

IX.D.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION Hartford

TO BE PROPOSED:

May 13, 2020

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Pulaski Middle School in New Britain for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's May 13, 2020, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

Approved by a vote of _____ this thirteenth day of May, Two Thousand Twenty.

Signed: _____
Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Commissioner of Education

DATE: May 13, 2020

SUBJECT: Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: Pulaski Middle School,
New Britain

Executive Summary

Introduction

Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) establishes the Commissioner's Network to provide new resources and flexibilities to improve student achievement in a subset of the state's lowest-performing schools. The Network represents a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to empower teachers and leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner to participate in the Network for a period of three years with the potential for a 1 or 2 one-year extension beyond the initial 3 years. Network schools remain part of their local school districts; the districts and the CSDE secure school-level autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability.

Successful school turnaround requires flexible policy conditions and targeted investments in high-yield reform strategies. There is a demonstrated need for support, financial and otherwise, to fully implement the Turnaround Plan for Pulaski Middle School (PMS) located in New Britain, CT. This will require efforts at the state and local levels to secure conditions that are conducive to scalable and sustainable reform.

Background

On April 5, 2019, the CSDE received an *Expression of Interest Form* from the Consolidated School District of New Britain (CSDNB) volunteering PMS for participation in the Network. On May 23, 2019, the Commissioner initially selected PMS for possible participation in the Network based on the following factors: (a) the district's expression of interest; and (b) the academic and developmental needs of the school's students and the capacity of the district to address those needs. The school was approved for one year of planning and funding to develop a turnaround plan. Following initial selection, PMS and the New Britain Federation of Teachers appointed members to serve on the school's Turnaround Committee, and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on October 10, 2019. The Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for PMS in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h (d).

Turnaround Plan for Pulaski Middle School

PMS, identified as a Turnaround School based on the Accountability Index under the Next Generation Accountability System, serves 864 students in Grades 6 through 8. Approximately 89 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Approximately 21 percent of the students are identified as needing special education services; 21 percent are English learners (ELs); 66 percent of the students are Hispanic; and 10 percent are Black.

The goal of the PMS Turnaround Plan is to enhance teaching and learning through a student-centered approach. This model emphasizes personalization, high expectations, hands-on learning experiences, teaching of 21st century skills, and opportunities for educators to reflect on their practices. By capitalizing on a student-centered approach PMS aims to transition students from dependent to independent learners, empower teachers to become culturally responsive educators, while addressing the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, and cultural backgrounds of students.

The Turnaround Plan includes investments in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations to ensure PMS maximizes student outcomes and teacher development. These investments support the transformation into a personalized academic environment where positive relationships between students and teachers are developed and reinforced through instruction that is challenging, relevant, collaborative, student directed and connected to real life situations. PMS recognizes the impact educator preparation has on student learning and the core talent strategies concentrate on effective instruction through student-centered professional learning opportunities, implementation of a culturally relevant curriculum based on the New Britain Profile of a Graduate, development of teacher capacity, and instructional rounds and data collection.

The following strategic components in the domains of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations speak to the transformative potential of the PMS Turnaround Plan. Specifically, the school, in collaboration with the CSDNB, will:

Talent:

- Through partnering with EdAdvance, increase effective professional learning opportunities for district and school leaders, instructional coaches and staff to improve learning in a student-centered environment. Implementation will include:
 - professional learning focused on student-centered learning on topics such as An Introduction to Student-Centered Learning, Creating a Student-Centered Learning Culture, Creating an Environment to Support Student-Centered Learning, and an Introduction to a Balanced Instruction Approach;
 - identifying the problem of practice based on student-centered and learning; and
 - conducting walkthroughs, instructional rounds, and teacher observations based on student-centered learning;
- Developing teacher capacity to implement the EdAdvance developed curriculum with fidelity through the support of instructional coaches who will model lessons, co-plan, co-teach, provide guided instruction, observations, and feedback; and

- Implementing walkthroughs and instructional rounds to collect evidence of student-centered classrooms and to calibrate, assess, evaluate and plan based on findings.

Academics:

- EdAdvance and PMS staff will write, design, and support the implementation of a culturally relevant and rigorous curriculum for English language arts, math and social studies that include units that are:
 - aligned to the current content standards, including the Connecticut Core Standards, Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks, and Connecticut English Language Proficiency Standards;
 - designed to meet the needs of the diverse learners with culturally relevant content, embedded support for Social Emotional Learning, English Learners, and differentiated instructional strategies and resources;
- Provide ongoing professional learning for differentiation to support various student needs and utilizing formative assessment to drive instruction;
- Establish a data culture through structured time to compare data including student attendance, benchmark assessment data and behavioral data in order to inform and differentiate instruction on a regular basis; and
- Create a comprehensive tiered intervention system with processes, procedures and protocols for Tier I, II, and III interventions.

Culture and Climate:

- Design a school-wide behavior intervention system that is based on a progressive and restorative approach to enable teachers to motivate all students and provide them with a support system of trusting adults;
- Strengthen implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) by creating a PBIS committee that will lead efforts to reboot the PBIS system, looking toward fidelity and intensity of implementation;
- Provide professional learning in trauma informed teaching practices and restorative practices for all staff;
- Implement student-centered activities and opportunities for family and community engagement; and
- Develop community partnerships to support future and career pathways.

Operations:

- Restructure the school schedule to maximize instruction and provide interventions; and
- Focus budgetary priorities based on PMS's needs and on sustainability of reforms.

The CSDE shall make a final determination regarding the allocation of funds, following the Turnaround Plan's approval by the State Board of Education. The Turnaround Office will collaborate with district leadership and the Turnaround Committee to prioritize expenditures identified through the planning process.

Through this budgeting process, PMS will work to evaluate and repurpose existing funding streams (e.g., local, state, federal, and grants) to support Network reform efforts and foster long-term sustainability. Funding for PMS is contingent upon the availability of funds and will be based on the transformative potential of the Turnaround Plan, as well as the size of the school.

PMS will benefit from increased flexibility and additional resources in exchange for heightened accountability. Over the course of the school's participation in the Network, the Commissioner and/or CSDE Turnaround Office will review: (a) school progress relative to implementation of the Turnaround Plan and annual plan amendments; and (b) school performance relative to identified goals and leading and lagging performance metrics. PMS will participate in periodic monitoring sessions, including school and classroom walkthroughs, progress monitoring, NetStat sessions, and annual school audits. In addition, the CSDE will provide ongoing support and technical assistance to support PMS through site visits and targeted support based on the Turnaround Plan.

Recommendation with Conditions

I recommend that the Board approve the Network Plan for PMS, which would be subject to the successful completion of the following items:

1. By September 30, 2020, the CSDNB shall commit to specific transformation expectations outlined here in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations as part of participation in the Commissioner's Network.
2. The Superintendent, on behalf of the PMS Turnaround Committee, shall submit plan amendments to the CSDE Turnaround Office on an annual basis in the spring, following school audits, detailing proposed strategies, budget requests, and implementation timelines for the following school year. The Commissioner or his designee may reconvene the Turnaround Committee to consider annual plan amendments, as appropriate and necessary. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact plan amendments or if the amendments are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at PMS, including, but not limited to, developing a revised Turnaround Plan and/or exercising any and all authorities prescribed in C.G.S. Section 10-223h.
3. PMS shall comply with all fiscal and programmatic reviews, provide any information requested by the CSDE in a timely manner, and report progress against goals and metrics in the format and frequency established by the CSDE.

Materials

Please see enclosed:

1. PMS Audit Report resulting from the Operations and Instructional Audit conducted on October 10, 2019.
2. Turnaround Plan developed and agreed to by the Turnaround Committee.

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Approved by: Lisa Lamenzo
Division Director, Turnaround Office

Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report

**Pulaski Middle School
New Britain Public Schools
October 10, 2019**



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Part I: Introduction

On May 23, 2019, the Commissioner initially selected Pulaski Middle School to participate in the Commissioner's Network, pending legislative authority to extend and expand the Commissioner's Network to include a ninth cohort of schools. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h(b), the New Britain Board of Education established the Turnaround Committee. On October 10, 2019, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted, in consultation with the board of education, the Pulaski Middle School Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the audit.

The audit team would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Pulaski Middle School community for its hospitality on the day of the school visit. We appreciate the openness and transparency demonstrated by members of the school community. There is a willingness and desire on the part of the staff, parents, students, and community partners to improve the school.

Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network is a commitment between local stakeholders and the CSDE to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools are accepted into the Network for a minimum of three years. Subsection (h) of C.G.S. 10-223h establishes that the Connecticut State Board of Education may allow schools to continue in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years, if necessary. At present, 8 Cohort (IV, V, VI, VII, VIII) schools are participating in the Commissioner's Network.

Network schools make targeted investments in the following areas:

- **Talent:** Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- **Academics:** Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.
- **Culture and Climate:** Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
- **Operations:** Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.

As part of the operations and instructional audit, auditors identify school strengths and weaknesses in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Audits are conducted by impartial and experienced educators who produce unbiased and objective reports supporting school planning and transformation efforts.

Operations and Instructional Audit Overview

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(c), the operations and instructional audit shall determine the extent to which the school:

- (1) Has established a strong family and community connection to the school.
- (2) Has a positive school environment, as evidenced by a culture of high expectations and a safe and orderly workplace, and has addressed other nonacademic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, arts, cultural, recreational and health needs.
- (3) Has effective leadership, as evidenced by the school principal's performance appraisals, track record in improving student achievement, ability to lead turnaround efforts, and managerial skills and authority in the areas of scheduling, staff management, curriculum implementation and budgeting.
- (4) Has effective teachers and support staff, as evidenced by performance evaluations, policies to retain staff determined to be effective and who have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort, policies to prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to the schools, and job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support programs that are tied to teacher and student needs.
- (5) Uses time effectively, as evidenced by the redesign of the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration.
- (6) Has a curriculum and instructional program that is based on student needs, is research-based, rigorous and aligned with state academic content standards, and serves all children, including students at every achievement level.
- (7) Uses data to inform decision-making and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data.

Audit Process and Methodology

The operations and instructional audit involves three phases of data collection and review:

- (1) The CSDE obtains and auditors review school artifacts, data, and documentation to gain a better understanding of the school's history and context. The CSDE collaborates with school and district leaders to administer a teacher survey.
- (2) The auditors conduct a school site visit to observe school systems and classrooms, and meet with members of the school community. During the on-site visit, auditors conduct interviews and focus groups with a representative set of school and community stakeholders, including school and district administrators, staff, students, family members, community partners, and members of the School Governance Council and Turnaround Committee.

- (3) The auditors synthesize and use all available data to generate the operations and instructional audit report, identifying strengths and growth areas around talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Please note that while this Audit Report identifies areas for improvement, it does not prescribe interventions or offer recommendations. The Turnaround Committee is responsible for developing a Turnaround Plan that addresses the deficiencies identified in the audit.

Part II: School Information

Pulaski Middle School serves 864 Grade 6 through Grade 8 students in New Britain. Approximately 10 percent of the students are Black and 66 percent of the students are Hispanic. Twenty-one percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 21 percent are English learners. Eighty-nine percent of the students in the school are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Student achievement at Pulaski Middle School is well below state averages in all grade levels and subject areas tested. The current principal is in her first year at Pulaski Middle School having previously served as an interim principal and assistant principal at two other schools in New Britain.

School Data Profile

The following chart provides a summary of Pulaski Middle School's current and historic data, including information about student enrollment and demographics, personnel, school climate, school performance, and student academic achievement. All data below is self-reported except where indicated with **.

Enrollment Data (2019-20):				
Grades:	6-8	5-Yr Enrollment Trend:		+ 106
Student Enrollment:	864	Mobility Rate:		22.9%
Personnel Data (2019-20):				
# of Administrators:	3	% of Teachers “Below Standard”:		0
# of Teachers:	66	% of Teachers “Developing”:		0
# of Support Staff:	20	% of Teachers “Proficient”:		94
# of Psychologists:	1	% of Teachers “Exemplary”:		6
# of Social Workers:	2	3-yr Teacher Retention Rate:		88.8%
School Day Per Year (2019-20):				
Total # of Student Days Per Year:	180	Instructional Minutes/Day:		339
Total # of Teacher Days Per Year:	185	Extended Day Program:		Yes
Student Demographic Breakdown (2019-20):				
% Black:	10.4	% Male:		55.0
% Hispanic:	65.7	% Female:		45.0
% White:	18.9	% EL:		21.0
% Other:	5.0	% Students with disabilities:		21.4
% F/R Meals:	89.7			
School Climate Data:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Student Attendance Rate:	94.2	93.0	92.8	93.1
Chronic Absenteeism Rate**:	17.5	20.3	25.0	27.9
Suspension Rate**:	21.9	24.7	23.0	NA

Teacher Attendance Rate:	95.4%	93.6%	91.4%	92.8%
School Performance Index**:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
SPI:	53.2	48.7	49.7	NA
Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 and 4 Data**:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Grade 3 – Reading				
Grade 4 – Reading				
Grade 5 – Reading				
Grade 6 – Reading	14.5%	12.4%	12.9%	11.4%
Grade 7 – Reading	17.5%	16.1%	17.1%	13.4%
Grade 8 – Reading	18.2%	10.9%	15.2%	16.2%
Grade 3 – Math				
Grade 4 – Math				
Grade 5 – Math				
Grade 6 – Math	5.1%	6.1%	6.3%	3.3%
Grade 7 – Math	7.3%	6.0%	7.5%	3.8%
Grade 8 – Math	5.6%	5.5%	9.7%	5.6%

* Data suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

NA = Data is not yet available.

Part III: Audit Findings

Part III of the Audit Report provides a summative analysis of audit findings in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Talent				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
1.1. Instructional practice	✓			
1.2. Evaluation and professional culture	✓			
1.3. Recruitment and retention strategies		✓		
1.4. Professional development		✓		
1.5. Leadership effectiveness		✓		
1.6. Instructional leadership			✓	

Summary of Strengths:

Instructional Leadership

Seventy-four (N=48) of survey respondents agree “there is a common vision of what effective instruction looks like at this school.” The principal reports that she would like to see “student engagement, the teacher as facilitator, and students and teachers asking higher order questions.” The school leadership team supports this vision, stating “engagement is big as we want students to learn...we should see students actively participating in the lesson, actively responding to a question, working together on a problem.” Teacher focus group members articulated that the school’s vision for effective instruction focuses on “student-centered, engaged classrooms in which students are working together and doing more with learning competencies.” Teachers report that the school keeps restarting visions under new leadership and would like to see consistency.

Summary of Growth Areas:

Instructional Practice

The School Performance Indices (SPI) for ELA and Math in 2018-19 are significantly below state averages. The ELA SPI is 45.5, which is 22.2 percentage points lower than the state average and the Math SPI is trending downward over the past three years and is currently at 35.2, which is 27.9 percentage points below the state average. Smarter Balanced English language arts (ELA) proficiency scores of 13.5% in 2018-19 are 42.2 percentage points below state average and math proficiency scores of 4.2% are 43.9 percentage points below. On a teacher survey administered prior to the audit site visit, 38% (N=25) of survey respondents agree that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school.” Auditors saw primarily teacher-led lessons lacking evidence of differentiation or scaffolding, an absence of rigor demonstrated through surface-level questioning that does not engage students in higher-order thinking, and low student engagement in the observed classrooms. Though learning targets and objectives were posted in

most classrooms, at times instruction did not match. Classroom instruction was frequently interrupted in the 21 observed classrooms in order to redirect off-task students. English language arts classrooms in grade 6 had evidence of surface level questioning such as “Who did Max live with?” and “Why don’t the boys have to hunt?” in worksheets about a novel. Students were observed engaging in off-topic conversations with their peers, shouting across the room, putting their heads down on the desk, and wandering around the room distracting other students. In accordance with leadership and teacher comments as well as the low levels of student achievement, support needs to include developing teachers’ ability to identify and implement strong instructional practices.

Evaluation and Professional Culture

On the teacher survey, 65% (N=43) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that “administrators provide regular, helpful, and actionable feedback to staff.” The teacher focus groups report there was “quite a breakdown last year” in the teacher evaluation process which resulted in 70 teachers from Pulaski Middle school not being evaluated. Members of the teacher focus group shared that a memorandum of agreement was signed with the union because protocols weren’t followed and these teachers were given the “Proficient” rating by default. The principal reports that the teacher evaluation process has been changed and the new process is “more effective than the first one” as every teacher will have 15 minute observations “in which we provide feedback and follow through.” She shared that the district is bringing in consultants to provide guidance on providing effective feedback and there are calibration sessions with the principal, assistant principals, and the district contact. Multiple teachers voiced concern of a repeat of last year as they are “currently off-track in writing [Student Learning Objectives] SLOs. They’re due soon and we haven’t done any work on them.” District leadership stated that “we really have to get more focused on SLOs and we’re seeking to address the concern. We’ve identified a Portrait of a Graduate and now the work is aligning that back...The issues we have with TEVAL last year should not be an issue this year at all.”

Eighty-two percent (N=53) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement “I am professionally respected and supported by the school leadership team.” Teacher focus groups shared that the “new leadership is more proactive” and willing to support teachers, but report there “seems to be a lack of communication between the district and school” and having two new assistant principals last year and a new principal this year has its challenges.

Recruitment and Retention

The 3-year retention rate for Pulaski Middle School is 88.8% and there aren’t any current vacancies on the teaching staff. Teacher focus group participants report that a mentoring program does exist for new teachers to provide supports and help teachers acclimate to the district’s expectations. Teacher focus group participants report not feeling supported as a result of a large number of involuntary transfers in the past few years, but share that changes were initially made in an effort have more content specific teachers teaching in middle school yet that has reverted back. Teachers shared feelings of unrest, anxiety and extreme stress, but also report a feeling “of change” with the new leadership that is in place.

Professional Development

Teacher survey results demonstrate that 57% (N=38) of teachers positively responded to the statement that “the professional development I received this year has improved my professional practice and allowed me to better meet the needs of my students.” Pulaski Middle School teachers engage in a full day of district-led professional learning every six days as part of NBU (New Britain University). District leadership reports that Engaging Schools conducted an audit and the findings were aligned with the need to shift to student centered instruction and more engaging instruction. Leadership reports that “our NBU goal is to be more student centered...and look for ways to engage students in student discourse throughout the day.” Teacher focus groups report that while content area teachers are regularly provided professional learning through NBU, unified arts teachers are not exposed to the content on a regular basis which creates issues of

consistency and alignment across the school. School leadership reports that NBU is mainly for grade level teams, but is also conducive to horizontal and vertical teams.

Leadership Effectiveness

Pulaski Middle School leadership consists of the building principal that is new to the school this year and two assistant principals that are in their second year. While 88% (N=58) of teachers agreed with the survey statement that “school leadership effectively communicates a clear mission, vision and set of school wide priorities,” teacher focus group participants also shared that since the administration team is so new, this is still a work in progress, with an assistant principal agreeing that “we’re under construction.” Focus groups revealed that leadership’s focus is on “creating a happy and safe environment...a place for students to learn.” The principal confirms that her goal is school safety and creating an environment for learning. Family and community focus group members shared that the principal has communicated her vision – that learning is student-centered and students are safe and cared for – to families during opportunities such as Open House, back-to-school meet and greet, and at PTO meetings. While all stakeholders agree there is a sense of urgency to improve the school, a school improvement plan that defines the school’s targeted work to raise achievement for all students has not yet been developed.

Academics				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
2.1. Academic rigor	✓			
2.2. Student engagement	✓			
2.3. Differentiation and checking for understanding	✓			
2.4. Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards	✓			
2.5. Supports for special populations	✓			
2.6. Assessment system and data culture	✓			

Summary of Growth Areas:

Academic rigor and Differentiation

While 74% of teacher survey respondents agree that “teachers at this school engage students in higher-order thinking and push them towards content mastery,” and 74% percent agree that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school,” this was not evidenced during the audit team classroom observations. Auditors observed questioning, tasks, and instruction that were not in alignment with the rigor of the Connecticut Core Standards. School leadership shared that there is limited rigorous instruction taking place, rather an emphasis is put on “teachers trying to manage classrooms.” District and school leadership agree that teachers need more assistance in developing a common understanding of what academic rigor and rigorous instruction look like.

Fifty-eight percent (N=38) of teachers surveyed support that “teachers at this school use student assessment data to check for understanding to differentiate instruction.” During classroom observations, the audit team did not find an examples of challenging instruction, scaffolded instruction to support student needs, or encouragement of student discourse to provide evidence to work through a problem or provide evidence to support a rationale of thinking. While an assessment system is in place, teachers report the frequent changing data set as a challenge and the information is not utilized to inform instruction and provide supports.

Smarter Balanced proficiency levels at Pulaski Middle School, as shown in the chart below, are significantly below the state averages for both ELA and Math.

Percent Proficiency (Levels 3+)				
2018-19 SBAC	State Average	District Average	Pulaski Middle	Difference between State and School Averages
ELA	55.7%	20.2%	13.5%	-42.2
Math	48.1%	11.3%	4.2%	-43.9

Average Percent of Growth Target Achieved				
2018-19 SBAC	State Average	District Average	Pulaski Middle	Difference between State and School Averages
ELA	59.9%	48.8%	42.8%	-17.1 pts.
Math	62.5%	44.2%	35.7%	-26.8 pts.

Student Engagement

Survey responses regarding the statement “students are engaged in their classes” were varied. While 41% agreed, 20% disagreed and 39% were neutral. In all 19 classrooms observed, instruction was primarily whole group and opportunities for small group work or student discourse were limited. In classroom walkthroughs, auditors observed off-task behaviors such as students wandering the room during instruction, students having off-topic conversations with their peers, and students not engaged in the instruction or following directions. Teacher focus group members shared that “we need to strengthen engagement.” Student focus group participants report a desire for more interactive activities. The students shared that the STEAM classes are “the best because we get to build things and can do hands-on learning.” School leadership shared that informal walkthroughs and formal observations also evidence a lack of authentic, active engagement.

Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards

Sixty percent (N=40) of Pulaski Middle School staff agree that “the school has curricula for all grade levels and content areas aligned to the current content standards.” The principal reports that the district has contracted with a local regional educational service center to conduct a curriculum audit and the focus this year is to “revamp the curriculum so that it supports differentiated learning and special populations.” While Illustrative Math was adopted and is in full implementation this year, teacher focus groups report that other content areas such English language arts “have revised curriculum almost every single summer and it keeps morphing into this huge document.” Teacher focus groups also revealed that the curriculums are “not engaging, not culturally relevant, and lack resources to support” special populations. Teachers and leadership agree that the school is lacking rigorous instruction. Teacher groups revealed a discrepancy between the honors team and the general team, sharing that the honors team receives more rigorous instruction and higher expectations.

Supports for Special Populations

Responses to the survey statement that “the school adequately meets the needs of its special education students and English Learners” were mixed. While 38% of teachers agreed, 42% disagreed and 19% were neutral. With 21.4% of Pulaski Middle School’s population identified for receiving special education services, there are eleven special education teachers on staff, at least two on each team, with an average caseload of twenty students. There are also fourteen paraprofessionals, with the majority providing supports in the specialized programs, such as Bridges and Pathways, which Pulaski Middle provides. During stakeholder focus groups, all revealed that improvements can be made in supporting students with disabilities, though district leadership noted that “we’re moving in a positive direction.”

Twenty-one percent of Pulaski Middle School’s population are identified as English learners, with supports provided by two English Language (EL) teachers and one EL tutor. Students are identified as foundational receive push-in supports, while students identified as advanced receive one period of instruction per day in the English Language Development (ELD) class. Teachers report that English learners struggle in science and social studies as they don’t receive push-in support for those content areas and supportive resources are limited. While school administration reports that special education teachers have planning opportunities with their content-area colleagues, EL teachers do not due to scheduling challenges.

There is an ELA Performance Index gap of 15.6 when comparing the Non-High Needs Rate of 62.7 to the High Needs rate of 45.2; this is a significant outlier as this gap is at least one standard deviation greater than the statewide gap in ELA. The Chronic Absenteeism data for the High Needs subgroup also shows the gap widening over time, as shown in the chart below.

Chronic Absenteeism		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Pulaski Middle School	High Needs	24.8	18.3	21.0	*	29.3
	Non-High Needs	25.0	11.1	11.9	*	11.4

Assessment System and Data Culture

In response to the survey statement “this school has a comprehensive assessment system to measure student progress, identify necessary interventions, and provide teachers with data to inform instruction,” responses varied. While 43% agreed with the statement, 23% disagreed and 34% were neutral. This inconsistency was also revealed in teacher focus group discussions in which one individual reports that teachers regularly meet together to review data, yet another individual stated “we don’t use data at all...we don’t have consistent data sources.” Another individual provided historical perspective citing “under the [Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative] CALI years we did deep data dives, but now we’re analyzing data with no next steps and there seem to be no plans to move forward.” Teachers participating in the focus groups agree that attendance is data-driven and time is spent reviewing and analyzing attendance data. Regarding the usage of data to inform instruction, focus group discussions did not support differentiated instruction, with some teachers equating more homework to a differentiated approach.

The school lacks a structured SRBI system. School leadership reports that while there is not a specific period of time with tiered interventions in place for both math and reading, a Kid Talk protocol is utilized by teams during NBU to discuss students of concern and develop actionable next steps; if a plan doesn’t work, then a referral is made to special education. District leadership states “the challenge is without a strong Tier I, it’s hard to develop a continuum.” Teacher focus group participants shared that “we have a lot of resources, but a lack of direction.” Both administration and teachers reported that they do not have the staffing, or flexibility in scheduling, to offer the services needed to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Culture and Climate				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
3.1. School environment		✓		
3.2. Student attendance	✓			
3.3. Student behavior	✓			
3.4. Interpersonal interactions	✓			
3.5. Family and community engagement		✓		
3.6. Community partners and wraparound strategy		✓		

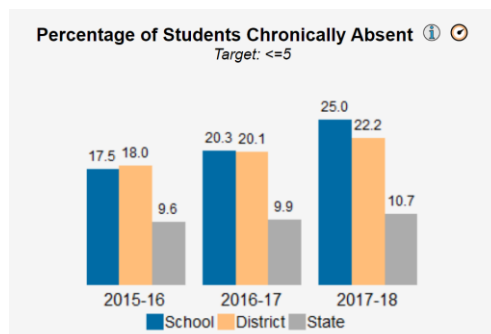
Summary of Growth Areas:

School Environment

Thirty-four percent (N=22) of the teacher survey responses supported that “the school environment is conducive to high-quality teaching and learning.” Pulaski Middle School is a well-maintained facility and there are some efforts to foster school identity through branding such as the logo prominently displayed in the cafeteria, though the principal would like to build on these efforts. Upon entering the school, students are greeted by the principal. The auditor walkthroughs found pockets of warm and inviting classrooms with supporting visual materials and bulletin boards, but many were devoid of student work or supporting artifacts. Though the main hallway has student work displayed, student work, data, and consistent messaging is not pervasive throughout the school. Parent and community focus group participants report a welcoming environment and the principal shared that the school utilizes strategies such as having a Spanish-speaking clerk in the main office as a means of supporting students and families.

Student Attendance

The percentage of students chronically absent is trending upward, increasing from a low of 17.5% in 2016-17 to 27.9% in 2018-19. As depicted in the graph below, this is significantly above the state average of 10.7% and above the district rate of 22.2%.

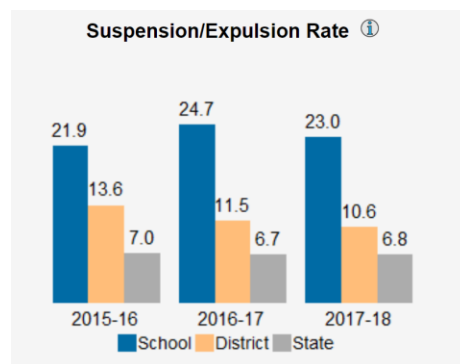


The Pulaski Middle School attendance team is comprised of the principal, district supervisor, attendance liaison, behavior support assistant, social worker, and two counselors. School leadership reports that

the attendance team meets weekly and, since many are new to the school, are working on understanding their role. There has been a recent focus with school staff to ensure that attendance is being recorded accurately. Teachers report that they are to call home for every student absence and once a student has 3 or more absences it is reported to the attendance team. Within the NBU structure there is time built in to look at attendance data, work to understand why a student is absent, and a protocol has been established to determine interventions. District leadership shared that the “real incentive for student attendance is relationships. Every student here needs to feel connected to an adult.” School attendance is encouraged through daily announcements, rewards for homerooms with highest attendance, and improved attendance is recognized. September was attendance month and every student with perfect attendance received a prize.

Student Behavior

Pulaski Middle School’s suspension rate in 2017-18 was 23%, well above the state average of 6.8% and the district rate of 10.6%.



District leadership reports that “at the end of last year we were struggling here, but it has improved. The principal has worked hard over the summer with her team and made some much-needed changes.” The principal expressed that her main priority is for the school to be safe. Teachers expressed their concern about safety at Pulaski Middle School and a concern that there is only one security staff member and one guidance counselor.

Responses to the survey statement that “the school implements an effective school wide behavior management system” were varied, with 43% of teachers agreeing, 18% disagreeing, and 28% were neutral. Forty-nine percent (N=32) of teacher survey respondents agreed that “the school has clear routines and procedures in place that are consistently followed by students and staff to help create a smooth and orderly environment. Teacher focus groups report that student behavior is “challenging” with “lots of defiance and disrespect.” Auditors also observed during classroom and hallway walkthroughs multiple instances of disrespect. Teacher focus groups report that “there are clear behavioral expectations, but students don’t always follow them.” Teachers also revealed that while “theoretically there is a behavioral management system and strategies we are supposed to use, rules are not consistently followed which leads to not feeling supported.” Family and community focus group members shared that the “chemistry here was terrible in the past, but Ms. Robles [principal] has worked on developing a more positive environment this year. There seems to be more structure with rules being enforced.” Student focus group members shared that there seems to be more consistency with expectations, but revealed that positive behaviors tend not to be recognized and reinforced.

Interpersonal Interactions

Fifty-two percent of survey respondents agreed that “Interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful.” Auditors observed interactions between students and staff that were lacking respect. This was also supported by the student focus group in which it was stated “we need to have equal respect for teachers and better relationships.” The tone within classrooms lacked warmth and engagement as there is a lack of connection and rapport between students and teachers. Students provided a mixed reaction when asked if staff members cared about them. Additional professional learning is needed on topics such as cultural competency, trauma, and restorative practices in order to build teacher capacity in forging strong relationships.

Family and Community Engagement

Fifty-three percent of teacher survey respondents disagreed with the statement “Families are engaged in the school.” School leadership and teachers shared that the school hosts events such as Open House, science fair, and multicultural night to engage parents, but turnout is low. Leadership and teachers report that although attendance is low across events, the most well attended were the ones that showcased student performance. The school has a PTO, but the parent/community focus group reports there is low attendance, yet is showing improvement from last year. Parents and teachers communicate through email, phone calls, and PowerSchool, and current happenings are communicated through newsletters such as ConnectEd and through the school’s Facebook page.

Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy

Focus groups revealed that Pulaski Middle School has some community partnerships, the range of wraparound is limited. The school has a school-based health clinic on the premises, and partnerships exist with New Britain Parks and Recreation, Girl Scouts, and YWCA STRIVE (Strength, Teamwork, Respect, Individuality, Vision and Excellence). School leadership, teachers, and parents suggested that increased efforts to coordinate relationships with additional community partners would be beneficial to the students of Pulaski Middle School.

Operations				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
4.1. Adequate instructional time		✓		
4.2. Use of instructional time	✓			
4.3. Use of staff time		✓		
4.4. Routines and transitions		✓		

Summary of Growth Areas:

Instructional Time

Forty-nine percent (N=31) of survey respondents agree that the school schedule and calendar maximize instructional time while 70% (N=46) agree with the survey statement that “teachers are adept at managing and maximizing instructional time within the classroom.” The audit team observed loss of instructional time

in many classrooms due to poor pacing, lack of student engagement, students entering class late, and student misbehavior. Although the school schedule provides adequate time for core instruction, student performance indicates that students would benefit from increased intervention time and services for math and reading.

Use of Staff Time

Fifty-two percent (N=32) of teachers disagreed with the survey statement that “teachers have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction.” Multiple focus groups report that teachers have 210 minutes of personal planning time per week, but this time is not frequently utilized for collaborative work. Teachers report a challenge with co-planning due to conflicting schedules with team partners or duty schedules that don’t allow for horizontal planning opportunities. Teachers also report that vertical collaboration is “non-existent.” Although structures are in place, such as NBU, to provide time for collaboration on the development of instructional materials and review of student data to drive instruction, it is recommended that the leadership work with staff on ways for teachers to work collaboratively with colleagues in order to embrace a clear, universal vision of what high-quality Tier 1 instruction looks like.

Routines and Transitions

Forty-nine percent (N=32) of teachers agreed with the survey statement that “the school has clear routines and procedures in place that are consistently followed by students and staff to help create a smooth and orderly environment.” Auditor observations found evidence of school-wide procedures and standards for transitions including grade-level specific stairwells and teachers walking students to class, but improvements are still needed as transitions are taking longer than the allotted time, leading to a loss of instructional time and certain spots are noisy and chaotic. The cafeteria also showed evidence of systems and structures to maintain a peaceful environment. Although school leadership stated that teachers have pre-determined duty stations for student arrival time, auditors observed only the principal greeting students, which is a safety issue as staff presence is lacking.

APPENDIX A: OPERATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL AUDIT RUBRIC

TALENT				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
1.1. Instructional Practice	Teacher effectiveness is inconsistent and highly variable from classroom to classroom. There are significant concerns about instruction. Staffing decisions do not reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Instructional quality is moderate; however, teacher effectiveness is variable from classroom to classroom. Staffing decisions do not always reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Most classes are led by effective educators, and instructional quality is strong. There are some systems in place to promote and develop teacher effectiveness and make appropriate staffing decisions.	100% of classes are led by deeply passionate and highly effective educators. There are strong systems in place to promote staff efficacy and make staffing decisions driven exclusively by student needs.
1.2. Evaluation and Professional Culture	There are significant concerns about staff professionalism. Staff come to school unprepared, and there is little sense of personal responsibility. There is a culture of low expectations; individuals are not accountable for their work. Evaluations are infrequent, and few if any staff were formally evaluated 3 or more times in 2018-19. Instructional leaders do not provide regular feedback to staff.	There are some concerns about professionalism. Some staff come to school unprepared. Some teachers feel responsible for their work. Some teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19, but most were not. Leaders communicate some expectations for and feedback on performance, but do not consistently follow-up to see whether or not the feedback is acted upon.	The school is a professional work environment. Most staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. Most individuals feel responsible for their work. Most teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19 in alignment with SEED expectations. Leaders provide feedback and hold individuals accountable for effort and results.	100% of staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. The vast majority of staff feel deep personal responsibility to do their best work. All teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19. Leaders conduct frequent informal evaluations and provide meaningful feedback. Individuals are held accountable for their performance.
1.3. Recruitment and Retention Strategies	The school and/or district lack systems to recruit and attract top talent. Retention of high-quality staff is a significant concern. The school lacks systems and strategies to retain top teachers and leaders.	The school and/or district have components of a plan for recruitment and retention of quality educators (e.g., mentoring, induction). The plan is not fully developed or consistently implemented.	The school and/or district have systems for strategic recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Retention of high-quality teachers is high.	The school and/or district effectively implement a long-term plan for recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Deliberate, successful efforts are made to retain top talent.
1.4. Professional Development	Professional Development (PD) opportunities are infrequent and/or of inconsistent quality and relevance. PD does not align to staff's development areas and/or students' needs. As a result, teachers struggle to implement PD strategies. There is no clear process to support or hold teachers accountable for the implementation of PD strategies.	PD opportunities are provided; however, they are not always tightly aligned with student and adult learning needs. The quality of PD opportunities is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers report that PD improves their instructional practices. Teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through PD.	The school offers targeted, job-embedded PD throughout the school year. PD is generally connected to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Most teachers feel PD opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PD strategies into their daily instruction.	The school consistently offers rich and meaningful PD opportunities that are aligned to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Teachers effectively translate PD strategies into their daily instruction. The school has a process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of PD strategies.
1.5. Leadership Effectiveness	Leadership fails to convey a school mission or strategic direction. The school team is stuck in a fire-fighting	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has

TALENT				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	or reactive mode, lacks school goals, and/or suffers from initiative fatigue. The school community questions whether the school can/will improve.	consistently guide daily activities and decision-making. The community generally understands the need for change, however actions are more often governed by the status quo.	implementing a solid improvement plan and has a clear set of measurable goals. The plan may lack coherence and a strategy for sustainability. Leadership conveys urgency.	a manageable set of goals and a clear set of strategies to achieve those goals. The plan is being implemented and monitored with fidelity. Leadership conveys deep urgency.
1.6. Instructional Leadership	Few staff can articulate a common understanding of what excellent instruction looks like. Instructional leaders do not demonstrate a commitment to developing consistent and high-quality instructional practice school-wide.	Some staff can articulate a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are enforced with limited consistency. Instructional leaders demonstrate some commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	Most staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are consistently enforced. Instructional leaders consistently demonstrate a commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	All staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. Educators relentlessly pursue excellent pedagogy. Instructional leaders have communicated and enforced high expectations school-wide.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
2.1. Academic Rigor^{*1}	Most observed lessons are teacher led. Teachers rarely engage students in higher-order thinking. Most students demonstrate a surface-level understanding of concepts. Observed lessons are indicative of low expectations and little sense of urgency.	Some observed lessons are somewhat student-centered, challenging and engaging. Teachers engage students in some higher-order thinking. Many students demonstrate only a surface-level understanding of concepts. Teachers demonstrate moderate expectations and some urgency.	Observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging for most students. Teachers engage students in higher-order thinking, and students are pushed toward content mastery. Lessons begin to engage students as self-directed learners. Teachers communicate solid expectations.	All observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging. Teachers push students, promoting academic risk-taking. Students are developing the capacity to engage in complex content and pose higher-level questions to the teacher and peers. Teachers promote high expectations.
2.2. Student Engagement[*]	Few students are actively engaged and excited about their work. The majority of students are engaged in off-task behaviors and some are disruptive to their classmates. Few students are truly involved in the lessons. Observed lessons primarily appeal to one learning style.	Some students exhibit moderate engagement, but many are engaged in off-task behaviors. Some observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lessons, but participation is more passive than active. Students are easily distracted from assigned tasks.	Most students are engaged and exhibit on-task behaviors. The observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lesson, but participation is, at times, more passive than active. A handful of students are easily distracted from the task at hand.	All students are visibly engaged, ready to learn, and on task. Students are clearly focused on learning in all classrooms. Students are actively engaged in the lessons and excited to participate in classroom dialogue and instruction. The lessons appeal to and seem to support all learning styles.
2.3. Differentiation and Checking for	Most teachers take a one-size-fits-all approach and struggle to differentiate their instruction to meet individual learning needs. There is no evidence	Some teachers are differentiating at least part of the observed lessons; however, the practice is not consistent or widespread. There is some	Most teachers employ strategies to tier or differentiate instruction at various points in the lesson. Most teachers use data or checks for	Teachers consistently and seamlessly differentiate instruction. Teachers use data and formal/informal strategies to gauge understanding, and

¹ Ratings for the four sub-indicators marked with an asterisk (*) are largely based on a composite or average score generated from all classroom observations.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
Under-standing*	around the use data to inform instruction and minimal efforts to check for student understanding.	evidence of the use of student data to adapt the learning process. Some teachers use strategies to monitor understanding.	understanding to differentiate the learning process on the fly. Teachers take time to support students struggling to engage with the content.	differentiate the learning process accordingly. Teaching feels individualized to meet students' unique needs.
2.4. Curriculum and Instruction Aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards	The school lacks a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) and/or the curriculum is not being implemented with fidelity. As a result, pacing is inconsistent. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is ≥ 10 points below the state average.	The school has curricula for some grades and content areas, some of which are rigorous, standards-based. Curricula are implemented with some fidelity. Teachers struggle with consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is 6-10 points below the state average.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for almost all grade levels and content areas, and are being implemented consistently across classrooms. Teachers demonstrate consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is within 5 percentage points of the state average.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for all grade levels and content areas. Curricula are aligned with the CCS and are being implemented with a high degree of fidelity throughout the school. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments meets or exceeds the state average.
2.5. Support for Special Populations	The school is inadequately meeting the needs of its high-needs students. IEP goals are not regularly met. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is not fully considered when making placements. The school lacks appropriate interventions and supports for ELs. There are significant achievement gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and no evidence of progress.	The school typically meets the needs of its high-needs students. Most special education students meet their IEP goals, but LRE is not always considered when making placement determinations. The school typically meets the needs of its ELs, and attempts to track progress and set content and language mastery goals. There are significant gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments and marginal progress over time.	The school consistently meets the needs of its high-needs students. Special education students regularly meet their IEP goals and LRE is a critical factor in placement determinations. The school meets the needs, tracks progress, and sets content and language mastery goals for all ELs. There are small gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and some signs of progress toward closing the gaps.	The school is successfully closing the achievement gap for its high-needs students. General and special education teachers work collaboratively to support students. The school tracks the effectiveness of language acquisition instructional strategies and adjusts programming accordingly. There is no achievement gap between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments.
2.6. Assessment Systems and Data Culture	The school lacks a comprehensive assessment system (including summative and benchmark assessments). Teachers rarely collect, analyze, and/or discuss data. The school lacks or fails to implement SRBI protocols linking data to interventions.	The school has some consistent assessments; however, there are major gaps in certain grades and content areas. There are some efforts to collect and use data. SRBI systems and processes are somewhat present.	The school implements a clear system of benchmark assessments. Some teachers are developing familiarity with regularly using formative assessments to differentiate instruction. The school has emerging processes in place to use the data to inform interventions.	Teachers consistently administer assessments throughout the year. Assessments are standards-based and provide real-time data. Teachers embed formative assessments in their daily lessons. The school has strong processes to collect, analyze, and use data to inform interventions.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
3.1. School Environment	The school fails to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Communal spaces and classrooms may be unkempt, rundown, unsafe, or sterile. Many classrooms are neither warm nor inviting and lack intellectual stimulation. Little to no student work or data is displayed to help convey a sense of pride and high expectations.	The school struggles to provide a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Large sections of the school are not clean, bright, welcoming, or reflective of student work. Though the school has some data and student work displayed, efforts to brand the school and convey high expectations are very minimal. Sections of the school need significant attention.	The school generally provides a welcoming learning environment. Most of the facility is in good repair and conducive to teaching and learning. Most classrooms and common spaces are bright and clean, displaying data and student work; however, some sections lack visual stimulation. The school has made an effort to foster school identity through branding and consistent messaging in classrooms and communal spaces.	The school provides a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Common spaces and classrooms are bright, clean, welcoming, and conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Data and student work are visible and present throughout the school, inspiring students and teachers to do their best work. There is clear branding and consistent messaging throughout the school, promoting school identity and pride.
3.2. Student Attendance	The school has few, if any, strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $\leq 88\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 20\%$.	The school has some strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 88\%$ and $\leq 93\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 15\%$ and $\leq 20\%$.	The school has multiple, effective strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 93\%$ and $\leq 97\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 10\%$ and $\leq 15\%$.	The school implements effective strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival. Average daily attendance is $> 97\%$ and chronic absenteeism is $\leq 10\%$.
3.3. Student Behavior	A school-wide behavior management plan may exist, but there is little evidence of implementation. Student misbehavior is a significant challenge and creates regular distractions. Disciplinary approaches appear to be inconsistent; students and staff do not have a common understanding of behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is greater than 20% (total # 2018-19 incidents/total enrollment).	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place, and there are some signs of implementation. Student misbehavior is a challenge and creates frequent disruptions. There may be confusion among students and staff regarding behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive, and there is inconsistent reinforcement of desired behaviors. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is between 15% and 20%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place and effectively implemented most of the time. Student behavior is under control. Misbehavior is infrequent with periodic distractions to instruction. Most students behave in a calm and respectful manner. Students and staff have a common understanding of the behavior policy. There is positive reinforcement of desired behaviors. The suspension/expulsion rate is between 10% and 14%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is consistently and effectively implemented. All students behave in a calm, orderly, and respectful manner throughout the school day. Classroom distractions are minimal, and immediately and appropriately addressed. Rewards and consequences are clear and appropriate, and are consistently applied across the school. The suspension/expulsion rate is $\leq 10\%$.
3.4. Interpersonal Interactions	There is a weak sense of community. The quality and types of student, adult, and student/adult interactions raise concerns. There are signs of divisiveness or hostility among students and with staff. There are minimal signs of connections between students and staff; interactions are	There is a moderate sense of community. Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults. There are some concerns around climate and tone. There is some teasing and divisiveness; however, it does not define school culture. Communication between	There is a good overall sense of community. Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults. Interactions are mostly positive. There is minimal teasing and divisiveness. Communication between students and staff is generally positive and respectful. There are signs of	There is a strong sense of community. Students are respectful and courteous of one another and adults. Student interactions are overwhelmingly positive and polite. The school is an inclusive and welcoming environment. Student/Adult interactions are positive and respectful, demonstrating

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	students and staff is somewhat positive. There are some connections between students and staff.	connections between students and staff. Most staff seem invested in their students.	strong relationships. Staff seems invested in the well-being and development of students.
3.5. Family and Community Engagement	The school offers infrequent opportunities to involve parents in the school community. Family involvement is minimal. Teachers rarely reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers several family events throughout the year. Roughly half of families participate in school activities. More than half of all teachers reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers periodic, meaningful opportunities for parents/families to engage in student's education. Most families participate in school activities. Most educators communicate regularly with families.	The school frequently engages parents/family as partners in student's education. Almost all families participate in school activities. Nearly all educators communicate with families on a regular basis.
3.6. Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy	The school offers inadequate supports to address students' nonacademic needs. There are limited wraparound services. The school makes little or no effort to engage community partners to expand services offered through the school.	The school offers some support to address students' nonacademic needs through wraparound services. Community and partner engagement is spotty and event-specific.	The school offers a range of wraparound services to address students' nonacademic needs. The school has several sustained community partnerships.	The school has a clear process for evaluating students' needs and connecting students to appropriate wraparound services. The school has sustained community partnerships to help address student needs.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
4.1. Adequate Instructional Time	There is not enough time in the school schedule to appropriately meet students' academic needs. There is a significant amount of wasted time in the school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes ≤ 5 hours of instruction per day, and ≤ 60 minutes of ELA time. ²	Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time. The school calendar and daily schedule could be improved to increase time on task. The schedule includes > 5 and ≤ 5.5 hours of instruction per day, and > 60 and ≤ 90 minutes of ELA time.	The school has taken steps to increase instructional time on task through extended learning opportunities. The school calendar and daily schedule are well constructed. The schedule includes > 5.5 and ≤ 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 90 and ≤ 120 minutes of ELA time.	The school has multiple extended learning opportunities available to students. The school implements a thoughtful and strategic school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes > 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 120 minutes of ELA time.
4.2. Use of Instructional Time*	Staff and students use time ineffectively. Misused instructional time results from misbehavior, poor scheduling, and inefficient transitions. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on task. Observed teachers struggle with pacing and fail	Staff and student use of time is somewhat effective. Some students are off task and there are missed opportunities to maximize instructional time. Lesson schedules are moderately well planned, paced, and executed. Teachers could be	Most staff and students use time well. A handful of students require redirection; however, the majority of students transition quickly to academic work when prompted by the teacher. There is minimal downtime. Lessons are well planned, paced, and	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Transitions are smooth and efficient. Teachers meticulously use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on task. Students transition promptly to academic work

² The total amount of ELA instructional time per day at the secondary level can include reading- and/or writing-intensive coursework.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	to use class time in a constructive manner.	more skilled and/or methodical in the use of class time.	executed. Teachers are adept at managing and using class time.	with minimal cues and reminders from teachers.
4.3. Use of Staff Time	Educators lack adequate and/or recurring professional development and/or common planning time. Common planning time is currently disorganized and the time is not used effectively. As a result, staff members are unable to develop and/or share practices on a regular basis.	Most academic teams have common planning periods (less than 1 hour/week); however, the school has failed to secure vertical and horizontal planning. Collaborative planning time is used at a basic level (e.g., organization of resources or topics not directly related to classroom instruction).	All academic teams have common planning periods (1-2 hours/week) and they are seldom interrupted by non-instructional tasks. Staff members use this time to discuss instructional strategies, discuss student work, develop curricular resources, and use data to adjust instruction.	All educators have weekly common planning time for vertical and horizontal planning (more than 2 hours/week). Common planning periods are tightly protected and only interrupted by emergencies. The school has established tight protocols to ensure that common planning time is used effectively.
4.4. Routines and Transitions	The school is chaotic and disorderly. The safety of students and staff is a concern. The school lacks critical systems and routines. Movement of students is chaotic and noisy with little adult intervention. Adults are not present during transitions; therefore, this is very little direction.	The school is somewhat chaotic and/or disorderly, particularly in certain locations and during certain times of day. Some staff make an effort to maintain procedures and routines; however, staff presence is also an issue and redirection of misbehavior is lacking.	The school environment is calm and orderly in most locations and during most of the day. Rules and procedures are fairly clear, consistent, and evident. Routines seem somewhat apparent and institutionalized. Adults are present to reinforce norms.	The school environment is calm and orderly. Rules and procedures are clear, specific, consistent, and evident. Routines are largely unspoken and institutionalized. Adults are consistently present to reinforce norms.

The Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan Application | Cohort IX

Form Number: ED 708
Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes

Date Issued: August 9, 2019

Dr. Miguel A. Cardona
Commissioner of Education
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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education’s nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie

Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator (ADA) Connecticut State
Department of Education | 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 607 | Hartford, CT 06103-1841 | 860-807-2071 |

Levy.gillespie@ct.gov

PART I: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK OVERVIEW

A. Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network (the Network) is a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 low-performing schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools participate in the Network for a period of three to five years.

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h (a), the Commissioner may select a school that has been classified as a category four or five school, as described in C.G.S. § 10-223e, to participate in the Network. The Commissioner shall give preference for selection to schools: (1) that volunteer to participate in the Network, provided the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees mutually agree to participate in the Network; (2) in which an existing collective bargaining agreement between the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees will have expired for the school year in which a Turnaround Plan will be implemented; or (3) that are located in school districts that (A) have experience in school turnaround reform, or (B) previously received a school improvement grant pursuant to Section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 6301, et seq.

C.G.S. § 10-223h (2019):

- authorizes the Commissioner to establish, within available appropriations, a Commissioner's Network of schools to improve student academic achievement in low-performing schools;
- authorizes the Commissioner to select not more than 25 schools in any single school year that have been classified as a category four school or a category five school pursuant to Section 10-223e to participate in the Network; and
- Provides that the Commissioner may select not more than five schools in any single school year from a single school district to participate in the Network.

After the Commissioner initially selects a school to participate in the Commissioner's Network, the local board of education shall establish a Turnaround Committee pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b). Following the establishment of the Turnaround Committee, the CSDE shall conduct, in consultation with the local board of education, the School Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). Once the audit is performed, the Turnaround Committee shall develop a Turnaround Plan for the school by completing this application. As stated in C.G.S. § 10-223h(d), if the Turnaround Committee does not develop a Turnaround Plan, or if the Commissioner determines that a Turnaround Plan developed by the Turnaround Committee is deficient, the Commissioner may develop a Turnaround Plan for the school. If the Commissioner deems it necessary, the Commissioner may appoint a district improvement officer for a school to implement the provisions of a turnaround plan developed by the Commissioner.

B. Turnaround Plan and Framework

The Turnaround Committee, in consultation with the School Governance Council, shall develop the Turnaround Plan in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h (d) and the guidelines issued by the Commissioner. Accordingly, the Turnaround Plan must:

- Provide a rigorous needs analysis informed by the operations and instructional audit.
- Identify an evidence-based turnaround model, aligned to school needs and growth areas.
- Provide robust strategies to secure, support, develop, evaluate, and retain top talent.
- Summarize the school's academic model, including curricula, assessments, and data-driven instruction.
- Outline a comprehensive approach to build a positive school culture and climate.
- Develop operational structures to effectively utilize time and resources.

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h (d), the Turnaround Plan may include proposals changing the hours and schedules of teachers and administrators at the school, the length and schedule of the school day, the length and calendar of the school year, the amount of time teachers shall be present in the school beyond the regular school day, and the hiring or reassignment of teachers or administrators at the school. If provisions of the Turnaround Plan alter the collective bargaining agreements applicable to the administrators and teachers employed by the local board of education, the local board of education and the exclusive bargaining unit for the affected certified employees shall negotiate concerning such provisions in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-153s. See C.G.S. § 10-223h (g).

The State Board of Education (SBE) must approve the Turnaround Plan before the school may implement it. Once the Turnaround Plan is approved, Network school leaders will work with the CSDE Turnaround Office, and/or other partners, to operationalize the Turnaround Plan by planning and designing tools, systems, and/or policies including, but not limited to:

- School bell schedule.
- School calendar.
- Annual assessment calendar.
- Staff evaluation schedule.
- Professional learning calendar.
- Scientific Research-Based Interventions processes and protocols.
- School organizational chart.
- Curricular materials (e.g., lesson plan template, unit plans, pacing guides).
- School budget.
- School Climate.
- Calendar of family and community engagement opportunities

PART II: TURNAROUND PLAN APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Instructions

Review and follow all directions carefully when completing this application. Complete all of the required sections. The application will be deemed incomplete and/or deficient if required sections are not submitted. The specific timeline for this application will be determined by the CSDE. District leadership must participate in, at minimum, two benchmark meetings with the Turnaround Office to provide updates on elements of the draft Turnaround Plan as it evolves and receive formative feedback. Be prepared to share draft Turnaround Plan components prior to these meetings.

B. Timeline Summary

Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-223h, the Commissioner's Network process is outlined below. As noted, the extension and expansion of the Commissioner's Network requires new legislative authorization; therefore, initial planning activities for a ninth prospective cohort of Network schools are underway, pending legislative authorization.

1. Commissioner initially selects the school for the Network.
2. Local board of education forms the Turnaround Committee.
3. CSDE conducts the operations and instructional audit of the school.
4. Turnaround Committee, in consultation with the school governance council, develops the Turnaround Plan and budget proposal.
5. Turnaround Committee reaches consensus or the Commissioner may develop a plan.
6. SBE votes to approve or reject the Turnaround Plan.
7. Local board of education negotiates Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with collective bargaining units for certified staff, if necessary, to establish the working conditions for the school during its turnaround period.
8. Certified staff identified and/or selected to work at the school ratify MOUs on working conditions, if necessary.
9. CSDE awards resources to the school depending on available funds.
10. Network school begins implementation of the Turnaround Plan with support from the CSDE.

C. Freedom of Information Act

All of the information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), C.G.S. Section 1-200 et seq. The FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in statute) are public records and every person has a right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records.

D. Questions

All questions regarding the Commissioner's Network should be directed to:

Lisa Lamenzo
Turnaround Office Bureau Chief
Connecticut State Department of Education
E-mail: lisa.lamenzo@ct.gov

PART III: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK TURNAROUND PLAN

Section 1: Cover Page

Name of School District:	Consolidated School District of New Britain (CSDNB)		
Name of School:	Pulaski Middle School	Grade Levels:	6-8
Name of School Principal:	Johanna Robles	# of Years Serving at this School	1
		# of Years in Total as Administrator	8
Turnaround Committee Chairperson:¹	Michael Foran		
Phone Number of Chairperson:	860-827-2213		
E-mail of Chairperson:	foran@csdnb.org		
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	272 Main St.	
	City:	New Britain	Zip Code: 06050
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Merrill Gay		
Signature of School Board Chairperson:²		Date:	
Name of Superintendent:	Nancy Sarra		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	

¹ Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h (b) (1), the superintendent, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the Turnaround Committee.

² By signing this cover page, the chairperson of the local board of education affirms that the board has established the Turnaround Committee in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(b), and that the superintendent has informed the board of the content of the Turnaround Plan.

Section 2: Setting the Direction

An organization needs to know where it is and where it wants to be in order to improve. Effective organizations have a clear direction that informs the work of all employees. An organization's direction is used as a filter for all work. As noted in *Turnaround Leadership Domain* (Center on School Turnaround, 2017), turnaround leaders set the direction and expectations, and articulate the commitment to school turnaround. The leadership team also engages all employees and stakeholders in the process of sharing and gathering feedback and making needed revisions to finalize and communicate the direction to others. Each person needs to own the direction and understand how his or her role supports the mission. Setting a direction is important for any organization and it is particularly critical for those seeking to make rapid improvement—as is the case for the lowest-performing schools. To improve rapidly, the school needs to be willing to identify and address the root causes of its successes and failures to transform its systems and practices.

Instructions: Using the space provided, identify the district's and school's vision and theory of action. (Please note for this section there is a limit of 200 words per response box.)

A **vision statement** serves as a common direction of growth for your organization and its stakeholders. This one-sentence statement describes the organization's clear and inspirational long-term desired change resulting from its work.

Theory of Action uses the "If we do X then we can achieve Y" construct for transformative outcomes. For example, if the state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA) or school focuses on implementing effective instructional practice, then the organizational goal of improved student performance is supported. Thinking through a theory of action allows organizations to more clearly see the chain of changes that will have to happen for the intervention to be successful. This can help in the planning stage to be sure the solutions that are chosen truly align with the impact that would like to be seen.

District Vision Statement (limit 200 words)

Vision: To pursue excellence one student at a time.

Mission: In partnership with family and community, the Consolidated School District of New Britain works to provide the best personalized and comprehensive whole-child education so our students will be prepared for, and positively contribute to, a profoundly different future.

District Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

Talent: If we improve the instructional capacity of the administrators, (*providing effective feedback, engaging in data decision making process, leveraging researched based practices, etc.*) teacher practice and student outcomes will improve.

Academics: If we instruct teachers in high leverage practices that include opportunities for: analyzing and constructing arguments based on evidence; critical & creative thinking and problem-solving; and meaningful and purposeful communication during NBU, then teacher practice will improve.

Climate and Culture: If we implement a multi-tier process for addressing chronic absenteeism, using high impact engagement strategies, then chronic absenteeism will decrease.

School Vision (limit 200 words)

Our commitment at Pulaski Middle School is to provide a safe, equitable, and intellectually challenging environment that will empower all students to become culturally competent, innovative thinkers, creative problem solvers and inspired learners.

School Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

If Pulaski Middle School:

- Improves instructional practices by integrating equitable student-centered learning into our core curriculum, including Scientific Research Based Instructional (SRBI) strategies;
- Develops a culturally competent curriculum and instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS);

- Implements strategies to improve the culture and climate of our school, including Restorative Practices, PBIS; and
- Develops staff instructional capacity through instructional coaching and professional learning that supports all students.

Then teachers, staff and administrators:

- Will spend quality instructional time with engaged students to improve student achievement;
- Strengthen their relationships with students;
- Strengthen authentic student engagement;
- Use more effective conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques;
- Help students feel more positively about their school experience; and
- Increase educator effectiveness to sustain continuous improvement.

Section 3: Leadership

One of the clear keys to successful turnaround is strong leadership at all levels (Herman et al., 2008). The objectives for both school and district leaders are to articulate a clear and compelling vision, create attainable short-term goals, define high performance expectations, hold faculty and staff accountable for those expectations, and continually celebrate wins (Leithwood, 2012). Research points to the importance of having a strong leader who can change culture and influence staff efficacy (Meyers & Hitt, 2017) and who demonstrates an intense focus and direction on academic outcomes (Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, & Sobel, 2002). In addition, the district needs to embrace the turnaround effort as a district-led initiative. One study finds that the “district instructional leadership builds capacity by coordinating and aligning work of others through communication, planning, and collaboration” (Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich, 2008, p. 318). Throughout the turnaround process, the district must coordinate the work by setting high performance expectations, sharing those expectations in a transparent way, continually checking progress on those expectations, and — with the school — co-developing further interventions, as needed, based upon the school’s progress (Leithwood, 2012). These types of leadership focuses can contribute to a productive, supportive and energizing school culture that enables adults in schools and district offices to collaboratively work toward improved outcomes for students (Kruse & Louis, 2009).

Instructions: In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the process to ensure an exceptional school principal with a track record of success, preferably in school turnaround and/or an urban school environment, is in place.

Mrs. Robles is in her first year as principal of Pulaski Middle School. Prior to her becoming Pulaski’s principal, she was an elementary principal for one year and an assistant principal at the middle and high school levels. Mrs. Robles has over 20 years of experience in education, all in urban districts. Mrs. Robles brings significant experience in developing the structures required to improve the climate and culture at Pulaski. She is student-centered and focused on building positive relationships with all of the Pulaski stakeholders while holding them to high expectations. Data from the current year indicates that Mrs. Robles’s leadership is having a positive impact on the school. Year to date disciplinary referrals are down 44%, out of school suspensions are down 24% and in-school suspensions are down 40% compared to last school year. The Commissioners Network grant will enable us to provide Mrs. Robles with additional coaching to support her development as an instructional leader and the development of the Pulaski leadership team.

Explain how administrators will be evaluated on an annual basis to inform leadership staffing decisions.

Mrs. Robles is evaluated under the Consolidated School District of New Britain’s (CSDNB) Administrators Evaluation Plan by the Assistant Superintendent. As part of this process, they work together to establish SMART goals for the school and personal goals based on the CCL. They meet bi-monthly to review progress and adjust as needed. Additionally, the Assistant Superintendent meets weekly with the Pulaski Administration Team to review data, provide coaching, support and then separately with Mrs. Robles to provide individual coaching. These meetings include periodic classroom walkthroughs and discussions on how best to support improved instruction through administrator feedback. The Pulaski Administration Team also participates in monthly professional learning sessions for all district administrators which are focused on improving instruction through better feedback.

Describe the district’s role in supporting and monitoring school administration in regards to implementation and monitoring of the improvement plan and budget, if approved.

The Assistant Superintendent will be an active participant on the Pulaski Turnaround Team. He will attend all Turnaround Team meetings and attend subcommittee meetings periodically to assess their progress in developing and implementing their components of the plan. The District Coordinator of Instruction for secondary schools will be an active member of the Academic and Talent subcommittees. She will also attend the Turnaround Team meetings to ensure alignment of school and district goals in these areas. Additionally, the Assistant Superintendent will meet individually with the Principal and Administration Team to monitor progress on an ongoing basis. Mrs. Robles will work with the District Finance and Talent office to monitor the budget and ensure that all expenditures are appropriately monitored. The District Talent office will work with the school administration to support the recruitment of high quality candidates for any staff positions funded through the plan.

Describe stakeholder (parent, community, student, other) engagement processes and structures (planning and development, implementation, and revising of plan to meet current needs).

Pulaski Middle School established a Commissioner's Network Turnaround Committee in the 2019-2020 school year. The committee consisted of members of key stakeholder groups: administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, and community partners. The committee held a series of meetings to review school data and the report of The Commissioner's Network Audit that was conducted on October 10, 2019. As a result, the committee submitted The Commissioner's Network Turnaround plan for Pulaski. The Committee will continue to meet monthly to monitor, adjust and refine the plan according to progress monitoring data. This committee will observe and analyze the effectiveness of the plan and augment with additional strategies as needed. This will be done to ensure it is implemented with fidelity. This endeavor will also be supported by Pulaski's Leadership Team in their monthly meetings.

Pulaski's Turnaround Committee consisted of a 2- person team: Mr. Mike Foran, Assistant Superintendent; Johanna Robles, Principal; Rosa Ortiz, Assistant Principal; Heather Whitehead, Assistant Principal; Wilfredo Irizarry, Dean of Students; Kevin Dukes, Campus Safety Officer; Jessica Arasimowicz, teacher; Ana Dávila, teacher; Jason Gibson, community partner; Ella Mirmina, Social Worker; Kimberly Gionfriddo, teacher; Michelle Norton, BSA; Julie Plaza, teacher; Tammy Rosado, teacher; Alyssa Serville, teacher; Sudha Sikka, teacher; Jeffrey White, teacher; Mary Zottola, teacher; Mr. Rosado, community partner; Ms. Richardson, parent; Ms. Ruggiero, community partner; Ms. Rivera, parent; Reina Sosa, student; and Rey Rodriguez, student.

Section 4: Data and Needs Analysis

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Instructions: Network school progress will be compared to the leading and lagging indicators identified in the chart below. Under the “Baseline and Historic Data” columns, please enter school data for each of the past three years. The indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Milestone targets.

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Student enrollment	791	806	875	901	900	900	900
Accountability Index	48.7	49.7	42.4	N/A	57.0	59.8	62.6
English Language Arts (ELA) School Performance Index (SPI)	43.2	46.3	45.5	N/A	50.6	53.0	55.5
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model	37.1	51.4	42.8	N/A	51.6	56.4	61.3
Math School Performance Index (SPI)	38.5	39.0	35.2	N/A	46.9	49.8	52.6
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model	47.9	51.1	35.7	N/A	59.9	63.9	67.9
Average daily attendance rate	93.0	92.8	93.1	93.1	95.0	96.0	97.0
Chronic absenteeism rate	20.3	25.0	27.9	21.9	16.7	15.6	14.4
Teacher attendance rate	93.6	91.4	92.8	91.4	93.0	94.0	95.0
Suspension rate	24.7	23.0	27.8	9.1	20.0	15.0	10.0
In-school suspensions (count)	203	178	234	53	100	75	50
Out-of-school suspensions (count)	241	234	450	142	200	150	100
Expulsions (count)	*	*	*	3	1	0	0
Grade 3 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 4 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 5 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Grade 6 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	12.4	12.9	11.0	N/A	14.0	17.0	20.0
Grade 7 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	16.1	17.1	13.0	N/A	16.0	19.0	22.0
Grade 8 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	10.9	15.2	16.0	N/A	19.0	22.0	25.0
Grade 3 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 4 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 5 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 6 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	6.1	6.3	3.0	N/A	6.0	9.0	12.0
Grade 7 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	6.0	7.5	4.0	N/A	7.0	10.0	13.0
Grade 8 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	5.5	9.7	6.0	N/A	9.0	12.0	15.0
Grade 5 NGSS Science Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 8 NGSS Science - “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	15.2	N/A	18.0	21.0	24.0
Grade 11 NGSS Science - “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 11 ELA SAT- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 11 Math SAT- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of Students enrolled in dual enrollment or AP courses	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate (HS only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6-year Cohort Graduation Rate- High Needs Students (HS only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to ESSA Milestone targets

Root Cause Analysis

Using the school data, along with the school audit findings reported by the Turnaround Office as a foundation, the turnaround committee will conduct a root cause analysis. Root cause is defined as “the deepest underlying cause or causes of positive or negative symptoms within any process that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the symptom” (Preuss, 2003, p. 3). A root cause analysis addresses the problem (weak demonstration of an effective professional practice), rather than the symptom (low student achievement), eliminates wasted effort, conserves resources, and informs strategy selection (Preuss, 2003). There are several resources available to conduct a root cause analysis. Two of the most common methods are the “5 Whys” model or the Fishbone Diagram. Identifying the root cause will help determine which practices are most appropriate to address weaknesses. *Root Cause Analysis: A School Leader’s Guide to Using Data to Dissolve Problems* (Preuss, 2013), provides additional examples specific to schools. **The root cause findings should serve as the basis for school improvement plan development.**

Section 5: TURNAROUND MODEL

Instructions: Please select one of the following turnaround models described in C.G.S. § 10-223h (d). Using the space provided, describe the core components of the model that pertain to talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Through participation in the Commissioner's Network, Pulaski Middle School will enhance teaching and learning through a student-centered approach. Student-centered practices emphasize personalization, high expectations, hands-on/group learning experiences, teaching of 21st century skills, and opportunities for educators to reflect on their practice. In addition, student-centered learning transitions all students from passive to active learners, and opens the door for collaboration and dialogue between the educator and student. Schools that incorporate these key features of student-centered practices are more likely to develop students that have transferable academic skills and feel a sense of purpose and connection to school. Pulaski Middle School is a large facility, with about 100 staff members serving approximately 900 students in Grades 6 through 8. By capitalizing on a student-centered approach Pulaski aims to transition students from dependent to independent learners, empower teachers to become culturally responsive educators, while addressing the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, and cultural backgrounds of students.

This Turnaround Plan includes investments in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations to ensure Pulaski Middle School maximizes student outcomes and teacher development. These investments support our transformation into a personalized academic environment where positive relationships between students and teachers are developed and reinforced; through instruction that is challenging, relevant, collaborative, student directed and connected to real life situations. Pulaski Middle School recognizes the impact educator preparation has on student learning and has designed our Talent Priority to concentrate on effective instruction. Our core talent strategies include:

- Student-centered professional learning opportunities;
- Implementation of a culturally relevant curriculum based on the New Britain Profile of a Graduate (POG);
- Development of teacher capacity; and
- Instructional rounds and data collection.

Pulaski Middle School's improvement process will heavily emphasize strengthening the instructional core, including curriculum, instruction and assessments. Core academic strategies include:

- Align curricula to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS);
- Professional learning opportunities on differentiation; and
- Implementation of a comprehensive SRBI system.

Pulaski Middle School will ensure a personalized academic environment where students feel connected to teachers, staff, leadership and the school community. Core culture and climate strategies include:

- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS);
- Restorative Practices;
- Opportunities for families and community engagement; and
- Community partnerships to support future and career pathways.

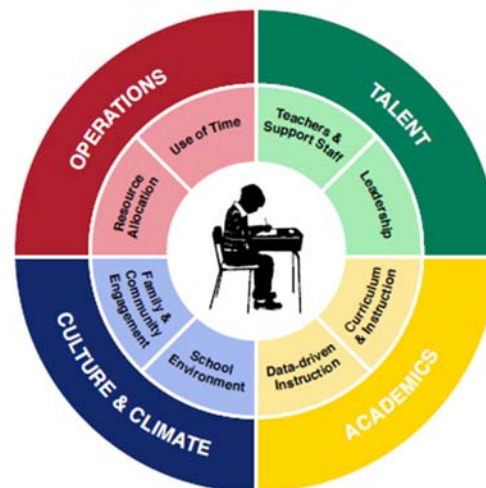
This plan will be supported and enabled by some improvements to school operations. These improvements include:

- Development of a schedule that maximizes instructional time; and
- Opportunities in literacy and numeracy for interventions and student-centered lessons.

Section 6: Turnaround Framework for School Improvement

The Commissioner's Network Plan is based upon the framework centered around four key overarching and research-based leverage points for school improvement: Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, and Operations (TACO). Each of these domains play an integral role in the realization of the school's goals to increase student outcomes.

- **Talent:** Systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- **Academics:** Rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels, including aligned curricula, instruction, and assessments.
- **Culture and Climate:** Positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
- **Operations:** Systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.



Plan Development

➤ Prioritize

As a result of the needs assessment and root cause analysis, the turnaround committee should engage in a prioritization process to identify key priority areas for each TACO domain. Although more can be identified, going deeper in improving fewer areas is often more effective. In the table below, list 1-3 priority areas for each domain based on the needs assessment.

Talent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving instructional practices 	Academics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop curriculum and instruction aligned to the CCSS; and • Strengthen authentic student engagement.
Culture and Climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve student behavior and attendance; and • Strengthen family and community partnerships. 	Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize instructional time; and • Design and adopt a school organizational structure to maximize routines and transitions.

➤ Plan

Now that the priority areas have been identified in each of the TACO domains, a rigorous, yet attainable plan is created based on the needs assessment and root cause analysis. Each of the four domains will include two parts:

- **Part One** - A series of domain specific questions which provide an overview of high-level thinking regarding future actions.
- **Part Two** - An action plan which includes the following components:

- **Goal:** A goal should be developed for each of the four domains including indicators, data source, baseline, and targets spanning three years. A goal performance measure is a means by which progress toward a goal is gauged.
- **Root Cause:** Statements describing the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of performance challenges that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the performance challenge.
- **Strategies:** A strategy should address the identified root cause. Strategies should take two or more years to implement, often much longer (Layland & Redding, 2016). If a strategy can be accomplished in one year, then it is too narrow and is most likely a useful milestone within a broader strategy. Strategies are powerful, high leverage work that builds capacity and changes practice, behavior, and belief so students are more successful. One bold strategy can have more impact than a litany of poorly implemented strategies.
- **Timeline:** The strategies (effective practices) to address root causes should be outlined over the course of three years.
- **Indicators of success:** Indicators of success help to monitor how well the strategies are working to address the root cause, i.e. if we do what we said we were going to do, how do we know it made a difference?
- **Owner:** Who is in charge of ensuring the plan is implemented?

Domain 1: Talent

Part One

Instructions: The Talent domain focuses on systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers and support staff. In the boxes below, address the following:

Explain how the review of school data, school audit findings, and the completion of the root cause analysis will inform staffing decisions.

The review of school data shows that Pulaski has been underperforming for the past three years as evidenced by the Next Generation Accountability System (NGAS). This is evidenced by the accountability index which falls below the target of 75:

Performance Indicators	Baseline/ Historical Data		
Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Accountability Index	48.7	51.5	54.3

The Commissioner’s Network Operations and Instructional Audit indicated that Pulaski fell below standard in instructional practice and evaluation and professional culture. The data sources indicate that the primary root causes for falling below standard are as follows:

- Administration inconsistent in completing the evaluation process with fidelity;
- Limited actionable feedback; and
- Absence of rigor demonstrated through surface-level questioning that does not engage students.

Administrators will participate in monthly meetings to strengthen leadership capacity. Through this process, administrators will be able to support coaches and staff in the essential elements of a student-centered environment. Additionally, we will increase our capacity in the areas of actionable feedback, supervision and accountability from district leadership to building leadership, coaches, and teachers so that there is a clear trajectory of information and implementation based on a shared understanding of a student-centered classroom.

Job descriptions at the district level are currently being revised to include language that describes the student-centered qualities we expect in successful New Britain classroom teachers. Prospective candidates should have a deep understanding of Connecticut Core State Standards, culturally responsive teaching, EL learners and the CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching. Consistent interview questions that ask applicants to describe a typical lesson and include opportunities for candidates to teach a demo lesson are beginning to be set in place. Assessment of these model lessons should include “Look Fors” for student-centered practices to assess the competency of the candidate. Future candidates who come on board at Pulaski should identify with their student-centered approach.

How will the district and school cultivate a professional learning environment to attract, support, develop, and retain high-quality teachers?

Student-centered classrooms address the specific learning needs and backgrounds of all students and is a district wide expectation. The district and school will cultivate a professional learning environment to attract, support, develop, and retain high-quality teachers by:

1. Using the current time structures devoted to New Teacher Orientation at the start of the school year to address the professional learning that current New Britain teachers have received around student-centered learning. In order to address the significant number of new teachers hired during the school year, a second New Teacher Orientation will be offered mid-year.
2. Identifying a cadre of veteran teachers who are proficient in creating a culturally responsive, student-centered classroom to mentor new teachers and assist them in demonstrating the strategies implicit in a student-centered learning environment.
3. Student-centered professional learning will continue throughout the year in New Britain University (NBU). Currently, NBU is a full day of professional learning that occurs every 6 days throughout the entire 10-month school year. Essential topics to be included at NBU are: An Introduction to Student-Centered Learning, creating a Student-Centered Learning Culture, Creating an Environment to Support Student-Centered Learning, An Introduction to a Balanced Instruction Approach and An Introduction to Balanced Literacy.

4. All NBU sessions are going to be specifically planned for and executed through the lens of the audience: principal, assistant principal, instructional coaches and teachers.
Learning walks are going to be conducted regularly with relevant staff (principal, assistant principal, instructional coaches, consultants) to calibrate, assess, evaluate and plan based on findings.
5. The structure of on-going professional learning through NBU for teachers, instructional coaches and building/district level administrators will focus on addressing student-centered instruction and supporting the newly written curriculum. The new curriculum is explicit in the CCSS, the New Britain Portrait of the Graduate (POG), assessment, research based instructional resources and methods for all students.

How will teachers be evaluated to inform professional learning offerings and staffing decisions?

In NBU teachers, principals, assistant principals and instructional coaches' sessions will be focused on student-centered learning which was noted as a major area of concern in the Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report and in the learning walks by our curriculum consultant partners (EdAdvance). The following components will constitute the plan to evaluate teachers to inform professional learning offerings and staffing decisions:

1. Professional learning sessions for administrators will include a review of all language in the CCT related to success in the classroom, with connection to real time data collected in observations and learning walks.
2. Make explicit connections with staff in NBU on observation/evaluation data to specific areas indicators and attributes of the CCT.
3. Learning walks and observations will be conducted with district-wide staff, principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches and consultants to calibrate to the *CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching 2017*: Indicators 1a, 3b and 3c. A minimum of 4 walkthrough cycles per year will be conducted in all grade 6-8 classrooms using a standardized "Look For" form for consistency throughout the school.
4. After learning walks are conducted, the data will be analyzed and used to inform further support of individual teacher's needs in the area of student-centered instruction. These needs will be addressed in professional learning sessions at NBU, staff meetings, PLCs and coaching sessions.
5. Instructional coach support will focus on the following (not exhaustive):
 - a. Environmental set up;
 - b. Instructional practices for all students;
 - c. Assessment (frequency, type and use of data);
 - d. Student/teacher discourse; and
 - e. Collaborative learning environment.
6. Coaches will support teachers through the following structures:
 - a. Consistent, yearlong support in the classroom (modeling of lessons, co-plan, co-teach, guided instruction, observations and providing feedback);
 - b. Instruction in student-centered strategies through NBU; and
 - c. Co-planning during NBU
7. Evaluation of teachers using the newly created curriculum will include how the lessons are aligned to the New Britain Portrait of a Graduate (POG), CCSS, CELP standards and strategies to address the needs of all of the students. This will assure that all New Britain students in grades 6-8 are receiving consistent assured experiences that lead to a successful graduate from New Britain High School.
8. Staff who are not responsive to the supports provided over time and whose evaluations do not show improvements in the area of creating a student-centered learning environment will be put on a plan according the teacher contract and teacher evaluation document.

Describe ongoing support and coaching opportunities for staff and school leadership.

The Consolidated School District of New Britain (CSDNB) will contract with a curriculum consultant (EdAdvance) to write, develop and support implementation of a four-year, K-12 curriculum and assessment renewal project. EdAdvance's work with NB includes extensive professional learning and coaching around student-centered environment and instruction to support the implementation of the curriculum units. This partnership will provide ongoing support and coaching for the staff and leadership through the following procedures:

1. New curriculum in ELA and Math grades 6-8 will be written. These will align with the research based EQuIP Rubric with a focus on CCSS aligned, culturally responsive unbiased assessments, instruction, resources and material for all students.

- Through the NBU description, noted above, ongoing coaching, professional learning and support will be provided through EdAdvance consultants and other outside agencies. A District Curriculum Coordinator will be dedicated to the professional learning of middle school staff and administration and will support in-house instructional coaches in modeling, coaching and learning walks throughout the year. Ongoing instructional coaching cycles will occur within the school across all grade levels. Administrative Institutes and Instructional Learning Practice (ILPs) will be held on a monthly basis. The administrative team will also engage in professional learning conducted by the external partners.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Talent three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year Talent Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 0	Target 1 Year: 1	Target 2 Year: 2	Target 3 Year: 3
Percentage of Teacher Retention	88.8% Audit	88.8%	90%	91%	92%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Talent goal.

Talent Priority: Building Staff Instructional Capacity					
Root Cause: Lack of understanding and consistent implementation of effective instruction					
Person(s) Responsible: District Coordinator of 6-12 Curriculum; Instructional Leadership Team					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Increase effective professional learning opportunities for district and school leaders, instructional coaches and staff to improve learning in a student-centered environment	3-4 cycles of professional learning (2.5 hours each) focused on student-centered learning for district/ school leaders, instructional coaches and staff	Identify the problem of practice based on student-centered learning Walkthroughs and instructional rounds based on student-centered learning	Collaboratively teachers identify a problem of practice in the area of student-centered classrooms Teachers observe teachers on a consistent basis in a student-centered classroom environment	Walkthroughs and instructional rounds data shows evidence of effective implementation of Student-centered classrooms	EdAdvance Consultants and Coaches NBU Time
Develop teacher capacity to implement 6-8 student-centered curriculum with fidelity	Establish criteria/ common understanding/ definition of what student centered learning is and looks like in practice	EdAdvance and school leadership will assess implementation and continue to build all staff capacity to include all content areas	EdAdvance and school leadership will assess implementation and continue to build all staff capacity to include all content areas	Evidence of enacted written curriculum	EdAdvance Consultants and Coaches Illustrative Math Consultant Purchase of Illustrative math NBU Time

	Coaches will provide professional learning during NBU time and in class support to staff to build their capacity to deliver curriculum and develop relationships with students without bias	including unified arts	including unified arts		Purchase of appropriate ELA resources
Implement walkthroughs to collect evidence of student-centered classrooms aligned to CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching Domain 1, indicators 3a and 3b		Walkthroughs with the lens of student-centered classrooms in math	Walkthroughs with the lens of student-centered classrooms in ELA	Data from walkthroughs that shows evidence of student-centered classrooms in ELA and math.	EdAdvance Consultants and Coaches
Implement Instructional Rounds			Train staff and implement Instructional Rounds in addition to walkthroughs	Data from Instructional Rounds that shows evidence of student-centered classrooms	EdAdvance Consultants and Coaches Instructional Rounds in Education: A Network Approach to Improving by Elizabeth A. City, Richard F. Elmore, Sarah E. Fiarman, Lee Teitel, Andrew Lachman

Domain 2: Academics

Part One

Instructions: The Academics domain focuses on how the school will redesign and/or strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment to increase student achievement. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's academic program and instructional philosophy, including the process to align the curricula and academic program to the rigor of the Connecticut Core Standards.

Based on the Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit, Pulaski Middle School is not proficient in any of the indicators within the academic domain. The root causes for scoring below standard in all six academic domains are as follows:

- Limited understanding and implementation of rigorous instruction;
- Lack of challenging instruction, scaffolded instruction to support student needs or encouragement of student discourse;
- Lack of authentic, active student engagement; and
- Curriculum and instruction is not culturally relevant, and lacks the resources to support special populations.

Pulaski Middle School follows the Consolidated School District of New Britain's (CSDNB) vision "to pursue excellence one student at a time. In partnership with family and community, the Consolidated School District of New Britain works to provide the best personalized and comprehensive whole-child education so our students will be prepared for, and positively contribute to, a profoundly different future." To ensure that all students are best prepared for any future paths they take, the CSDNB has created a philosophy based on five key skills and attributes known as the Profile of a Graduate that is tied into curriculums district-wide. These skills and attributes are: Analyze & Construct Arguments Based on Evidence; Critical & Creative Problem Solving; Empathy & Cross-Cultural Understanding; Meaningful & Purposeful Communications; and Initiative. Over the next three years, Ed Advance and the Pulaski Middle School staff will write, design and support the implementation of a culturally relevant and rigorous curriculum aligned to the Connecticut Core State Standards in ELA, math, science, and social studies. An audit of existing curriculum and materials will be conducted using the EQuIP Rubric. Information gathered from the audit will drive the writing of the new curriculum using the newly designed K-12 template.

The template will align to CCSS, CELF standards, the New Britain POG, Essential Questions, instructional supports and assessments. Units will meet the needs of a diverse range of learners with culturally relevant content, embedded support in SEL, EL and differentiated instructional strategies and resources. During this period, coaches, teachers and administrators will participate in continual professional learning using formative assessment to drive instruction. This will be facilitated via New Britain University (NBU), which is a weekly 2-hour, 45-minute professional learning session that occurs throughout the entire 10-month school year with the EdAdvance consultants where teachers and coaches will continue their own learning. A session will be designed, planned and implemented for administrators to learn how to coach and evaluate staff members through the new curriculum to continue practices beyond the Commissioner's Network timeframe.

New units in ELA, math, science, and social studies will be unpacked, with the focus of planning intentional lessons around gathered data to increase student learning. During these sessions, there will be an emphasis put on practicing using the data to determine instruction. Data will be analyzed and instructional goals will be set based on this information. This work will happen in data teams during NBU sessions, common planning time and PLC time. In the newly created culturally relevant curriculum, the areas of ELA, math, science, and social studies for grades 6-8, will be renewed. There will be identified research based instructional strategies for addressing the CELF standards, social emotional development and students with different learning needs. As new units are introduced, these areas will continually be emphasized in lesson planning and implementation.

Describe how staff will use data to inform lesson plans, differentiate instruction, and provide remedial support to meet the academic and developmental needs of all students.

In order to best identify student needs for intervention, an SRBI audit will be completed of all intervention programs. The lack of consistent use of SRBI practices and use of data to inform instruction have been identified as root causes for below standard levels of student engagement and academic rigor. The audit will allow Pulaski to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the systems in place in order to refine and implement interventions that will best support instruction.

Teachers will use meeting time to develop and create a data culture that empowers teachers, school leaders, students, and families. This mindset will develop and instill a shared responsibility for improving student outcomes. Teachers will get structured time to compare data including, but not limited to, student attendance, benchmark assessment data, and behavioral data. Teachers will collect and analyze student data, and use data to inform and differentiate instruction on a regular basis. These meetings will allow teachers to review and discuss individual student progress, student trends by standard, student/school trends over time, and grading policies. Teachers will be expected to report out on how data has informed classroom instruction and individual growth goals for students. This work will happen in School Intervention Team (S.I.T) meetings, data teams, NBU sessions, common planning time and PLC time. Pulaski will continue to align the Kid Talk Team (Tier I) with the S.I.T. Tier II team structure in order to streamline the process to create a comprehensive school tiered intervention system.

Describe ongoing professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction.

During weekly, yearlong NBU, staff will receive professional learning on the formative assessment cycle with administration and instructional coaches. The use of data to drive instruction will be supported during the unpacking of units and lesson planning based on student needs and assessment. This will include the use of pre/post assessments, integrated performance tasks and interim assessments. Professional learning will also focus on additional evidence of learning (common formative assessments, progress monitoring tools, POG Skills Rubric and POG Self Reflection Tools Aligned to Attributes) in each unit. The new curriculum will be explicit in the CCSS, the New Britain POG, assessment, research based instructional resources and methods for all students. Student-centered learning encompasses strategies for all students (EL, SEL, special education, etc.). Student-centered learning is culturally responsive and encompasses strategies for all students (EL, SEL, special education, etc.). It includes the seven structures of best practices of teaching for all students: gradual release of responsibility, classroom workshop, strategic thinking, collaborative activities, integrated units, representing to learn and formative-reflective assessment (Zemelman et al., 2012).

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, the Academic three-year goal will include School Performance Index and Smarter Balanced Growth Model (as applicable) indicators for ELA and Math. The baseline and targets should reflect the ESSA Milestone Targets.

Three-Year English Language Arts Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2018-19	Target 1 Year:2020-21	Target 2 Year:2021-22	Target 3 Year:2022-23
ELA School Performance Index	Edsight	45.5%	50.6%	53.0%	55.5%
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model	Edsight	42.8%	51.6%	56.4%	61.3%

Three-Year Math Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year:	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
Math School Performance Index	Edsight	35.2%	46.9%	49.8%	52.6%
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model	Edsight	35.7%	59.9%	63.9%	67.9%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Academic goals.

Academic Priority: Comprehensive System of Curriculum and Assessment for All Content Areas					
Root Cause: Certain content areas are not aligned to Connecticut Core Standards and is therefore resulting in a lack of rigor. There is a lack of a common understanding of what it means to provide differentiated instruction and the school does not have the capacity to offer the services needed to meet the diverse needs of all students, including those with IEP's, 504's and those who are learning English as a second language. School lacks an SRBI Team and also lack active data teams that utilize relevant data to drive instruction and tiered grouping.					
Person(s) Responsible: District Coordinator of Curriculum for Grades 6-12, Pulaski Administrator Team, K-12 EL Coordinator					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Align curricula to the CCSS and POG to ensure rigor	Write new 6-8 ELA curriculum units Write new 6-8 Math curriculum units	Implement newly developed 6-8 ELA curriculum units Implement newly developed 6-8 math curriculum units	Independently enact newly developed 6-8 ELA curriculum Independently enact newly developed 6-8 math curriculum	Curricula is aligned An increase in scores in ELA formative and summative assessment data An increase in scores in Math formative and summative assessment data	Consultants (EdAdvance, Illustrative Math) Instructional Coaches NBU Time Purchase of standards-based ELA primary resource Illustrative Math Resources
Ongoing professional learning for differentiation	Provide effective professional learning for differentiation for different student needs Follow up support on how to differentiate effectively, after professional learning	Follow up support on how to differentiate effectively, after walkthroughs and observations Provide feedback on teacher-identified problem of practice based on differentiation	Professional learning for teachers to work collaboratively to identify and address a problem of practice based on differentiation Calibrate feedback on teacher-identified problem of practice based on differentiation	Increase in proficient and exemplary rating on CCT rubric in 1a, 3b and 3c Increase in formative and summative assessment results	Instructional Coaches NBU Time
Create a comprehensive SRBI System	Conduct Intervention Inventory of current intervention programs and practices	Review and analyze the effectiveness of current interventions, programs and augment with	Provide professional learning and coaching for selected intervention programs	Landscape of intervention programs that address specific student needs Teachers using data to inform instruction to	Purchasing of additional intervention programs and diagnostic assessment

	<p>Create SRBI flowchart and review current protocols and intervention tools for Literacy, Numeracy, behavior</p> <p>Develop SRBI processes, procedures and protocols for Tier I and Tier II Intervention students</p> <p>Refine procedures for Tier II students that merges with building level S.I.T. team</p> <p>Streamline the format of the Kid Talk Protocols to include traditional SRBI data to assist in the creation and implementation of interventions/ referrals</p> <p>Create a flowchart, schedule and Calendar for data team meetings</p>	<p>additional strategies</p> <p>Research, and pilot additional intervention programs in numeracy and literacy based on student need</p> <p>Refine SRBI model with increased focus to implement Tier II and III strategies with fidelity</p>	<p>Implement selected intervention programs</p> <p>Further develop the menu of academic interventions</p>	<p>meet the needs of individual students</p>	<p>Planning time for teachers and interventionists</p>
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Academic Priority: Student Engagement					
Root Cause: Lack of authentic engagement evidenced by student work production and an increase of behavior incidents. Lack of strong teacher/student relationships. There has not been clear communication, guidance, and professional learning provided to teachers on what student engagement looks like in the classroom					
Person(s) Responsible: District Coordinator of Curriculum for Grades 6-12, Pulaski Administrator Team, Pulaski Restorative Practitioners					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Increase effective professional learning opportunities for staff to improve learning in a student-centered environment	3-4 cycles of professional learning (2.5 hour sessions each), of student-centered learning for district/school leaders,	Professional learning to identify and work to address a problem of practice based on student- centered learning	Professional learning for teachers to work collaboratively to identify and address a problem of practice based on	<p>Walkthroughs indicate a more student-centered environment</p> <p>Increase in proficient and exemplary rating</p>	<p>Consultants (EdAdvanceand Illustrative Math) Instructional Coaches</p> <p>NBU Time</p>

	instructional coaches and staff in ELA, math, science and social studies	Walkthroughs and instructional rounds based on student-centered learning	student-centered classrooms	on CCT rubric in 1a, 3b and 3c	
Create a professional, collaborative school culture around student-centered learning	<p>District and school leaders and instructional coaches attend at least one teacher professional learning session each cycle</p> <p>Establishing criteria for student engagement expectations</p> <p>Developing awareness amongst members of the leadership team focused on culturally responsive teaching to address implicit bias</p>	<p>Instructional rounds by district and school administration and instructional coaches</p> <p>Implement criteria for student engagement expectations</p> <p>Provide PD to all staff focused on culturally responsive practices that address implicit bias</p>	<p>Collaborative instructional rounds by teachers</p> <p>Refine criteria for student engagement expectations</p> <p>Monitor and refine culturally responsive practices that address implicit bias</p>	Data from walkthroughs that shows evidence of student-centered classrooms and student engagement expectations	<p>Consultants (EdAdvance and Illustrative Math)</p> <p>Instructional Coaches</p> <p><i>Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students</i></p>
Leadership professional learning	<p>3-4 professional learning sessions on look-fors and providing actionable feedback on student-centered learning for district/school leaders</p> <p>Instructional rounds</p>	<p>Provide feedback on teacher-identified problem of practice based on student-centered learning</p> <p>Instructional rounds</p>	<p>Calibrate feedback on teacher-identified problem of practice based on student-centered learning</p> <p>Calibrate instructional rounds based on student-centered learning</p>	<p>Increase in proficient and exemplary rating on CCT rubric in 1a, 3b and 3c</p> <p>Increase in formative and summative assessment results</p> <p>Data from instructional rounds</p>	<p>Consultants (EdAdvance and Illustrative Math)</p> <p>Instructional Coaches</p> <p>NBU Time</p>
Professional learning for instructional coaches	3-4 professional learning sessions on coaching strategies to support teachers in planning student-centered learning and providing	<p>Coach teachers on teacher-identified problem of practice based on student-centered learning</p> <p>Instructional rounds</p>	<p>Instructional rounds</p> <p>Collaboratively create and implement action plans with teachers based on pre-</p>	<p>Increase in proficient and exemplary rating on CCT rubric in 1a, 3b and 3c</p> <p>Increase in formative and summative</p>	<p>Consultants (EdAdvance and Illustrative Math)</p> <p>Instructional Coaches</p> <p>Building and District Administrators</p>

	<p>actionable feedback to promote growth</p> <p>Instructional rounds</p> <p>Collaboratively create and implement goal-oriented action plans with teachers based on pre-assessment of student-centered elements</p>	<p>Collaboratively create and implement action plans with teachers based on pre-assessment of student-centered elements</p>	<p>assessment of student-centered elements</p>	<p>assessment results</p> <p>Data from walkthroughs that shows evidence of student-centered classrooms</p> <p>Successfully achieved action plans and positive teacher surveys completed after coaching</p>	<p>NBU Time</p>
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Domain 3: Culture and Climate

Part One

Instructions: The Culture and Climate domain targets creating a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for all students and staff, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's behavior management system and strategies to shape positive school culture.

Based on the Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit, Pulaski is not proficient in any of the indicators within the culture and climate area. It ranked below standard in the areas of interpersonal interactions, student attendance, and student behavior. The primary root causes of our below standard culture and climate are as follows:

- Interactions between staff and students are lacking respect, warmth and engagement as there is a lack of connection and rapport between student and staff;
- Unclear and inconsistent enforcement of expectations;
- Consistent messaging is not pervasive throughout the school; and
- Low engagement from the community and families.

The school's behavior intervention system will be based on a progressive and restorative approach; designed to enable teachers to motivate all students and provide them with a support system of trusting adults in the building.

Pulaski will strengthen school-wide implementation of the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model by creating a PBIS committee, and seeking input from team leaders, teachers, and other school leadership that are PBIS trained. In order to maximize the use of instructional time to further student learning, a strong and consistent behavior management system is necessary to minimize disruptive behaviors that can divert attention away from academics. School values, expectations, and consequences will be posted in classrooms and common spaces, providing visual reminders and cues to students. In the first year of implementation, the school will conduct an intensive reboot of its PBIS system, looking toward fidelity and intensity of implementation across all faculty and staff. Such behavior management tools and protocols will include:

- Increasing student engagement;
- School rules and behavioral expectations and norms;
- Use of rewards and incentives to reinforce positive behaviors;
- Tiered consequences for significant or repeated behavioral infractions; and
- Referral processes and forms.

Training in these protocols and procedures will be included in the comprehensive professional learning plan based on teacher needs and developing school wide consistency.

The PBIS Team will meet monthly to assess the fidelity of implementation and effectiveness. Pulaski will create a culture that celebrates, expects, and encourages strong character, and positive behaviors and interactions. Students/ classrooms/ teams will earn rewards for laudable behaviors; students, faculty and staff will create norms around what warrants such awards and incentives. Students/ classrooms/ teams can identify ways to earn incentives. This approach supports and creates camaraderie, positive peer encouragement, and character development. Parents will be invited to attend informational sessions and workshops to learn about the language and protocols being used at Pulaski to encourage alignment with academic and behavioral expectations at home. The PBIS Committee will lead the design and implementation of the school's PBIS system. Teachers and leaders will proactively teach, post, and reinforce academic and behavioral expectations, including in different locations and during different times of the school day. In addition to positive reinforcement, the PBIS coordinator, PBIS committee, and school leaders will design and implement a tiered response to behavioral infractions. The tiered system will clearly articulate common infractions (e.g., teasing, swearing, and physical altercations) and the range of consequences for each infraction. The Leadership Team will lead the design and implementation of the tiered behavior management system, promoting staff buy-in and fidelity in implementation. The Leadership Team will monitor student behavior data and apply targeted supports and interventions, as needed.

Development And Enhancement Of Tier I Strategies: Teachers will have a "cheat sheet" of redirection and de-escalation strategies to employ before referring a student for disciplinary action outside the classroom. In addition, Pulaski, in partnership with a Restorative Practitioner, will work to strengthen Tier I practices, and learn the foundation concepts of managing school climate within the framework of the Restorative Practices model. Over the course of the first year, the restorative practitioner will work with the teachers to build capacity and further train all staff members. In the second year, the

school will enter into a full year-long process of training all school members in Basic and Advanced Climate and Basic Restorative Practices.

Tier II And III Interventions: Pulaski will provide professional learning in Trauma Informed Teaching for all staff. Trained staff will employ the strategies of this framework as the foundation Tier II approach for students who are facing significant challenges in the school setting. In addition to this training, staff will be trained on culturally responsive teaching that addresses implicit bias and disparate impact. The school will also improve their Practices partnership with the school-based health clinic organization that provides medical, dental, and Tier III clinical and medical mental health intervention to students through educating parents about the benefits it provides their child. Students requiring Tier III behavior interventions were selected to be on an academic intervention team starting in Fall 2019. These students are given more individualized attention and support with smaller class sizes. Students are temporarily removed from their classroom to work with a Behavior Support Assistant (BSA), who can help them to address and resolve the root causes of their classroom outbursts. This approach will ensure the student is ready to reenter the classroom without unnecessarily disrupting teaching and learning for the other students in the classroom. During fall 2020, staff will review the successes and downfalls of the program in order to develop an improved comprehensive plan; including student referral criteria, support programming, data collection and analysis, and exit criteria.

Explain how the school will promote strong family and community connections to support school goals.

Pulaski is committed to a number of strategies to enhance the quality of its involvement with families. The school will conduct a multi-lingual family survey at the start of the school year. The purpose of the survey will be to determine what families value in terms of participation in the education of their children, events and strategies that meet their logistical needs for participation, and to find talents, skills and connections that could be introduced into the school environment to support instruction. Pulaski will continue to convene and leverage its PTO, particularly as the school begins implementation of its Commissioner's Network plan. The PTO, which includes teachers, parents, leaders, and community members, will provide important feedback and implementation support. The PTO will also work on setting a calendar of school-based events for the year at the start of the school year that will be made public. Pulaski offers a variety of meaningful family engagement events throughout the school year. For example, last year, Pulaski hosted a number of open houses, concerts, sporting events, Science Night and Multicultural Night. It is not uncommon for Pulaski to draw upwards of 500 parents and family members to these events. Next year, Pulaski will work to increase the academic nature of family events. For example, staff will look to engage families (in fun and meaningful ways) around academic standards, student progress, and strategies to reinforce learning and behaviors outside of school hours. In addition to the Pulaski Open House and parent-teacher conferences, each content area will organize an academically based family event.

Additionally, Pulaski will work to reconnect with the Family Engagement Team working with community partners and business leaders to identify and leverage the many assets in the surrounding community (i.e., volunteers, mentors, donations, fundraising). This team will work to enhance collaboration with the community to engage teachers and school staff in effective outreach and service to families. They will together design strategies to extend engagement and collaboration with families outside of the structure and constraints of the school day and building. To improve community engagement Pulaski will utilize the Coalition of New Britain Youth to reach out to more community partners and invite them to school events such as Open House, conferences, family and educational events. In order to create strong school/family connections, Pulaski will:

- Maintain a clear and accessible school website;
- Employ multiple means of communication in multiple languages (e.g., website, email, Twitter, Facebook, text messages, Parent-link, newsletters);
- Host fun and engaging family events at the school (e.g. music performances, art shows, cultural events, academic celebrations);
- Respond to parent emails and phone calls within 24 hours;
- Make proactive and positive phone calls to parents;
- Issue monthly school-wide newsletters to share happenings and events;
- Provide families with easy access to their child's attendance and academic data;
- Create and cultivate an active PTO;
- Partner with community organizations to lead parenting and family workshops;
- Provide childcare during family events to create a welcoming school environment; and
- Host parent events to support parents and guardians (literacy, math, child development, supporting your student, etc.).

Describe the school's attendance intervention system.

Student attendance and chronic absenteeism are significant areas of concern at Pulaski. In order to improve attendance, Pulaski will work on a tiered approach that begins with prevention, focused on Tier I universal school wide strategies that encourage attendance for all students. The following strategies provide a sampling of Pulaski's planned attendance strategies:

- Create a school community that is warm and welcoming for students and families and offers culturally competent and enriching learning opportunities that makes students want to attend school on a daily basis;
- Define, communicate and hold staff accountable for the expectations regarding the role of teachers in reducing chronic absenteeism;
- Provide teachers with a list of students who were chronically absent in the past year;
- Recognize perfect and improved attendance through shout outs, positive calls home, and attendance celebrations;
- Identify students who have been chronically absent or at risk of being chronically absent in the past and set up individual meetings with those families before the beginning of the school year and at consistent times throughout the year; and
- Align practices between school and district on how chronic absenteeism data is calculated to ensure accuracy.

Tier II strategies include:

- Check-in/check-out system for students who are chronically absent from school (i.e., assigning chronically absent students to an adult mentor in the school);
- Personalize early outreach;
- Caring mentors; and
- Action plan that addresses barriers and increases engagement.

Tier III strategies include:

- After school incentive program for Tier III attendance students;
- Develop individualized learning plans for high risk and high needs students and address prior attendance along with low academic performance; and
- Partner with community agencies that offer resources that can help engage students and their families and remove barriers to attending school.

Describe how the school will address students' social and emotional well-being.

To foster positive relationships, build a sense of community, and support college and career readiness, students will take a Seminar (formerly known as Advisory) class that will have a curriculum to promote strong student-teacher relationships. The Seminar period will be dedicated to character education, interdisciplinary skills, and college and career readiness. The class will engage students in lessons based on the Engaging Schools Learning and Life Competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social efficacy and academic efficacy. In Seminar, students will also track progress toward individual goals, understanding their strengths and needs for growth, and tracking their progress towards their high school and career goals. In addition, students will be taught how to lead their own conferences lending their own voices and taking ownership of their own learning; as well as other leadership opportunities that will empower students and build confidence.

To facilitate student leadership in building relationships amongst themselves as well as with staff, a restorative practitioner in cooperation with Pulaski administration will conduct a walkthrough of the school facility and classrooms to assess alignment with Restorative Practices (RP). The purpose will be to identify areas of strength and those in need of improvement. Pulaski will plan professional learning for all staff that gives an overview of school culture and climate, bias and cultural competence, and further training in Restorative Practices. The goal will be to build capacity in the building and further training to support teachers in developing better relationships with students. Also, to develop a safer climate and better equip staff to respond to Tier I and II behaviors appropriately to prevent escalating behaviors and Tier III situations. Pulaski will educate families in positive behavior management and Restorative Practices, to ensure home-school consistency and reinforcement. Throughout the day, teachers will find

specific ways to model and showcase expected behaviors, and to build upon student-teacher relationships. Pulaski will continue to rely on its Restorative Team to mobilize the resources of the school, the district, and the surrounding community to meet the developmental needs of students. The Restorative Team will include, but not be limited to, administration, psychologist, social worker, and special education teachers.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Culture and Climate three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Culture and Climate Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2018-2019	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
Decrease Suspension Rate	Review360	27.8%	25.0%	22.5%	20.0%
Decrease Chronic Absenteeism Rate	PowerSchool	27.9%	16.7%	15.6%	14.4%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Culture and Climate goal.

Culture and Climate Priority: Improved student attendance and overall behavior					
Root Cause: Student engagement is lacking so students do not feel connected to what Pulaski is offering personally and academically					
Person(s) Responsible: All members of the Pulaski Staff					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Implementation of Tiered Attendance strategies	Evaluate current attendance strategies and effectiveness Identify high risk and high needs students based on previous year's data and establish support at the beginning of the year	Evaluate and refine tiered strategies with a focus on tier I strategies and addressing needs upfront Identify high risk and high needs students based on previous year's data and establish support at the beginning of the year	Refine tiered strategies with a focus on tier I strategies and addressing needs upfront Identify high risk and high needs students based on previous year's data and establish support at the beginning of the year	Decreases in chronic absenteeism rates	Funding for an Attendance Coordinator Funding for after school programs tied to student sub-groups that have high chronic absenteeism
Implementation of PBIS school wide	Initial school wide training of PBIS practices Evaluate program for effectiveness	School-wide PBIS implementation	Monitor and evaluate implementation of PBIS	Decreases in suspensions	Training and assistance from PBIS trained staff
Implementation of Restorative	Whole school further	Establishing school-wide	Establishing academic uses of	Decreases in suspensions	Training and professional

Practices school wide Increase effective professional learning in restorative practices applications	implementation in basic restorative practices and effective use of circles	circle times committed to building rapport in the classroom	circles and empowering students to be a circle leader	and chronic absenteeism rates	learning from a Restorative Practitioner
	Feedback focused on implementation of restorative practices by RP trained staff	Feedback focused on implementation of restorative practices by RP trained staff	Feedback focused on implementation of restorative practices by RP trained staff	90%+ staff trained in restorative practices and effective use of circles	
	School leaders and staff attend professional learning that reviews the beginning aspects of the restorative practices continuum	Responsive professional learning for restorative practices based on observations and walkthroughs	Ongoing training of restorative practices for new teachers and teachers unfamiliar with the process	Increase of positive relationships between students and staff	
	Create and establish a team that will construct a school wide protocol for behavioral incidents	Visit sites that are utilizing restorative practices successfully	Collaborate with the community and other stakeholders to reinforce the restorative culture within the school community	Decrease in behavioral incidents Increase of uninterrupted instructional time	

Culture and Climate Priority: Strengthen family and community partnerships					
Root Cause: There is a lack of school to home connection, particularly with families who speak a language other than English					
Person(s) Responsible: Pulaski staff					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Implement student- centered activities and opportunities for family and community engagement	Review current school activities and opportunities for engagement, and identify areas of need Incorporate resources in multiple languages spoken by our families	Plan new events and opportunities centered around student learning and family resources Incorporate resources in multiple languages spoken by our families	Evaluate and refine school events Incorporate resources in multiple languages spoken by our families Provide oral and written translation at school events	Increase in parent/ family participation and engagement in school activities	Coalition of New Britain Youth

	Provide oral and written translation at school events using school based resources	Provide oral and written translation at school events using school based resources	using school based resources		
Develop community partnerships to support future and career pathways	<p>Establish connections for all students to National Academy Foundations (NAF), pathways at the high school level</p> <p>Participate in academy visits to the high school or surrounding school options to align career pathways to career readiness curriculum implemented at Pulaski</p>	Align connections for all students to NAF pathways at the high school level	Provide students with opportunities to connect with professionals in their preferred fields.	Increase in student engagement and attendance	<p>Opportunities for site visit</p> <p>NAF</p> <p>Community Partners presence in the school</p>

Domain 4: Operations

Part One

Instructions: The Operations domain focuses on systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources. In the boxes below, address the following:

Propose the length of the school day and year for students, and describe how the proposed schedule will maximize instructional time on task for each major instructional/content area.

Based on the Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report for Pulaski Middle School, Pulaski is not proficient in any of the indicators within the operations area. It has ranked the use of instructional time as below standard. The primary root cause of our below standard for operations is the loss of instructional time observed in all classrooms due to the following:

- Poor pacing;
- Lack of student engagement;
- Students entering late; and
- Student misbehavior.

Pulaski Middle School's Administration Team is currently exploring different scheduling options to maximize instruction and provide students with increased intervention time in literacy and numeracy. This team is reviewing the current schedule and planning for scheduling improvements for the 2020-2021 school year; developing a seven-period daily schedule and exploring an option for an A/B block schedule for ELA and Math. The block schedule option will enable teachers to provide focused intervention time and streamlined services for Tier I and II students in literacy and numeracy. This schedule will be determined and set by June 2020 and implemented in August 2020. The following options are also being explored as part of the schedule improvements to maximize student learning:

- Daily STEAM periods;
- Returning to grade level teams; and
- Four days of collaborative team work that includes, but not limited to:
 - Collaborative lesson planning;
 - Review student data to drive instruction and support SRBI processes; and
 - Coaches assigned to specific teams to provide ongoing professional learning focused on a culturally responsive curriculum and student-centered learning.

Propose the length of the school day and year for staff, including additional time before and during the school year for professional learning and/or common planning time.

The length of the school day for staff will be set at 7 hours with an additional hour per week for faculty/team/data meetings, a weekly after school 45-minute extra help period and a 185-day calendar, as designated by the teachers collective bargaining agreement. Pulaski's Administration Team is reviewing the current schedule and beginning planning for scheduling improvements for the 2020-2021 school year. This schedule will be determined and set by June 2020 and implemented in August 2020. The following options are also being explored as part of the schedule improvements to maximize time for staff professional learning and common planning time:

- Returning to grade level teams will facilitate building organizational structure to maximize routines and transitions to help create a smooth and orderly environment that leads to increased instructional time;
- Common planning time across grade levels through NBU; and
- Time will be provided one Wednesday a month after school, for one hour, to allow vertical collaboration between content areas.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the school Operations three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Operations Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year:	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
Accountability Index	ESSA Milestone Targets	54.3	57.0	59.8	62.6

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year culture goal.

Operations Priority: Create an appropriate organizational structure that supports teacher professional growth that will maximize student learning					
Root Cause: The loss of instructional time due to scheduling inefficiencies					
Person(s) Responsible: Principal, Assistant Principal, Coaches, Leadership Team					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Devise a schedule maximizing instructional time, routines and transitions to help create a smooth and orderly organizational environment	An improved schedule that allows for ELA and MATH to promote opportunities for interventions and student-centered lessons Implement Grade level teams to facilitate orderly transitions	Review and improve on schedule	Review and improve on schedule	Schedule that will maximize instruction time, intervention opportunities and collaboration Reduce transitions	PowerScheduler Leadership Coach
Professional learning for teachers to maximize instruction with a focus on student-centered lessons with the schedule	Coaches to provide training and in class support to teachers to build their capacity to deliver curriculum in time allotted based on the new schedule Walkthroughs and Instructional rounds by coaches and school administrators Baseline data from walkthroughs and Instructional rounds to inform next steps	Coaches and school administrators will assess the schedule and continue to support and build teacher capacity Data from walkthroughs and Instructional rounds to inform next steps	Coaches and school administrators will assess the schedule and continue to support and build teacher capacity Data from walkthroughs and Instructional rounds to inform next steps	Data from walkthroughs and instructional rounds showing teachers maximizing instruction with a focus on student-centered activities in the allotted time	Leadership Coach. EdAdvance Consultants and Coaches

Action 7: Sustainability Plan

Instructions: In the box below, describe the sustainability plan which addresses the following:

- How will the school build its capacity in order to sustain progress made using Commissioner's Network funds during Commissioner's Network participation years?
- How will the district support and monitor plans and activities subsequent to the end of Commissioner's Network participation?

Pulaski Middle School will utilize funding from the Commissioner's Network to build capacity and sustain changes:

- Domain I: Talent: Instructional Coaching will strengthen our leadership capacity in order to support administrators, coaches, teachers and staff in a student-centered environment. ILPs will continue to increase capacity on a monthly basis focusing on areas of actionable feedback, supervision and accountability to align district leadership to building leadership, coaches, teachers and students. The district and school will cultivate a professional learning environment to attract, continuously support, develop, and retain high-quality teachers through orientation, mentorships, student-centered NBU and evaluation and professional learning utilizing documentation.
- Domain II: Academics: Pulaski will partner with EdAdvance to write, design, and support implementation of a rigorous student-centered curriculum that will maximize instructional time through ongoing professional learning. It will include calibration of assessment and evaluations based upon data analysis of practices and strategies. Coaches, teachers and administrators will participate in continual professional learning through NBU, PLCs, and common planning time. SRBI, SIT, and Kid Talk will align to streamline the process to create a comprehensive school tiered intervention system.
- Domain III: Culture and Climate will build and strengthen our implementation of a school wide PBIS model maximizing instructional time by supporting cohesive school expectations and norms, rewards and incentives. There will be training and resources provided on tiered interventions and consequences. Ongoing monthly meetings will be held to assess implementation and effectiveness, incorporating a community that invites all stakeholders to build on these practices. Restorative practices and Trauma Informed Teaching professional learning will provide Pulaski with an environment conducive to safe and healthy learning. The PTO will continue to provide information, in many languages, from all stakeholders and we will increase community involvement including reconnecting Pulaski with our Family Engagement Team to assist with effective outreach for families with service needs.
- Domain IV: Operations includes scheduling changes including STEAM periods, grade level teams and improving on building environment. Schedule changes will be made without requiring additional staffing or resources.

The district will support and monitor plans and activities subsequent to the end of the Commissioner's Network participation through:

- The Assistant Superintendent will be an active participant of the Turnaround Team during the years of the Commissioner's Network participation. He will support and monitor the progress by coaching and evaluating the administrative team on an ongoing basis. Support will include attendance at weekly meetings to monitor the effectiveness of the team protocols and data-driven decision-making and problem-solving. In addition, the District Coordinator of 6-12 Curriculum will support the alignment of school and district goals by conducting walkthroughs to ensure that teachers are implementing the culturally relevant student-centered curriculum consistently.

Section 8: Budget Proposal

8.1 BUDGET PROPOSAL

After the SBE approves the Turnaround Plan, the school is eligible to receive a Network grant in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h (a).

Instructions: Using the Excel workbook provided, please create a one-year budget proposal outlining new costs associated with the Turnaround Plan and leveraging all available funding sources.

1. **Budget Cover Page:** Please enter the school name on the cover sheet. The remaining cells summarizing the entire budget workbook will be auto-generated as you complete the Network proposal, bond request, and Wraparound Grant proposal. Please do not enter cost information on the cover page.
2. **Part I: Commissioner's Network Year 1 Budget Proposal:** Please insert information pertaining to the proposed Commissioner's Network budget for the school. The budget should reflect all new expenditures contained in the Turnaround Plan and show the proposed funding source(s) for each new cost. Possible funding sources include, but are not limited to, the school's local operating budget, the federal budget, the Alliance District grant, the Priority School District grant, the Commissioner's Network grant, and/or other grants. Please categorize proposed expenditures by Uniform Charts of Accounts codes (see Appendix B). For each expenditure, provide the following information in the appropriate columns: (a) label the position/service/item; (b) provide cost information and/or a budget justification (e.g., summary of the expense, # of units, cost per unit, etc.); (c) enter the total cost; (d) list all funding sources; and (e) show how the investment is strategically aligned to the Turnaround Plan by identifying the section of the plan that describes the corresponding strategy. The budget proposal will be evaluated for strategic alignment and anticipated impact as the award amount is determined by the CSDE after the State Board of Education approves the Turnaround Plan. When adding personnel through the Commissioner's Network grant, please use the following formula for all salaries and benefits built into the plan.

Year 1:	75 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/25 percent paid through alternative funding
Year 2:	50 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/50 percent paid through alternative funding
Year 3:	25 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/75 percent paid through alternative funding
Year 4:	0 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/100 percent paid through alternative funding

Section 9: Modifications

During the term of the school's participation in the Commissioner's Network, the Commissioner shall review the progress of each school. The Commissioner or designee may, on the basis of such review, convene the Turnaround Committee to, as part of its monitoring responsibility, address a lack of sufficient progress or other implementation issues at the school. The Turnaround Committee may consider and enact changes to the Turnaround Plan by consensus. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact changes or the changes are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at the school, including, but not limited to, finding the Turnaround Plan deficient and developing a revised Turnaround Plan.

PART IV: APPENDIX SECTION

Appendix A: Turnaround Committee Signatures Page

Please Note: Applicants should not sign this section of the application until the Turnaround Committee reaches consensus on the Turnaround Plan and is ready to submit a final copy of such plan to the CSDE.

We, the undersigned members of the Turnaround Committee, on the basis of a consensus agreement, submit this Turnaround Plan to the Commissioner for final selection of the school into the Commissioner's Network.

Signature of Superintendent, Non-Voting Chair

Date

Nancy Sarra
Name of Superintendent (typed)

Signature of Board of Education-appointed Parent

Date

Marangeliz Rivera
Name of Board of Education-appointed Parent (typed)

Signature of Board of Education-appointed Administrator

Date

Johanna Robles
Name of Board of Education-appointed Administrator (typed)

Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

Date

Kimberly Gionfriddo

Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)

Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

Date

Jeffrey White

Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)

Signature of Union-appointed Parent

Date

Debra Richardson

Name of Union-appointed Parent (*typed*)

Signature of Commissioner of Education

Date

Dr. Miguel Cardona

Name of Commissioner of Education (*typed*)

Turnaround Committee Participation

In the table below, please input the names and titles of the additional stakeholders not referenced above that were involved in the development of this turnaround application:

Name	Title
Jessica Arasimowicz	Teacher
Ana Dávila	Teacher
Kevin Dukes	Campus Safety Officer
Mike Foran	Assistant Superintendent
Jason Gibson	Community Partner
Wilfredo Irizarry	Dean of Students
Ella Mirmina	Social Worker
Michelle Norton	Behavior Support Assistant
Rosa Ortiz	Assistant Principal
Julie Plaza	Teacher
Tammy Rosado	Teacher
Joanna Ruggerio	Community Partner
Alyssa Serville	Teacher
Sudha Sikka	Teacher
Heather Whitehead	Assistant Principal
Mary Zottola	Teacher

Appendix B: Budget Information

As noted in Section 8.1, please code all expenditures in accordance with the state's Uniform Charts of Accounts as summarized below.

CODE:	OBJECT:
100	PERSONNEL SERVICES – SALARIES. Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary grantee employees including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This includes gross salary for personnel services rendered while on the payroll of the grantees.
200	PERSONNEL SERVICES – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS. Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are parts of the cost of personnel services.
300	PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES. Services, which by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, accountants, technical assistance support organizations, school management partners, etc.
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES. Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. Persons other than grantee employees perform these services. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
500	OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES. Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
600	SUPPLIES. Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances.
700	PROPERTY. Expenditures for acquiring fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, initial equipment, additional equipment, and replacement of equipment. In accordance with the Connecticut State Comptroller's definition equipment, included in this category are all items of equipment (machinery, tools, furniture, vehicles, apparatus, etc.) with a value of over \$5,000 and the useful life of more than one year and data processing equipment that has unit price under \$5,000 and a useful life of not less than five years.
800	OTHER OBJECTS. (Miscellaneous Expenditures) Expenditures for goods or services not properly classified in one of the above objects. Included in the category could be expenditures for dues and fees, judgments against a grantee that are not covered by liability insurance, and interest payments on bonds and notes.

Appendix C: Statement of Assurances

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES | GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE: Commissioner's Network

THE APPLICANT: Consolidated School District of New Britain HEREBY ASSURES THAT:
Pulaski Middle School
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;
- C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project's completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;
- H. The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;
- K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;
- L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)

References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

- i. “Commission” means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
- ii. “Contract” and “contract” include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
- iii. “Contractor” and “contractor” include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
- iv. “Gender identity or expression” means a person’s gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person’s core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.
- v. “good faith” means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
- vi. “good faith efforts” shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
- vii. “marital status” means being single, married as recognized by the State of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
- viii. “mental disability” means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association’s “Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders”, or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
- ix. “minority business enterprise” means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of C.G.S. § 32-9n; and
- x. “public works contract” means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms “Contract” and “contract” do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, unless the contract is a municipal public works contract or quasi-public agency project contract, (2) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in C.G.S. § 1-267, (3) the federal government, (4) a foreign government, or (5) an agency of a subdivision, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), or (4).

- (b) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin,

ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an “affirmative action-equal opportunity employer” in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers’ representative of the Contractor’s commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and C.G.S. §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e, 46a-68f and 46a-86; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the provisions of this Section and C.G.S. § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, municipal public works contract or contract for a quasi-public agency project, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he or she will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works or quasi-public agency projects.

- (c) Determination of the Contractor’s good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor’s employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.
- (d) The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.
- (e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract

with the State and in every subcontract entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a municipal public works contract for a quasi-public agency project, and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with C.G.S. § 46a-56, as amended; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission regarding a State contract, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

- (f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.
- (g) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to C.G.S. § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and C.G.S. § 46a-56.
- (h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with C.G.S. § 46a-56 as amended; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission regarding a State contract, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

- M.** The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education and availability of state or federal funds.
- N.** The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature: _____

Name: *(typed)* _____ Nancy Sarra

Title: *(typed)* _____ Superintendent of Schools

Date: _____

PART V: REFERENCES

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