

Unitary Status Strategies & Measures



Unitary Status Criterion- **Personnel**

Narrative: One of the factors the courts review for Unitary Status is the impact of staffing on equitable student outcomes. For this factor, we have compiled over 10 years of staffing data to review educational levels, National Board certification, experience levels, and race and turnover rates. Analysis of this data was reviewed in light of identified focus schools in our district.

Identified Concerns: The racial make up of our teaching staff does not reflect the racial diversity of our student body. Pitt County Schools actively seeks diverse candidates for employment, but racial minorities have tended to be underrepresented in our employment pool. Therefore, we turn our attention to better assignment of staff, development of staff and creating successful cohorts of teachers within our focus schools.

Strategies:

A. TEACHERS

- 1) Improved professional development plans and opportunities for professional growth directly related to improved student performance (see district calendars of offerings for licensed personnel).

Measure:

Measured by the new Standard 6 of the Teacher Evaluation system which will address student growth for every teacher in every discipline.

- 2) Instructional Coaches at every school in the district are highly trained instructional leaders who embed development on site every day as needed. They are the primary “delivery” method for individual teacher support and development.

Measure:

Measured by the new Standard 6 of the Teacher Evaluation system which will address student growth for every teacher in every discipline.

- 3) Review of data factors in reassigning teachers during student reassignment process in order to address impact on focus schools.

Measure:

Better representation of our diverse teaching population in all schools as compared to percent to total for our district.

- 4) Review of data factors in granting teacher transfer requests.

Measure:

Better representation of our diverse teaching population in all schools as compared to percent to total for our district.

- 5) Teacher Leadership Cohort assigned to focus schools (and newly configured Lakeforest School). Teachers were selected based on proven student growth outcomes over a three year period and their ability to coach and lead their leagues. We have 15 teachers in five focus schools beginning in the 2011-12 school year.

Measure:

Survey of teachers served by TLC in the 5 schools to determine effective support. Improved student outcomes.

- 6) The North Carolina Teacher Evaluation system implemented in the 2010-11 school year has five standards that are measured to improve teacher leadership, instructional practice and cultural awareness. Teachers are directly evaluated on their attention to the diversity in their classrooms and integrating student history into classroom culture and instruction.

Measure:

Teacher Effectiveness Report from DPI.

- 7) Pitt County Schools was the partner in a federal Teacher Quality Program grant with East Carolina University. The purpose of this grant is to create seamless strategies from preservice education into the school system that improves the student performance for first year teachers. The five –year, \$9 million dollar grant is focused on high poverty, low performing schools.

Measure:

Improved student outcomes for first year TQP teachers placed in PCS and improved student outcomes based on improved induction program.

- 8) A component of the TQP grant (see 7 above) is the restructuring of our new teacher induction program. The first phase of that restructuring occurred in summer of 2011 with a full week of training, orientation and on site support for new teachers.

Measure:

Improved student outcomes for first year TQP teachers placed in PCS and improved student outcomes based on improved induction program.

- 9) For more than 10 years the Pitt County Educational Foundation has provided funding to support and incent teachers to apply for National Board certification. In many of those years, low performing schools were targeted for priority funding in order to encourage more teachers to become National Board certified. Pitt County has the largest number of National Board certified teachers in the east with 275 teachers certified.

Measure:

Number of National Board certified teachers continues to increase.

- 10) PCS has enjoyed a strong mentoring program until the 2011-12 school year when the legislature removed all funding for mentoring programs. Even without funding, we still have quality teachers who assist and support the mentoring of new teachers. We also use our Instructional Coaches to help us with classroom assistance and support for new teachers.

Measure:

New teachers rate mentoring as helpful in their first year through teacher survey.

B. CLASSIFIED STAFF

No concerns identified.

C. ADMINSTRATIVE

- 1) Our district has been able to successful recruit diverse principal and administrative candidates from surrounding districts. The economic downturn and the loss of administrative positions in all school districts has been a benefit to us in recruiting these candidates to our system.

Measure:

Continue to increase the diverse population of our administrative staff.

- 2) For three years, we have also used a Tier System for our assistant principals which tailor their development to their unique needs. This internal development system allows us to identify potential leaders and provide training to support their success as administrators in our district.

Measure:

Successful placement of Tier 1 assistant principals into principal positions within the district.

Unitary Status Criterion-**Facilities**

Narrative: School facilities available to students across Pitt County are comparable, regardless of the race of students served. In the last ten years, Pitt County Schools has built one new high school, one new middle school and four elementary schools. Pitt County Schools has invested over 100 million dollars since 2000 in construction projects that have benefitted all grade levels and attendance areas across the county in both new construction and classroom additions and renovations. The district developed a Long Range Facilities Plan in 2008 with broad involvement of community stakeholders. That plan continues to be revised as needed and as funding allows for accomplishment.

Identified Concerns: While there are no identified concerns from this factor, we have used the study of our facilities to ensure that equitable renovation and maintenance apply to all schools, especially focus schools. All school needs are prioritized in accordance with budget allotments and addressed accordingly. These practices should continue.

No strategies are identified that relate to Unitary Status.

Unitary Status Criterion-**Transportation**

Narrative: Transportation is one of the original Green Factors due to the segregated system for transporting students from the 1950's and 1960's. Due to limited technologies the very detailed data collected in Pitt County Schools begins with the 2007-08 school year. Pitt County Schools operates 218 buses daily running 272 routes and traveling approximately 2.6 million miles annually. Our data review reveals no issues for transportation related to educational equity. All students qualify for transportation to school unless they live within walking distance.

Identified Concerns: We do not have ANY concerns identified related to Unitary Status. We are constantly seeking to improve transportation for safety and efficiency and continue to work on decreasing ride times for our most rural routes, increasing ridership, improving department technology in order to better communicate with schools and parents and improving efficiencies. The state reviews of our transportation department continue to result in high efficiency ratings each year.

Strategies for improvement are district improvements and not requirements of Unitary Status.

Unitary Status Criterion- **Technology and Media**

Narrative: This criterion is another area of case law identified as relevant to school districts attempting to achieve unitary status. Historically the inequity was measured by library books in schools. In more recent years, the review has been much broader and included technology as well. The question reviewed was whether our focus schools have fewer resources for media and technology than other schools in our district. This criterion did not present major areas of concern.

Concerns Identified: PCS has used allotment formulas to provide media resources to schools for many years. However, the allocation of resources for technology was school based (meaning that schools used their equipment dollars and what monies they could raise through PTA's and fundraisers to purchase computers). While we did not identify concerns with equity in access to books or literature, we did have concerns that schools with high poverty rates would have less opportunity to purchase computers and software. However, those same schools were the beneficiaries of large sums of federal e-rate dollar projects for infrastructure during the same time periods. In addition, those schools got higher Title I allocations which could be used for computers and software (since e-rate dollars could not). Since 2008, the purchase of computers has been a district responsibility based on a standard determine by our Technology Task Force. Over Six million dollars has been invested in all of our schools based on this standard. Schools can add to their inventory by combining school funds with district funds. However, the standard remains the district responsibility for equitable access to technology.

Strategies:

- 1) Continue to use the District Priority Flowchart to ensure equity in all schools for all equipment and software purchases, as well as , ensuring equity for those resources that are deemed essential by the Technology Task Force.

Measure:

Collect measureable student outcomes from Tech Venture pilots and share with the Technology Task Force and Administrative Team.

- 2) Continue to utilize Tech Ventures pilots to test technologies and their impact on student achievement prior to a district wide purchase.

Measure:

Compare software utilization to student performance outcomes. Most of these programs generate their own reporting system to evaluate effectiveness.

- 3) Support the implementation of research validated software supports in our lowest achieving schools.

Measure:

Track the number of SMARTBOARDS at each school. Continue to study new market additions that provide the same instructional engagement for less cost.

- 4) Continue to work on interactive technology purchases at the middle and high school levels to provide equal opportunity to access as is found in the elementary

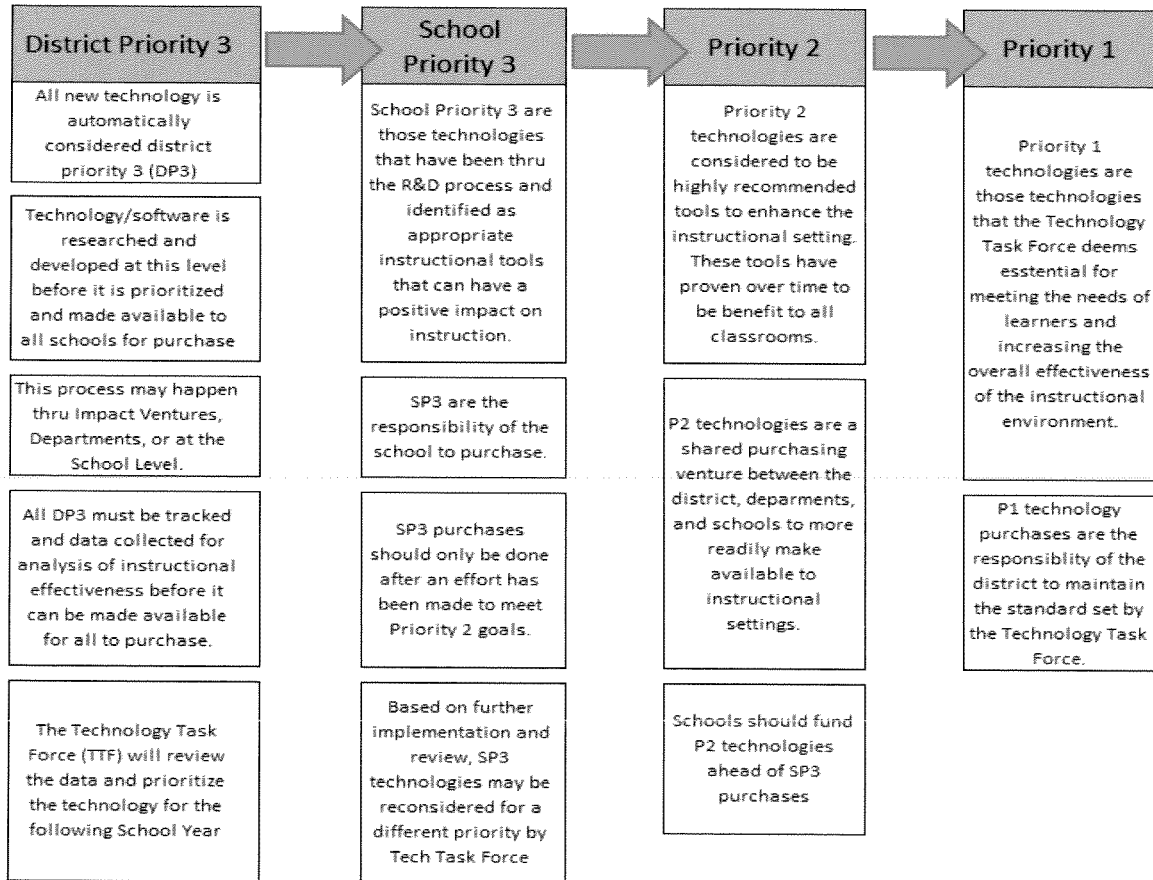
schools (use of ARRA funds in Title I schools has significantly increased SMARTBOARDS in the elementary setting).

Measure:

Replacement cycle continues as planned. The number of computers has been and can be tracked. In the past four years, we have replaced 6,400 computers in our schools or equipped the new school with 200 computers and other appropriate technology to meet or exceed our standard.

- 5) Remain committed to the five year replacement cycle despite the fact that WHAT the replacement technology may be will change (i.e. we are currently moving to replace desktops with laptops).
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District Priority Flowchart:



Unitary Status Criterion- **Extra Curricular Activities**

Narrative: While not one of the Green Factors, a review of case law found that extra curricular activities in school systems had presented barriers to achieving Unitary Status. Therefore, we collected data and conducted a thorough review of our extra curricular offerings and how students accessed those opportunities.

Identified Concerns: Student participation in extra curricular activities is generally voluntary except for sports teams or clubs with specifically identified requirements (golf team, National Honor Society). Due to the differences in school sizes and student interests, every school does not offer every sport or club. However, this difference is due to lack of participation and not a district decision. Our only concern was that we had clear policy/procedure language that eliminated subjectivity in determining who would join a club or organization.

Strategy:

- 1) To clarify in Board policy/procedure that subjectivity will not be a barrier to any student participating in extra curricular activities except where GPA, or athletic skill must be demonstrated to make a team or join an honor society.

Measure:

This issue was discussed with the Pitt County Board of Education on March 21, 2011 with understanding of the needed change to procedure. On February 13, 2012, the PCS Board Policy Committee revised procedure 10.703 to include the following language (see bolded language in procedure).

- 2) To communicate this expectation through written procedure as well as through discussions in our schools.

Measure:

These changes have been discussed at our K-12 Administrative meetings in April 2011 and January 2012.

“DRAFT”
“Revised Procedure”

PITT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION Date Revised: December ____, 2011	PROCEDURE 10.703-P
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PROCEDURE FOR REGULATING CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. All clubs and organizations operating in the school must be approved by the principal.
2. Each club shall have by-laws, or a charter or other organizing document, setting forth the club's purposes, officers, qualifications for membership, rules of conduct, and dues. A copy of this document shall be kept on file in the principal's office.
3. Student-initiated clubs are permitted in grades 9-12. Such clubs shall not be denied the chance to meet on the basis of their religious, political, philosophical or other viewpoint. Such clubs are subject to the same guidelines as school-sponsored clubs except that they shall be assigned a monitor rather than a faculty sponsor. *Religious* clubs shall meet the Constitutional and statutory requirements set forth in Procedure 9.002-P (Guidelines for Religious Clubs).
4. A faculty sponsor or monitor shall be present for all club meetings. All social events sponsored by clubs shall be approved by the principal and adequately chaperoned.
5. A list of the officers of each club, its faculty sponsor or monitor, and its meeting times shall be kept on file in the administrative offices.
6. The student handbook must list all clubs and organizations that have been approved by the school.
7. Students wishing to form a new club must present their request in writing. For scheduling purposes, new clubs may be required to meet either before or after school for their first year.
8. Club fundraising projects must be approved by the principal and fall within the guidelines set up by the school and the Board of Education.
9. All monies accruing to any club shall be accounted for through the internal accounting system of the school.
10. All club meetings shall be held on school property and in school facilities, except when waived for special meetings or events upon request of the faculty sponsor and approval of the principal. (The principal may seek advice from the local advisory council if she/he chooses.)
11. Service clubs associated with existing civic organizations in the community, such as Key Clubs, are encouraged to the extent that no student is excluded because of race or gender, and so long as they comply with these guidelines.

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“Revised Procedure”

Procedure 10.703-P

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12. Membership in clubs and participation in their activities is voluntary. Membership may not be limited on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age or disability **and faculty advisors and other school staff should encourage and facilitate diversity in club membership and activities.**
13. Grade point average shall not be a factor for acceptance into any club, except for honor clubs.
14. Dues for clubs shall be reasonably related to their expenses and activities, and shall not be so high as to prohibit interested students from participating.
15. No club or organization shall carry on any activity or act in any way that violates the policies of the Pitt County Board of Education or the school.
16. Hazing and secret clubs are strictly forbidden.
17. The principal has the right to disband any club or forbid any club activities that disrupt the educational environment or violate school or Board of Education policies.

Last Revisions/Adoption: March 21, 2005

Legal References: None

Cross References: Procedure 9.002-P (Guidelines for Religious Clubs)

Unitary Status Criterion- **Student Achievement**

Narrative: It is difficult to trace the impact of past segregation on current student achievement. The school system holds student achievement as its highest priority regardless of its connection with the quest for Unitary Status. The data collected are reviewed systemically by schools, administrators, Board members, community task force members who work with the district. Constant review of the data is used to select strategies and define our course of work. The focus schools selected as a part of the Unitary Status data analysis were based on schools with a 10 year history of more than 70% population of one race AND a 10 year history of student performance below the district average. When those schools are selected, the majority of them also have higher poverty rates than the district average.

Identified Concerns: There has not been one consistent measure of student reading and math scores over the past 10 year period studied (not to mention for the past 30 years). Like many other school systems, we have struggled to close the gap between the aggregate achievement of our Black and Hispanic students as compared to our White students. Based on our past experience, moving students through reassignment has not necessarily been the answer to closing the gap. In addition, the onset of NCLB legislation allowing for school sanctions of “choice” complicate our ability to validly track impacts of certain strategies on school improvement. Pitt County Schools does not operate a dual system and has evidence of many areas where low performing/high poverty schools have benefitted from allocation of targeted resources. Our current strategies emphasize targeting resources to students and schools who most need those resources. It will ALWAYS be our priority to improve student achievement, even after the school system achieves unitary status.

Strategies:

- 1) Third consecutive year with Instructional Coaches in all schools to use data to drive improvements in classrooms through coaching, modeling, analysis and training.
Measures: Higher proficiency scores and increased student growth scores for students in measured grades and subjects and improved ratings for our teachers in the Teacher Effectiveness Report.
- 2) Use of state low wealth dollars to add teaching positions in schools and increase the level of service in Exceptional Children’s program, Academically Gifted program and Career and Technical Education (145 teachers above the state allotment through low wealth dollars).
Measures: Higher proficiency and growth scores for students. Increased number of students served in these programs with more attention and support to their individual needs.
- 3) Title 1 fund appropriated based on “sliding scale” so that schools with highest poverty rates get highest funding levels.

- Measure:** Title I Budget approved annually by the Board of Education.
- 4) First district wide state pilot for READ 3D program which allows for assessment of reading and immediate intervention in K-2.
Measure: Increased numbers of students read on or above grade level as measured by READ 3D assessments in grades K-2.
 - 5) District wide purchase of Study Island for benchmarking and support of student needs in reading and math.
Measure: Increased proficiency and growth scores in reading and math for all tested grades.
 - 6) Research validated software pilots in lower performing schools (Successmaker, Waterford).
Measure: Increased proficiency and growth scores in reading and math for elementary schools using this program.
 - 7) Implementation of Foundations and Fundamentals classes in high schools to ensure students “catch up opportunities” to earn credit.
Measures: Improved proficiency scores in reading and math. Increased number of credits earned by students and higher graduation rates.
 - 8) Credit recovery programs in all six high schools.
Measures: Increased number of credits earned. Improved drop out and graduation rates.
 - 9) Remediation dollars allotments to schools based on research validated strategies.
Measure: Improved proficiency and growth scores for students in all tested grades and subject areas.
 - 10) Four year focus on district wide research driven strategies (The 28) to improve student achievement.
Measures: Improved student achievement data and increase in teacher ratings above “proficient in the NC Teacher Effectiveness Report.
 - 11) District wide requirement for SIOP (instructional strategy for increasing understanding of content language) training and posting of SIOP objectives.
Measure: Increase in number of teachers who score above “proficient” in the NC Teacher Effectiveness Report.
 - 12) District wide training for all schools and staff in Thinking Maps (how to use graphic organizers to increase understanding of simple and abstract concepts).
Measure: Increase in the number of teachers who score above “proficient” in the NC Teacher Effectiveness Report.
 - 13) Administrative training in a year long Professional Learning Community of Eric Jensen’s Poverty.

Measure: Improved ratings for teachers and administrators in Standard 3, Cultural Awareness, of the North Carolina Evaluation Instruments.

14) School Improvement Plans driven by school data collection and district objectives.

Measures: All schools can demonstrate measureable improvements in the goals and targets of their School Improvement Plans.

15) District Monitoring Team that visits schools and observes classrooms for fidelity of teaching quality and program implementation.

Measures: Improved teacher effectiveness as measured through the evaluation process, NC Teacher Effectiveness Report and student growth for each classroom/content area.

16) Four years of Culturally Responsive Teacher training through a train the trainer model in each school.

Measures: Improved teacher effectiveness ratings in Cultural Awareness of the evaluation instrument and the Teacher Effectiveness Report.

17) Support of program area specialists in science, reading, math and social studies for teacher training, support, lesson planning and resource development.

Measures: Increased proficiency and growth in grade levels and content areas tested. Increase in number of teachers rated above “proficient” in the Teacher Effectiveness Report.

Unitary Status Criterion- **Student Services**

Narrative: This area of review includes absence data, promotion and retention data, short and long term suspension data, graduation rates and drop out rates. It also includes a comparison of student services support personnel in our schools, including social workers, nurses and counselors.

Identified Concerns: In a review of ten or more years of data (if available), there are significant discrepancies by race in suspensions, students who drop out of school and graduation rates. While significant progress has been made in recent years, there are still a higher proportion of African American students suspended, dropping out and not graduating than the percent to total of these students in our overall enrollment population. Addressing this disparity is a high priority for the Pitt County Schools regardless of whether they exist because of past school segregation.

Strategies:

A. SUSPENSIONS

1. In school suspension programs are offered in all middle and high schools as an alternative to out of school suspensions.
2. Working with students and staff to set expectations and follow consistent school rules through the PBIS system which attempt to change behaviors and not just remove students from the educational setting.
3. Implementation of a district wide school uniform policy to reduce the infractions related to dress code violations. Suspensions from school are only utilized in cases where other methods such as Project Equal, ISS, and parent conferences have not resolved the issue with uniforms and compliance.
4. Use of alternative disciplinary options for addressing tardiness in order to keep students in school.
5. Alternative options for students recommended for suspensions including Project FIND, the Transition Center and Pitt Academy.
6. Continue Project Equal which has allowed students to serve their consequence through after school community service instead of an out of school suspension.

Measures: Pitt County Schools will continue to see a decline in their short term and long term suspensions. The number of students in a diverse subgroup will decline so that the number is in line with the proportion of students enrolled in the district from that subgroup. For example, the percentage of Hispanic students suspended should reflect the percentage of Hispanic students in the district.

B. DROP OUTS

1. Link Crew outreach to all freshmen to assist them with their transition to High School. This program trains upper classmen to serve as support to entering freshman and help them navigate the high school experience

without it becoming overwhelming. Link Crew is a year long program which helps with orientation to exam reviews.

2. Continue to support the FastTrack programs in our middle grades. Students who have failed a grade are identified as candidates for this program where they can accelerate their learning in a small group setting. Successful candidates can skip the year they lost or can move to high school through mid-year promotion.
3. If grant funding allows, continue Student Success Academy. This program identifies potential at-risk 5th graders and supports them in a 4-5 week summer program that prepares them for middle school. Staff members track these students throughout the school year to provide support for their academic needs and to link them to other services if needed.
4. Continue Project Equal (see A.6).
5. Continue Twilight Academies in all six high schools. This credit recovery program has been a boost to drop out prevention and graduation. Students who have failed a course can work in this after school and summer program to recover those courses and graduate on time. Students suspended for long period who lose credit have the opportunity to make up this course work. Transportation is provided at each of the six high schools.
6. Drivers license revocation. North Carolina statute allows school systems to revoke the driver's license of students who drop out of school under certain conditions.
7. Continue to support Pitt Academy. This alternative to long term suspension allows students to complete their work even when they have committed an infraction that would normally result in a long term suspension from their school.
8. Educate the community by continuing the Drop out Prevention Awareness Campaigns held every two years. These campaigns not only assist in fundraising to support these programs but they help the community understand the problem and its impact on everyone.
9. Sustain the efforts of the Drop out Prevention Task Force through meetings 5 times a year to review data and determine strategies for continuous improvement.
10. Continue to monitor attendance at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Interventions include involvement with the school social worker and Mediation Center prior to court involvement.
Measures: The Drop Out rate in PCS will decrease by 25% in the next two years. Students from diverse subgroups who drop out of school will not be overrepresented in our drop out data.

C. GRADUATION

1. Credit Recovery programs (see B. 5).
2. Pitt Academy (see B. 7).

3. School Improvement Grants in three high schools continue to help us find strategies for course credit, absenteeism and parent engagement that will benefit our students.
4. Better tracking of students over the four year cohort to ensure they have been properly coded in our student information management system as transfers, etc.
5. Continue to look at alternative graduation options for at risk students who may be able to meet the state requirements of 21 credits but not the local policy of 28 credits.

Measures: Our graduation rate will increase from 70% to 80% in the next three years. We will close the gap within our subgroups for graduation.
