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NEW PROSPECT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
STRATEGIC PLAN SY 2015/16 – SY 2017/18

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 this 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 lead effectively 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.

NEW PROSPECT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL began the strategic planning process in the spring of 2015. In order to move our strategic direction forward, we first had to engage with our community to understand our specific challenges and consider a path to address them collectively. Our School Governance Council and local school Leadership Team facilitated the work. Through a variety of data collection tools, we collected feedback from our local community members at large, our parents, our staff, and our students to help guide us through many iterations to develop a strategic plan that matches the needs of our school-wide community. Additionally, we collaborated with our feeder middle school (Webb Bridge, Cohort 2) using their strategic plan to help guide our work as well as considering the focus of our feeder high school (Alpharetta, Cohort 3) to ensure that our students will be prepared for success in both middle and high school.

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 initiatives; 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 New Prospect Elementary School 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. We believe that purposeful alignment with our feeder schools (100% of our students are “districted” to attend both Webb Bridge MS and Alpharetta HS) will provide our students with the best possible long-term outcomes via our strategic plan’s thoughtful alignment.

## 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.

New Prospect Elementary School 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, the leaders of New Prospect Elementary School clarified performance trends and identified the school’s most critical areas for improvement.

### Needs Assessment – Process

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We began our needs assessment in the spring of 2015. Led by our School Governance Council and Leadership Team, we began collecting and analyzing relevant school data, including a variety of survey results from our staff, students and community, assessment trend data, and a recent School Quality Review report for our school.

We used a “divide and conquer” approach among our “Needs Assessment Team” members. Our Needs Assessment Team sought feedback from parents, staff, students, and our local community. Externally, our local community included a variety of local businesses, real estate agencies, daycare providers, school business partners, neighborhood homeowners associations and local religious organizations. An additional external feedback source was from parents of children who are “zoned” to attend New Prospect ES, but have previously chosen alternate options. As a council we agreed that aligning with our feeder school, Webb Bridge Middle School, should help guide a portion of our work, therefore we carefully reviewed the current strategic plan, including the request for flexibility, and seed fund proposal from our “feeder” middle school, Webb Bridge Middle School.

Internally, we surveyed staff, students, and their parents. We utilized a variety of survey tools, including: school climate survey data, school choice survey data, three separate in-house created surveys for all school level stakeholder groups, student survey data from TKES surveys of practice, and we conducted empathy interviews with randomly selected students in grades K - 5. Additionally, we utilized protocols to analyze existing trend assessment data and current practice (some examples included: Notice and Wonder; Atlas; S-U-G and “Dot-mocracy”). We were also fortunate to have a School Quality Review performed this spring, and trend data from that report informed our work to develop and support strategic initiatives. We analyzed trend data for the last three years through the lens of Student Growth Percentiles, CRCT data, and ITBS data.

An interesting, although not surprising common thread between student data and school choice data was a desire for more hands-on learning. Additionally, data indicating a need for quality writing instruction was evident, as was the need for a positive learning environment that included all stakeholders.

### Needs Assessment – Summary of Findings

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Once we considered and analyzed numerous data, the council and leadership team identified the following areas to begin the work:



Writing Skills, Project Based Learning, and Science Performance were the top three, but after carefully considering all of the ideas that were priorities from our numerous data sources, we determined our long-term outcomes.

Data considered included qualitative results from empathy interviews with students in grades K – 5 where the most significant common thread was student acknowledgement that their most successful learning came from challenging interactive opportunities with new content. Through additional survey data collected from students, staff and parents, we realized that there was a “disconnect” for some students and parents who were not involved in the talented and gifted education program (TAG). We have parents who expressed concern about the level of challenge provided to their students when their TAG peers were in their TAG classes. A more concerning outcome was the opinion of some of our students, as young as first grade, making comments such as, “I am so glad I made it into TAG, I was worried that I was not smart...” during empathy interviews. A community member’s comment on an anonymous survey, also related to TAG, “Stop making kids feel like they are not smart enough because they are not in TAG” or “Students should be engaged in authentic learning experiences every day.” We need to ensure that all students feel equally valued and challenged every day at New Prospect Elementary.

Our School Quality Review identified numerous best practices currently in place at our school. However, also reported were the following limiting factors:

- Most (but not all) teachers use data to inform classroom decision making

- Independent learning activities are offered, few require deep thinking and the development of problem solving skills
- Consistent, effective use of questioning and discussion to promote student thinking
- Inconsistent use of individual student data for teachers and their students to establish and monitor growth toward personal goals

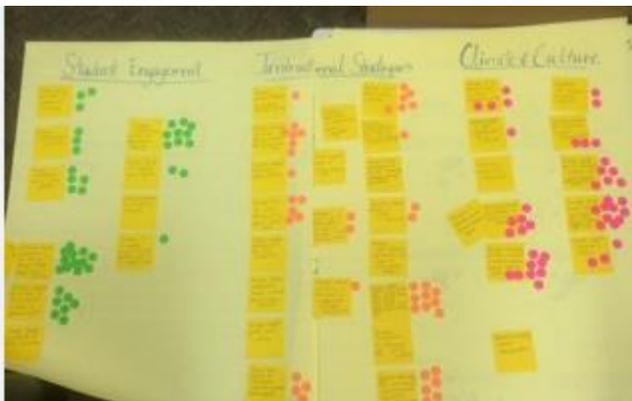
Due to this intensive data analyses, the council determined the following Long-Term Objectives:

***Increase student mastery of grade level writing standards for all areas at the highest level***

***Increase student performance on science standards across all grade levels***

***Create an environment in which students can achieve personal success through strong academics in a collaborative culture involving all stakeholders***

After several iterations about root causes through the lens of a data analysis protocol, our governance council and leadership team agreed that...



Our three focus areas were determined:  
Student Engagement, Instructional Strategies, and Climate and Culture

Once the three focus areas were determined, the teams iterated over potential short term goals that would support the work. After careful consideration, each had four goals that “rose to the top” utilizing “dot-mocracy” to guide this work.

**Increase student choice/performance task options to demonstrate learning**

**Increase collaborative learning among students**

**Increase student engagement in the learning process through inquiry-based learning**

**Increase students’ use of data to set and monitor academic and behavioral goals**

**Increase student achievement through hands-on learning, for example: PBL (Project-Based Learning),**

**STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)**

**Increase interdisciplinary performance tasks that facilitate connections between real-world application and content standards**

**Increase use of interdisciplinary connections**

**Increase student growth in all academic areas through purposeful differentiation**

**Increase parents’ level of engagement in programs that support students’ academic and social growth**

**Increase positive relationships among stakeholders, student → student; student → teacher; student → self; parent → school**

**Increase encouragement, recognition and celebration of students’ demonstration of positive behavior/character traits**

**Increase communication to students and parents regarding progress toward goals**

**SECTION III. Long-term Outcomes**

**LONG-TERM OUTCOME 1.** Increase student mastery of grade level writing standards for all areas at the highest level

The rationale for this long-term outcome is supported by trend test data on the GA Writing Assessment, Write Score assessment data for grades 3 - 5, as well as survey feedback from staff, parents, and students.

G5WA - Proficiency Summary by Performance Level				
<i>*Filters default to All Students</i>				
TestSchoolReportName	New Prospect Elementary			
InstructionalSettingSpecialEdFlag	(All)			
EllCode	(All)			
ESLFlag	(All)			
InstructionalSettingRemedialFlag	(All)			
FreeReducedMealCode	(All)			
FederalEthnicityCode	(All)			
% of Students				
Writing		Does Not Meet	Meets	Exceeds
2011-2012		6.1%	57.6%	36.4%
2012-2013		3.5%	52.9%	43.5%
2013-2014		3.4%	68.6%	28.0%
<b>G5WA 2012-2014</b>				

- Although the overall pass rate had increased over three years, the % of students exceeding standards had decreased significantly in 2013 →2014 from previous years. Write Score results for grades 3 -5 from 2014-15 provided additional evidence that student writing skills/mastery of writing standards was an area we needed to focus on to increase student achievement. Additionally, the need for consistent, engaging writing instruction was a notable theme in survey data from all stakeholders. Our plan includes implementation of Writers’ Workshop through professional development in Lucy Calkins Units of Study for our teachers beginning with the 2015-16 school year. Ultimately, our goal is to build the capacity of our teachers to effectively develop and monitor the evolving writing skills of our students as measured against the grade level appropriate Georgia Performance Standards for writing.

Our TARGET measure(s) to gauge success will be:

- ❖ Student growth on Write Score assessments – administered in September, December, and February
- ❖ Professional learning sessions on Writers’ Workshop in August, October, December, February – growth measured via a pre-assessment survey administered in August and a post-assessment survey administered in May
- ❖ Personalized learning data collected through individual student data notebooks aligned with grade level content standards for writing
- ❖ Increase % staff trained in Critical Friends Group, measured against 2015 baseline
- ❖ Increase level 3 and 4 performance in TKES standard # 6 Assessment Uses
- ❖ GA Milestones test data (2015 will be the baseline)

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**LONG-TERM OUTCOME 2.** Increase student performance on science standards across all grade levels

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- Students consistently identify science lab as their most engaging learning experience at New Prospect. We historically have “lost” students to Fulton Science Academy (FSA). Through a local survey, 98% of our participating parents, strongly agreed or agreed that science instruction and content were important. Climate survey data from families whose families zoned to New Prospect, but chose not to attend, indicated a desire for a strong science based curriculum. The most recent CRCT SCIENCE subtest data comparing the % of students who exceeded standards at New Prospect to similar Fulton County schools in grades 3, 4 and 5 rank our school 21<sup>st</sup> in third grade, 19<sup>th</sup> in fourth grade, and 19<sup>th</sup> in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The CRCT science subtest range of % of students exceeding standards was 94% for the top performing schools compared to 68% for New Prospect in fifth grade; 87% to 63% in fourth grade; 85% to 56% in third grade, respectively. On our student survey, 17% of surveyed students indicate that they either disagree or strongly disagree that they have choices in how they learn. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) was identified as significantly important via stakeholder survey data as it will provide our students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills that will prepare them for the workplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Additionally, student survey data validates the need for a STEM emphasis that focuses on the individual learning needs of each student at New Prospect through opportunities to learn via the process of inquiry and experimentation; crucial to the development of critical thinking skills.

Our TARGET measure(s) to gauge success will be:

- ❖ Staff survey data comparison pre-training (2016)/post-training (2017)
- ❖ Student survey data pre (2016)/post implementation (2017)
- ❖ Increase in level 3 and 4 rating on TKES standard #3 – Instructional Strategies (2016 vs. 2017)
- ❖ Increase % of staff trained in Inquiry Based (IB)/Project Based Learning (PBL) (2016 vs. 2017)
- ❖ Evidence of Inquiry/Project based strategies in unit planning (2016 vs. 2017) in Planbookedu
- ❖ GA Milestones scores in Science (note: 2015/16 scores will be our baseline)

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**LONG-TERM OUTCOME 3.** Create an environment in which students can achieve personal success through strong academics in a collaborative culture involving all stakeholders

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Throughout the survey data collected, effective use of student data was a common theme. Additional needs included student ownership of personal data, and rigorous enrichment opportunities for all students, regardless of classification. Quality professional development will provide staff with the knowledge needed for consistent implementation of best practice teaching strategies. The need for professional development was also a recurring theme on various surveys. Parents, students, community and staff survey results include:

- 16% of community members indicate that the overall curriculum rigor for our school was fair, and 4% rate it as poor
- Parent comments from local school qualitative survey, “Address curriculum and rigor; Re-work the TAG (talented and gifted) program; Allow all students to learn something new every day.”
- Student comment during an empathy interview, “Teachers *try* to challenge me.”
- 98% of surveyed students either agree or strongly agree that they are encouraged to do their best work; 96% believe their teachers care about them, however...12% indicate that disagree, strongly disagree, or do not know if they are challenged at school.
- 17% of surveyed students indicate that they either disagree or strongly disagree that they have choices in how they learn

Our TARGET measure(s) to gauge success will be:

- ❖ % of teachers observed through formative assessment data at the proficient or exemplary performance level on:
- ❖ Increase % of level 3 and 4 on TKES Standard #8: Challenging Learning Environment
- ❖ Increase % of level 3 and 4 on TKES Standard #4 Differentiation
- ❖ Increase % of teachers trained in best practice instructional strategies: Mystery, Compare/Contrast, Decision Making, and Collaboration

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

**FOCUS AREA 1. Instructional Strategies**

Teacher quality is a significant variable that affects student growth. Therefore, we need to provide our staff with purposeful professional development aligned with the identified needs of our community. To ensure success, continual support and monitoring will be an integral part of our plan.

<p><b>As measures of progress, we will:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase student choice/performance task options to demonstrate learning, through staff trained in PBL/IB, progress measured through increases in performance at levels 3 and 4 annually on TKES standards # 4 – Differentiation and #3 Instructional Strategies. Work will begin during the 2016-17 school year and goal will be met by 2018</li> <li>2. Increase collaborative learning among students, through staff trained in best practice gifted strategies, progress measured annually via staff and student surveys – training will begin during the 2016-17 school year; goal will be met by 2018</li> <li>3. Increase students’ use of data to set and monitor academic and behavioral goals, through individual student data tracking, progress measured annually through our PLC and PBIS initiatives and evidence of personalized data notebooks; work will begin 2015-16 and goal will be met by 2018</li> <li>4. Increase student achievement through hands-on learning, for example: PBL (Project-Based Learning), STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), staff training will begin in 2016-17; GA Milestones data will serve as a measurement tool with 2016 data as a baseline; goal will be met by 2018</li> </ol>
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**Summary of strategic initiatives:**

- Provide professional development to support school-wide initiatives
- Increase staff capacity to effectively develop as a professional learning community
- Train staff to effectively implement a writers’ workshop model
- Utilize individual student data notebooks to support personalized learning

**FOCUS AREA 2. Student Engagement**

Student engagement is required for student growth. At New Prospect Elementary School, we know that purposeful differentiated instruction and best practice teaching strategies that emphasize real-world connections will provide our students with a positive, engaging learning environment in which they will have the opportunity to thrive as learners.

<p><b>As measures of progress, we will:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase student engagement through hands-on learning, for example: (PBL) Project Based Learning or (STEM) Science, Technology, Engineering and Math measured via student survey (pre/post) to be administered annually beginning in 2016 and an increase in levels 3 and 4 on TKES Standard #3: Instructional Strategies</li> <li>2. Increase student achievement through hands-on learning, for example: (PBL) Project Based Learning or (STEM) Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, increased student achievement measured annually – to be measured by GA Milestones data with 2015 as the baseline</li> <li>3. Train staff in School-wide Enrichment Model beginning 2016; success will be measured via pre/post staff survey data</li> <li>4. Increase interdisciplinary student performance tasks that facilitate connections between real-world application and content standards, progress measured annually through pre/post survey data for students, staff and parents– beginning in 2016; goal will be met by 2018</li> </ol>
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**Summary of strategic initiatives:**

- Train staff to implement an inquiry-based/problem-project-based, school-wide enrichment model
- Provide differentiated instruction
- Develop a school-wide enrichment model

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**FOCUS AREA 3. Climate and Culture**

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To maximize the effectiveness of our overall school program, all New Prospect stakeholders need to be active participants, invested in developing positive self-esteem for all of our students. Student leadership and extra curricula opportunities will provide a means to increase student achievement and strengthen relationships among staff, parents and students within the school environment. We will emphasize, recognize, and celebrate positive student behavior.

<p><b>As measures of progress, we will:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase parents’ level of engagement in programs that support students’ academic and social growth, progress measured annually through parent volunteer data collection beginning in 2015; goal will be met by 2018</li> <li>2. Increase positive relationships among all stakeholders, progress measured annually through survey data and implementation of PBIS beginning in 2015; goal will be met by 2018</li> <li>3. Increase encouragement, recognition, and celebration of students’ demonstration of positive behavior/character traits, progress measured annually through survey data and PBIS data collection beginning in 2015 – goal will be met by 2018</li> </ol>
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| <p>4. Increase communication of data to student and parents regarding progress toward goals, through personalized data notebooks beginning in 2015; progress measured annually – goal will be met by 2018</p> |
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**Summary of strategic initiatives:**

- Increase student engagement opportunities with an academic focus, examples: Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl Team, Math Olympiad Team, Science Olympiad Team
- Expand student leadership opportunities, examples: Safety Patrol, Student Council, Peer Tutors
- Increase opportunities for parent/community engagement in school events
- Implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

## SECTION V. Next Steps

The School Governance Council and Leadership Team of New Prospect Elementary School will lead and monitor implementation of our Strategic Plan SY2015/16 – 2017/18. We will share and communicate plan progress via the following platforms:

- School Governance Council (SGC) Meetings
- Monthly Principal/Curriculum Chats
- School Website
- School Newsletter
- Faculty Meetings
- Leadership Meetings
- PLC (Professional Learning Community) Meetings

To ensure purposeful, systematic monitoring and assessing of plan progress, we have permanently added a Strategic Plan update to the SGC agenda.