

DOLVIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN SY 2014/15 – SY 2016/17

APPROVED AUGUST 2014

SECTION I: Strategic Planning Background and Approach

In May 2012, the Georgia Board of Education voted to make Fulton County Schools the state's largest charter system. The Charter System Model offers freedom and flexibility, both at the school level and system-wide, to employ research-based methods to improve student achievement, even if such innovations would require exemptions to current state laws and regulations.

Given the new Charter System framework, individual schools within Fulton County have the ability to work in dramatically new ways. We are asking our communities to help drive change and to get involved in our schools. Our collective vision is that every Fulton County school will have a principal and local School Governance Council equipped to effectively lead in a charter system environment to improve student achievement through innovation and flexibility. Schools will be empowered to consider the best uses of resources at the local level and design innovative practices that align with school needs.

Dolvin Elementary began the strategic planning process in the spring of 2014. In order to plan our strategic direction forward, we first had to engage with our community to understand our specific challenges and consider a path to collectively address them. The Dolvin Leadership Team and School Governance Council worked to gather and examine both qualitative and quantitative data, i.e. student enrollment, standardized test scores, attendance, stakeholder impressions, etc.

Our process included five distinct phases: (1) a needs assessment; (2) the identification of priority issues; (3) the establishment of long-term outcomes, focus areas, & short-term goals; (4) the formulation of strategic initiative; and (5) the development of a monitoring plan. Developed over a period of several months and designed collaboratively with input and guidance from many stakeholders, the strategic plan represents our deliberate approach to shape and guide what **Dolvin Elementary** is, what we do, and why. Our students deserve the best educational experience we can provide, and this plan sets our vision and direction for making that happen.

SECTION II: Context for the Strategic Plan: The School's Needs Assessment

For every school, the strategic planning process must begin with a thorough consideration of the questions “Where are we as a school?” and “With what do we have to work?” By identifying strengths and weaknesses within the school and examining opportunities and challenges within the external environment, schools lay the foundation for building a strategic plan that builds on their positive attributes while overcoming any weaknesses or areas for improvement.

Dolvin Elementary began the strategic planning process by conducting a needs assessment. Through a close analysis of the internal and external environments, we sought to identify stakeholders’ perceptions of our school and enhance our understanding of the political, socio-economic, and demographic environment in which the school operates. By analyzing a comprehensive set of school data and reviewing school-based surveys and external school reviews, the leaders of **Dolvin Elementary** clarified performance trends and identified the school’s most critical areas for improvement.

Needs Assessment – Process & Summary of Findings

Our School Governance Council began the Needs Assessment process by brainstorming who our stakeholders are and how we would gather information about the community conditions from them. Our stakeholders are parents, students, teachers, business partners and staff of our school. In looking at our external environments and gathering information from these groups, we felt that a survey would be the best way to gather information. Our community relations committee held a meeting and developed a survey to address potential areas of need for our school. The survey was distributed, completed by community members, staff, and parents and then analyzed by the committee. Results and an analysis of the survey were then shared with the full governance council.

Our survey was designed to capture overall perceptions in the following areas: communication, personnel, educational achievement and community involvement. We utilized both rating systems (1-10 scales) and priority listings with open-choice responses available for comments. We collected survey data from April 25, 2013, to May 9, 2013, and received approximately 261 independent responses (approximately 37.2 percent of Dolvin families) that included numerous comments/suggestions as part of their completed survey.

In summary, our Environmental Scan indicated a strong community perception of Dolvin, with most respondents (53%) rating Dolvin as a “9” or “10” on a 10-point scale (1 being lowest, 10 being highest). Further, respondents indicated they are very satisfied with our educational achievement, school personnel and amount of community involvement. While overall extremely positive and favorable towards our total school program, we also found areas for growth including:

- increased parent-teacher communication with ongoing communication
- more child-specific teaching methods to emphasize the uniqueness of each child
- a desire to build student self-responsibility
- enhance opportunities to think outside the box
- have flexible learning opportunities that are appropriate for all learners at all levels
- build peer relationships and opportunities for peer mentoring
- provide opportunities for each student to grow as a whole child, not just academically.

Lastly, the survey indicated a strong desire to have more real life learning opportunities for students, a higher use of technology, flexible grouping and differentiation based on the needs of students.

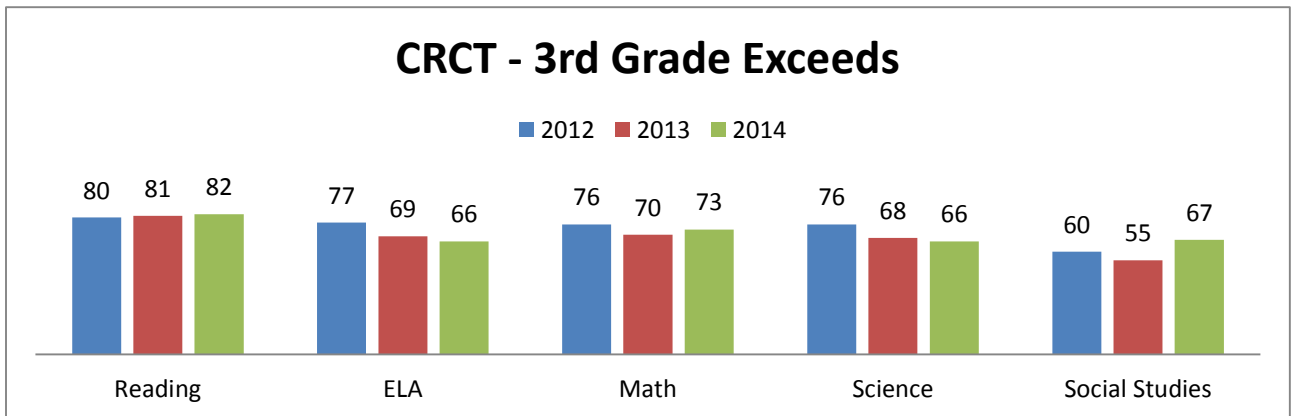
To further gather environmental information on student need, fourth and fifth grade students were asked to take a brief survey indicating their interests and desires for the future of their school and their learning at Dolvin. This survey indicated student interest in more project-based learning, field trips, and more use of technology.

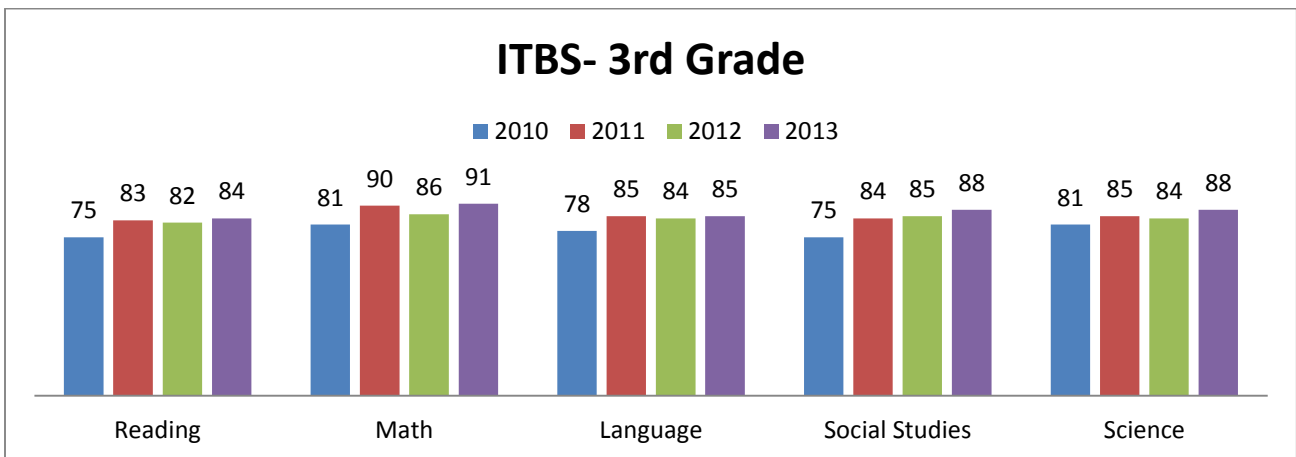
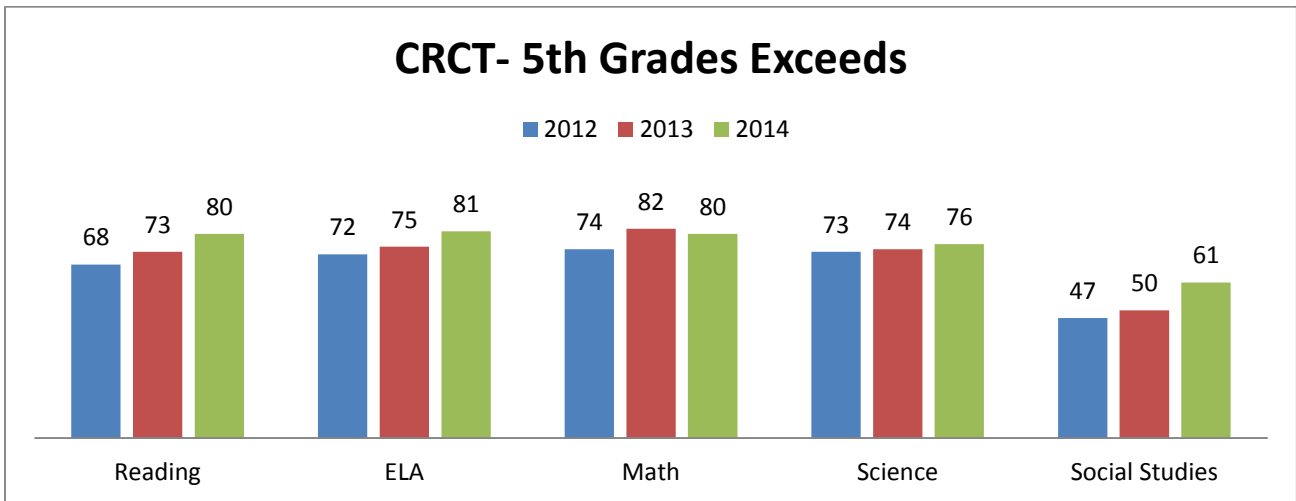
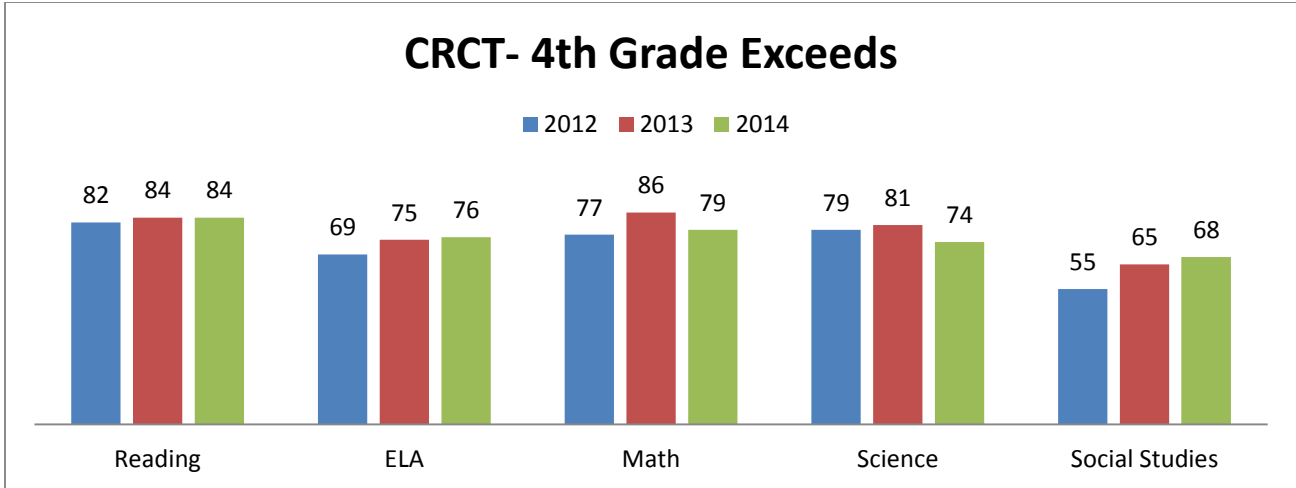
II. Organizational Assessment – Process & Summary of Findings

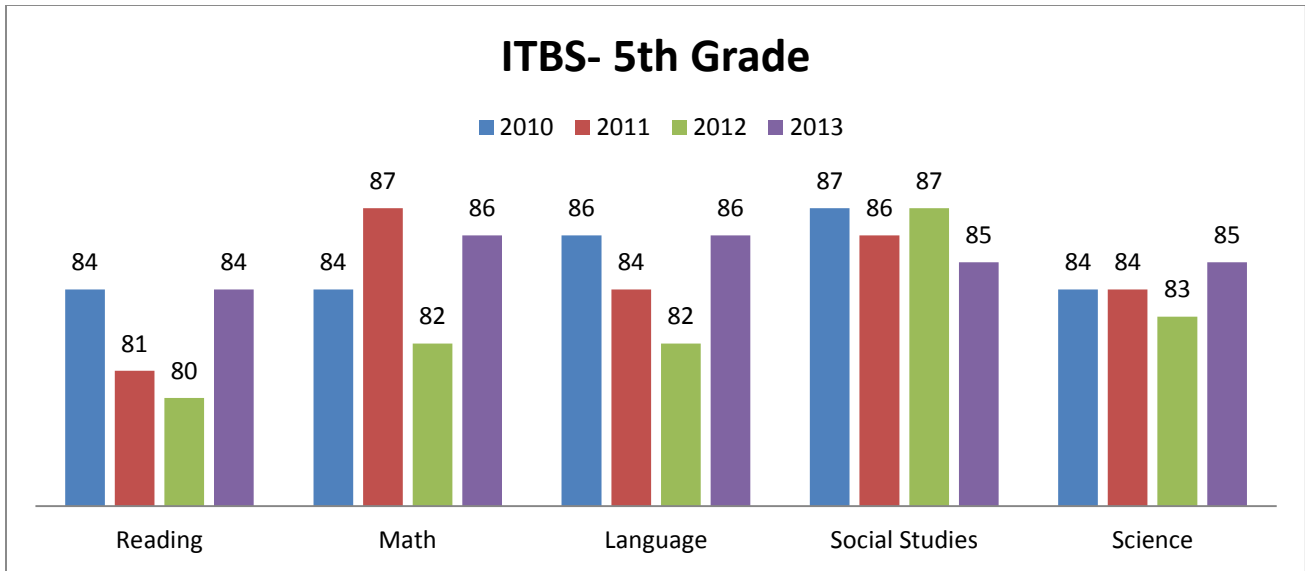
Dolvin’s internal needs assessment was conducted by the administrative team, the Dolvin Leadership Team, and the teachers from the School Governance Council. The team members analyzed information from the county-provided data pack and local school data. The groups also used feedback from the Quality Review Report conducted by Cambridge Education in 2011. As a team, we reviewed the data and compared results as appropriate to our state, county and local peer school groups. CRCT data was looked at primarily by examining the percent of our students in the “Exceeds” category (Level 3) and by ranking our “Exceeds” results in each subsection (Reading, ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies) against all other Fulton County Schools. We noted that CRCT/ITBS data is collected yearly; each testing group is comprised of a different set of students so any increases/decreases from one year to the next should be considered with this in mind. Our standardized test score analysis showed that our students are in the top ten percent of the Fulton County schools in exceeds for reading, language arts and math across third, fourth and fifth grade. While we will continue to reach or surpass these goals in reading, language arts, and math, we would like to see increased test scores in science and social studies.

Our school is demographically diverse, having more than 800 students whose families come from all over the world. Approximately 27 percent are Asian, 10 percent are African-American, .3 percent are American Indian/Alaska Native, 8 percent are Hispanic, and 63 percent are Caucasian. Approximately 6 percent of our students qualify as English Language Learners (ELL), 26 percent of our students qualify for Fulton County’s Talented and Gifted (TAG) program, 11 percent of our students qualify for Early Intervention Services (EIP) and 8 percent qualify for Special Education services (Speech and/or IRR services). We have 52 percent boys and 48 percent girls. Free and reduced lunch students, which has risen over the last several year are currently at 15 percent.

Scores







College and Career Ready Performance Index

2011-2012

SYSTEM NAME	ACHIEVEMENT POINTS	PROGRESS POINTS	ACHIEVEMENT GAP POINTS	ED/EL/SWD PERFORMANCE	EXCEEDING THE BAR POINTS	CHALLENGE POINTS	CCRPI SCORE	SINGLE SCORE
ALL	45.6	16.3	7	5.6	0	5.6	74.5	74.1
Fulton County	48.7	16.9	7	4	0	4	76.6	73.9
Dolvin Elementary School	57.8	17.8	15	2.3	.5	2.8	93.4	93.4

2012-2013

SYSTEM NAME	ACHIEVEMENT POINTS	PROGRESS POINTS	ACHIEVEMENT GAP POINTS	ED/EL/SWD PERFORMANCE	EXCEEDING THE BAR POINTS	CHALLENGE POINTS	CCRPI SCORE	SINGLE SCORE
ALL	47.5	16.5	9	4.8	0	4.8	77.8	75.8
Fulton County	49.7	16.7	7	4.4	0	4.4	77.8	77.5
Dolvin Elementary School	57.3	18.6	15	2.6	.5	3.1	94	94

From all the information gathered, we have become aware of the following needs:

- Student-centered learning in a model such as school-wide enrichment
- STEM and project-based learning
- A new character development program to help students develop positive relationships
- Integration of curriculum
- Further integrating the use of technology in the classroom
- Student goal setting and accountability
- Student mentoring program

SECTION III: Long-term Outcomes

LONG-TERM OUTCOME 1. Foster critical and global thinkers through rigorous and relevant learning.

The rationale for this Long-Term Outcome is to foster Dolvin Elementary School students in higher-order thinking and to ensure rigorous and relevant learning so that all students improve their critical thinking skills. As a high achieving school, we will implement project-based learning, instructional technology, interdisciplinary connections, and professional development for critical thinking across content areas to assist with our growth in this area.

We will measure our progress on this long-term outcome by the following data:

- Georgia Milestones test (3rd-5th grades) Reading, ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies (% Exceeds)
- Annual ITBS (3rd, 5th grades) Reading, Math
- Number of project- based learning units taught per teacher per year
- Number of instructional technology lessons per teacher per year
- Number of interdisciplinary connections per teacher per year
- Number of hours of professional development for critical thinking across content areas
- CCRPI achievement points
- Percent of growth on Student Learning Objectives in grades K-3 and special areas

LONG-TERM OUTCOME 2. Develop a supportive community that promotes positive relationships and integrity.

The rationale for this Long-Term Outcome is to improve student leadership skills and positive communication skills. Based on survey information, our community has determined a need to develop communication skills that promote positive relationships and integrity. We believe that all students are leaders and want to equip them with the tools to demonstrate integrity and respect throughout the community.

We will measure our progress on this long-term outcome by the following data:

- Evidence of teaching character traits per teacher per year
- Number of students in mentor programs
- Number of hours of staff development and planning time
- Survey of Students
- Survey of parents and staff

LONG-TERM OUTCOME 3. Develop an engaging student- centered environment that is differentiated to meet the unique needs and interest of each learner.

The rationale for this Long-Term Outcome is to ensure student accountability because each is responsible for the choices he/she makes and ultimately leads their own lives and learning. In doing so, increased opportunities will be given for students to have a voice in their learning based upon individual learning styles.

We will measure our progress on this long-term outcome by the following data:

- Evidence of student goal setting
- Number of opportunities for students in School Enrichment Model
- Percentage of differentiated instruction based on student interest

SECTION IV: Focus Areas, Short-Term Goals, and Strategic Initiatives

FOCUS AREA 1. Critical thinking across all content areas

In an effort to engage Dolvin Elementary School students in higher-order thinking and to increase real world application of knowledge and skills in an appropriately challenging environment, teachers will have the opportunity to improve and expand the use of project-based learning and instructional technology. They will also expand their use of critical thinking across all content areas.

As measures of progress, we will:

1. Increase student achievement using project-based learning.
2. Increase teacher utilization of instructional technology.
3. Increase the use of interdisciplinary connections.
4. Increase professional development for critical thinking across content areas.

Summary of Strategic Initiatives:

- Increase the use of STEM and project-based learning
- Increase the use of integrated curriculum across all content areas
- Inspired classroom model in all classrooms where student collaboration using technology is an integral part of the instruction

FOCUS AREA 2. Building Student Character, Communication, and Leadership

The results of our school survey indicate a need to enrich students' ability to communicate with respect and integrity. As a staff, we want to increase students' opportunities to show leadership skills to lead and serve effectively in their community.

As measures of progress, we will:

1. Develop positive communication skills among students.
2. Increase relationships that demonstrate integrity and respect throughout the community.
3. Increase student leadership skills through student mentoring.

Summary of Strategic Initiatives:

- Teaching character traits through having cross grade level teams work together to promote communication
- Student mentoring program where older students mentor younger students
- Increase planning time to address initiatives
- Provide staff development on character and TAG strategies

FOCUS AREA 3. Student Ownership of Learning

In order for students to take ownership of their academic progress, they need to be exposed to student-centered learning that will motivate them to self-reflect on their progress and meet their individual learning goals. In an effort to expand individual learning opportunities, teachers will provide differentiated opportunities and skills.

As measures of progress, we will:

1. Increase student accountability/responsibility for learning.
2. Increase student choice in the demonstration of learning.
3. Increase teacher strategies for student-centered learning.

Summary of Strategic Initiatives:

- School enrichment model where students have enrichment opportunities in a topic/content area of their choice
- Increase differentiated instruction based on student interest
- Increase student goal setting, evaluation and reflection

SECTION V: Next Steps

The school leadership team will be largely responsible for the next steps of the plan. First, the team will decide the measures for each of the objectives and long-term outcomes and set interim data points to check for progress. The leadership team will decide when each initiative should begin since this is a three year plan. The team will also determine if a request for flexibility of seed money is applicable. Each initiative will be assigned to a leader who will work with a team to define the tasks and action steps for that initiative. This will include defining the results, who is responsible, resources needed and the date to be completed. Leadership meetings will be used to talk about progress on each of the initiatives. The governance council will be briefed continuously on the progress of the plan, and we will share with the community through our Dolvin Diary Newsletter. The council will also hold an informational meeting to go over the plan.