers across the district. By means of consolidation, we have trimmed by half the total number of servers in the district. Now, with our increased

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network speed, we are looking at virtualization to improve the efficiency and availability of servers. Virtualization is a simulation process that allows one server to function as multiple servers. The district currently has more than 400 physical servers. Indications are that we can reduce servers by a factor of 20:1 through conversion to virtual status. With the reduction of individual physical servers, we could decrease our cost of acquisition, maintenance, and operation of equipment, while providing improved throughput for information growth.

Strategy 9: Redesign the Early Childhood Program

We will strengthen and enhance the Early Childhood Program by working with our new director to build a professional culture and professional practice through structured times for each unit to develop collaborative strategies embracing the Early Childhood vision. We will review and refine the organizational chart to enhance service to our stakeholders by clearly articulating roles and responsibilities. We will refine our operational systems to provide more effective and efficient systems for recruitment, enrollment, placement, and transportation of students through a better use of technological tools, such as School Finder.

Sponsor: Theresa Jensen

Progress Made 2008-09:

This year we selected a new director for Early Childhood (ECH) whose first priority was to build positive and supportive relationships with all stakeholder groups. The director accomplished this by visiting classrooms prior to the opening of schools, listening to staff as they set up the learning environments, establishing a principal work team to discuss ideas and hear concerns, and meeting with parents to answer questions and address concerns. This information-gathering generated the following actions:

- Established six additional registration sites throughout the community for student enrollment.
- Extended registration hours to include evenings and weekend satellite registration in neighborhood and community centers.
- Provided more timely feedback to parents, teachers, and principals regarding placement in classrooms and transportation route information.
- Reviewed and revised professional development and the use of resource teachers to enhance support for improved classroom instruction.

These changes resulted in an increase of 300 families attending the Early Childhood School Kick-Off; an increase of over 850 children from August through December 2008 served in JCPS Early Childhood programs; and an increase of **Every 1 Reads** volunteers in early childhood classrooms.

In December 2008, we streamlined the recruitment, enrollment and placement system by clearly delineating a process, timeline, tracking procedure, and monitoring practices to eliminate duplication of efforts and loss of paperwork. Using this system, we have re-enrolled into our four-year-old classes all three-year-olds currently attending the early childhood program. We are now in the process of using this system to efficiently identify and enroll new students into our three- and four-year-old classes for the 2009-10 school year.

In January 2009, we embarked on an extensive refinement of our collaborative venture with MIS to develop an automated transportation information system to address the concerns that parents raised last fall. This system, School Finder, has been designed so that once an ECH staff member enters the child's home address into the computer; the system projects the school, program, and bus assignment. We are currently working with personnel in Transportation to align the ECH placements with the district's new cluster plan for elementary schools.

In March 2009, a further refinement of the early childhood organizational charts and job descriptions was approved by the Policy Council and the Jefferson County Board of Education. This refinement will remove duplication and overlap, and clearly articulate roles and responsibilities, while streamlining services to children and families. Professional support, monitoring, and follow-through will be easier to provide and track to ensure that needs are met. Streamlining the system will allow us to reduce costs to the district, thus supporting the Board's budgetary agenda.

Goal 4: Improve Organizational Effectiveness

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