Executive Summary

Livingston Elementary School

Newton County School System

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Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.
Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Livingston Elementary School is located in the Southwestern portion of Newton County, Georgia. Once a small rural school, it is now experiencing the impact of urban sprawl. The school serves students in Pre-Kindergarten through grade five. Currently, the enrollment is 514 students. The majority of students are African American (61%) followed by Caucasian (28%). Hispanic (6%) and Multi-Racial (5%) students comprise the other 11% of the population. Seventy-six percent of the students are eligible for the federal free or reduced lunch programs. About 18% of the students receive supplemental services through the Early Intervention Program (EIP), and about 10% of the students receive special education services. Six percent of the students are served in the gifted program. Livingston Elementary is a school-wide Title I school.

Over the past three years, the enrollment has gradually decreased from 543, to 525, to the current enrollment of 514. The percentage of African-American students has gradually increased from 56%, to 58%, to the current percentage of 61%. Caucasian students have gradually decreased from 34%, to 31%, to the current percentage of 28%. Hispanic students have increased from 4% to 6%. The number of Multi-Racial students has remained the same. Between 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, the number of students eligible for federal free or reduced meals increased from 72% to 95%. However this year, the number decreased to 76%. This discrepancy could be attributed to a reduction in enrollment, the mobility rate, an improvement in the job market, or a report error.

The current administrative staff has been in place for the last four years. The staff has had very little turn over as well. The few staff members that have left either retired or moved closer to their homes. The decline in student enrollment has resulted in the loss of two certified staff positions which were absorbed through staff retirements. Currently, certified staff include two regular education Pre-Kindergarten teachers and one special education Pre-Kindergarten teacher; four kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, and fourth grade teachers; three fifth grade teachers (a loss of one) and special education teachers; two EIP teachers (a loss of one); and one counselor, media specialist, art teacher, music teacher, PE teacher, gifted teacher, and academic coach.

The students and families that attend Livingston are very supportive of the school. The biggest challenge that the school faces is the mobility rate of students/families. In 2012-2013, Livingston's mobility rate was 32%. As of December 16, 2013, the mobility rate for this school year is at 19.55%. We were half way through the year at that point.
School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

Mission
The mission of the Newton County School System is to provide educational excellence for all students. (Livingston has adopted this same statement as our mission since we are a school system rather than a system of schools.)

Vision
The Newton County School System envisions students, who through a rigorous and relevant education, will be able to think critically in order to produce, perform, create, and communicate their knowledge competitively to a hyper-connected, global audience. (Livingston has adopted this same statement as our mission since we are a school system rather than a system of schools.)

Belief Statements
The staff at Livingston believes the following:
- Students are capable of reaching their full potential in an emotionally and physically safe environment which includes high expectations with consistent behavior management.
- All students can learn when given the appropriate opportunities
- Instruction must be differentiated to address students’ varying needs.

Currently, 100% of Livingston's teachers are Highly Qualified, and 100% of paraprofessionals and administrators are Highly Qualified. In order to ensure that all students are receiving solid instruction, administrators monitor classroom instruction very carefully through the use of walk throughs, the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), grade level meeting minutes, Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention meetings, and Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings. A variety of professional development activities are offered to ensure that teachers continue to stay abreast of effective teaching and learning practices and strategies. Many staff members are also enrolled in advanced degree programs. As part of TKES, the principal/assistant principal will schedule and hold mid-year meetings with all teachers to discuss their specific class data, students that are not making adequate progress, and specific strategies that need to be implemented the last half of the year to ensure that all students have the opportunity and resources to meet and/or exceed standards.

Collegial planning and collaboration are evident throughout the school. Grade level teams meet regularly to identify the needs of all students and to implement and/or monitor initiatives. Through PLCs, teachers meet within their grade levels at least two days per week during common planning time. Additionally, grade levels receive half day planning opportunities throughout the year. During these designated planning times, grade level-appropriate professional development occurs on topics such as curriculum development, data analysis, standards based teaching strategies, walkthroughs, and the pyramid of intervention.

Livingston has an assessment system in place that allows teachers to monitor and evaluate student learning. Information obtained from a variety of formal and informal assessments is used by teachers to determine student levels, guide instructional decisions, and improve curriculum. Grade level teams analyze all assessment data (standardized tests, benchmark data, etc.) in relation to the school improvement plan. The creation of a data room allows all data to be displayed in one place and to be accessed and/or referred to on a regular basis.

Livingston is a relatively small school with an enrollment around 525. School personnel are able to interact with small groups of students.
and/or individual students allowing them to build relationships with students and their families over time. All students have at least one faculty member that knows them well. Staff members are able to serve as advocates for students to meet their learning, behavioral, physical, and emotional needs.

Implementation of the Pyramid of Intervention ensures that all students receive a rigorous, standards-based education based on the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards and that students’ difficulties are identified in a timely manner. Tier 1 mandates that all students receive a standards-based education with differentiation of instruction based on students’ various needs. All students are universally screened in reading and mathematics two times a year (August and May) using STAR Early Literacy, STAR Reading, and STAR Math. Data from the universal screening are analyzed, and students needing interventions are identified. Additionally, data from standardized tests such as the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Test, and the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Skills; formative and summative assessments; student portfolios; behavior checklists; special education records (IEP goals and objectives, 504 plans, and re-evaluations); Tier records; results of benchmark testing; physician and psychiatric reports, etc. are used to identify students’ difficulties. Once students are identified, they are placed in Tiers 2 or 3 of the Pyramid of Intervention and specific interventions are chosen to correct the difficulties that have been identified.

Students in Tiers 2 and 3 are progress monitored on a weekly basis. Teachers, counselors, administrators, paraprofessionals, parents, and even volunteers work collaboratively to implement specific interventions designed to impact the areas of difficulty. Special education students are placed in Tier 4 of the Pyramid of Intervention. Those students have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that outline specific goals and objectives designed to address areas of need.

Students are actively engaged in their learning through the use of research-based instructional strategies, collaboration, and self-reflection. Small group instruction allows teachers to personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address the individual needs of students. Through discussions and examinations of professional practices, efforts are being made to consistently require students to apply knowledge and skills, integrate content and skills across disciplines, and use technologies as instructional resources and learning tools. Support services are provided to students based on their identified needs. Examples of support services include EIP, ELL, Gifted, Special Education Services, RTI, and 504.

Livingston Elementary School's faculty and staff take seriously its obligation to involve parents and the community in educating students. To promote strong and effective parent involvement, the school is committed to actively involving all stakeholders in the educational process. The school has established a parent involvement policy that assures parents that their feedback on the school's performance will be sought and lists specific ways in which parents will be involved. A School-Parent compact is also used to enlist parents' support in helping all students to meet or exceed grade level expectations. The compact is reviewed and discussed at initial conferences and meetings at the start of each school year. Signed copies of the compact are placed in each student's file and a copy of given to parents.

Parent involvement activities that are on-going at Livingston include:

-Parent workshops are sponsored in cooperation with the district-wide Title I Parent Involvement Coordinator.
-Title I meetings are scheduled to update parents throughout the year.
-Annual parent surveys are conducted and the results are used to address identified concerns.
-School to home communication is conducted through student agendas, newsletters, conferences, telephone calls and/or emails, the school website, and Wednesday Work Folders.
-PTO meetings are held throughout the year.
-The School Council which includes four parent representatives meets four times per year.
-Open House is held annually prior to the first day of school for students. Students and parents meet teachers and discuss grade level expectations.
Curriculum Night is held in late August to allow teachers to educate parents on grade level expectations and requirements of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards.

-Parent Teacher Conferences are held two times per year.

-The Student of the Month reception, honors assemblies each semester to recognize students for outstanding achievement in all areas (academics, behavior, and the arts), choral presentations, grade level PTO performances, spelling bee, field day, and other school-based activities provide opportunities for parents to participate.

-The Infinite Campus Parent Portal allows parents of fourth and fifth grade students to monitor grades.

Livingston Elementary school realizes that good communication is vital. Throughout the year, parents are contacted and invited to come to Open House, Curriculum Night, conferences, school events, and award ceremonies. In order to get effective involvement, parents are notified in various ways (i.e., phone calls, school messenger, call/communication log, conferences, surveys, weekly newsletters, suggestion box, agendas, daily folders, Friday folder, email, etc.).

Livingston has an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). All parents and teachers are automatically members of PTO. The PTO works closely with the school in sponsoring events and fundraisers.

The stakeholders are students, parents, teachers, administrators, board members and community members. Stakeholders are invited and asked to participate in the following events/activities: Open House, Volunteers, School Council, PTO, family projects, award ceremonies, CHAMPS Graduation, Title I activities, etc.

The curriculum is extremely important and has changed a lot due to the implementation of the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. Parents participate in and learn about the new curriculum through events such as Curriculum Night, Partners in Education, and parental involvement in IEP and Tier meetings. Tier meetings encourage the parents whose children are struggling to take an active role in their child's education. In a collaborative effort to provide all students with the best education possible, Livingston welcomes parents to help prepare students with the knowledge, skills and independence needed to make responsible decisions now and in the future. Research shows that students with involved parents - no matter what the income, background and language - are more likely to do better in school, stay in school longer, like school more, and become productive citizens.
Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school’s notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

In July, 2010, the school superintendent and system/school administrators began to develop and fully implement a strategic plan that would focus on teaching and learning and result in improved student achievement at all levels (elementary, middle, and high school). The plan contained two non-negotiable goals: increased student achievement and more effective teaching.

At the school system level, the goal is to build the capacity of personnel to deliver high quality instruction through using research-based instructional strategies in classrooms (RBIS), building the background knowledge of students during the school day (BBK), and integrating the use of technology in classroom lessons (IT). At the school building level, the goal is to ensure high-functioning Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in each school with a definite time and place to meet and an agenda of work centered around instruction and its outcomes for students through ongoing questionasking and action steps listed below:

Step 1: Preanalyze data aligned to Georgia Performance Standards/Georgia Assessments
Step 2: Deliver standards-based instruction using RBIS, BBK, and IT
Step 3: Conduct common assessments (formative and/or benchmarks) aligned to Georgia Performance Standards
Step 4: Analyze common assessment results to check for mastery
Step 5: Implement CCGPS-based tiered remediation (RTI) and Enrichment
Step 6: Check for mastery/Repeat cycle

Livingston continues to fully implement the plan resulting in several notable achievements.

First, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are fully functional with a definite time and place to meet and an agenda of work centered around instruction and its outcomes for students through ongoing questionasking and action steps. Teachers and support staff work together, rather than in isolation, to analyze data; plan and deliver standards-based instruction; conduct and analyze common assessments; implement tiered remediation and enrichment based on data; and assess for mastery of skills. Dr. Dan Mulligan, Educational Consultant, stated that PLCs at Livingston are “state of the art”. Walkthroughs also confirm that the teams are planning and working together as instruction in classes throughout each grade level is similar to each other. Students are actively engaged in rigorous work through the use of research-based instructional strategies as mandated by the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. Staff members are more effectively using technology as an instructional resource, and students are using technology as a learning tool.

Implementation of the Pyramid of Intervention ensures that all students receive a rigorous, standards-based education based on the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards and that students’ difficulties are identified in a timely manner. The process has been refined so that all grade levels are implementing tiered instruction and on-going progress monitoring in a similar manner with integrity and fidelity. Tier 2 and Tier 3 teams have a definite time and place to meet. Decisions about what is best for each student in the Tier process are based on data. Students are moving between tiers as the Pyramid of Intervention specifies. Staff members, parents, and other stakeholders are communicating with one another to ensure that interventions are implemented and effective.

Teachers and support staff are using data to drive instruction. Small group, differentiated instruction is based on needs identified in Tier
Meetings, results of progress monitoring and common assessments, universal screening results, benchmark data, and standardized test data. All students are challenged at their level and expected to make measurable progress each year. Staff members have also made great progress in building relationships with students and stakeholders and in providing two-way communication with students and other stakeholders.

Staff members have identified several goals for the next three years. First, and foremost, the staff will stay the course through extending and refining the function of PLCs, the implementation of the Pyramid of Intervention, and the use of data to drive instruction. Jumping from one initiative to another will not contribute to a daily focus on learning and improved student achievement results.

The second goal is to continue to increase the rigor and relevance of instruction to the level mandated by the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. Stronger connections will be made between school and the real-world. Teachers will support students as they learn to more effectively collaborate with others, develop critical thinking skills, and integrate/apply content knowledge and skills across disciplines in order to produce, perform, create, and communicate their knowledge competitively to a hyper-connected, global audience.

Finally, we will continue to seek ways to communicate with and involve all stakeholders in the education of our students.
Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Overview of CRCT Gains From 2011 to 2013

Content Mastery

_____ Meeting 2013 Performance Targets for in the "All Students" subgroup in each subject
4th Grade - All subgroup met Performance Target in ELA
4th Grade - All subgroup met Performance Target in Reading
5th Grade - All subgroup met Performance Target in ELA and Math
5th Grade - All subgroup met Performance Target in Math

_____ Gains in ALL STUDENTS subgroups in ELA
3rd Grade - From 82% in 2011 to 91% in 2013 (9% Gain)
4th Grade - From 89% in 2011 to 96% in 2013 (7% Gain)
5th Grade - From 86% in 2011 to 95% in 2013 (9% Gain)

_____ Gains in ALL STUDENTS subgroup in Reading
4th Grade - From 90% in 2011 to 96% in 2013 (6% Gain)
5th Grade - From 83% in 2011 to 88% in 2013 (5% Gain)

_____ Gains in ALL STUDENTS subgroups in Math-
3rd Grade - From 63% in 2011 to 70% in 2013 (7% Gain)
4th Grade - From 84% in 2011 to 86% in 2013 (2% Gain)
5th Grade - From 76% in 2011 to 88% in 2013 (12% Gain)

_____ Gain in ALL STUDENTS subgroups in Science
4th Grade - From 76% in 2011 to 79% in 2013 (3% Gain)
5th Grade - From 63% in 2011 to 64% in 2013 (1% Gain)

_____ Gains in ALL STUDENTS subgroups in Social Studies
3rd Grade - From 60% in 2011 to 76% in 2013 (16% Gain)
4th Grade - From 66% in 2011 to 73% in 2013 (7% Gain)
5th Grade - From 58% in 2011 to 70% in 2013 (12% Gain)

_____ Gains in SUBGROUPS Across Core Subject Areas
3rd Grade - ELA - Black - From 82% in 2011 to 84% in 2013 (2% Gain)
3rd Grade - ELA - White - From 83% in 2011 to 100% in 2013 (17% Gain)
4th Grade - ELA - Black - From 86% in 2011 to 95% in 2013 (9% Gain)
4th Grade - ELA - White - From 94% in 2011 to 95% in 2013 (1% Gain)
5th Grade - ELA - Black - From 82% in 2011 to 96% in 2013 (14% Gain)
5th Grade - ELA - White - From 90% in 2011 to 95% in 2013 (5% Gain)

3rd Grade - Reading - White - From 91% in 2011 to 93% in 2013 (3% Gain)
4th Grade - Reading - Black - From 88% in 2011 to 93% in 2013 (4% Gain)
4th Grade - Reading - White - From 97% in 2011 to 100% in 2013 (3% Gain)
5th Grade - Reading - Black - From 74% in 2011 to 89% in 2013 (15% Gain)

3rd Grade - Math - White - From 63% in 2011 to 89% in 2013 (26% Gain)
4th Grade - Math - Black - From 78% in 2011 to 79% in 2013 (1% Gain)
4th Grade - Math - White - From 94% in 2011 to 100% in 2013 (6% Gain)
5th Grade - Math - Black - From 70% in 2011 to 87% in 2013 (17% Gain)
5th Grade - Math - White - From 80% in 2011 to 90% in 2013 (10% Gain)

3rd Grade - Science - White - From 67% in 2011 to 96% in 2013 (29% Gain)
4th Grade - Science - Black - From 67% in 2011 to 72% in 2013 (5% Gain)
4th Grade - Science - White - From 83% in 2011 to 95% in 2013 (12% Gain)
5th Grade - Science - Black - From 57% in 2011 to 58% in 2013 (1% Gain)
5th Grade - Science - White - From 66% in 2011 to 71% in 2013 (5% Gain)

3rd Grade - Social Studies - Black - From 56% in 2011 to 67% in 2013 (11% Gain)
3rd Grade - Social Studies - White - From 64% in 2011 to 93% in 2013 (29% Gain)
4th Grade - Social Studies - Black - From 55% in 2011 to 63% in 2013 (8% Gain)
4th Grade - Social Studies - White - From 77% in 2011 to 89% in 2013 (12% Gain)
5th Grade - Social Studies - Black - From 52% in 2011 to 64% in 2013 (12% Gain)
5th Grade - Social Studies - White - From 66% in 2011 to 76% in 2013 (10% Gain)

5th Grade - Writing - Black - From 52% in 2011 to 65% in 2013 (13% Gain)