Priority School Partnership School
Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School, Alexandria City Public Schools

February 27, 2017

To: Dr. Alvin Crawley, Superintendent
        Ms. Natalie Mitchell, Director of Title I Programs
        Dr. Terri Mozingo, Chief Academic Officer
        Dr. Lisa Piehota, Director of Elementary School Instruction
        Dr. Christopher Phillips, Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School Principal

From: Gail E. Lovette, Ph.D., Assistant Professor & Director of Turnaround Programs
        Eileen Cannon, M.T., Program Manager

It is a privilege to partner with Alexandria City Public Schools to provide targeted support to Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School. There were three areas that warranted in-depth audits by our content experts in order to best determine the focus for sustainably increasing teacher and leadership capacity as described in the Scope of Work developed for this partnership: Literacy instruction, Mathematics instruction, and Leadership. Attached you will find the **final** audit reports for these three areas including short- and long-term recommendations made by Curry to further support Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School. Some of these recommendations will be addressed by our partnership while some may be addressed by stakeholders at the school and district level. These audit reports do not include partnership work that has already commenced- direct coaching provided to 17 Jefferson-Houston teachers & support staff in grades K-2, nor will they include the program evaluation of the extended day and family involvement programs within Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School and Alexandria City Public Schools.

Included in this packet, please find the following:

1. **Jefferson-Houston Partnership Workstreams** table: A record of each task included in our partnership's statement of work
2. **Audit Findings Summary** table: A high-level overview of UVA Curry School team's observations--noted areas of strength and areas for growth, as well as major recommendations
3. **Jefferson-Houston Partnership Support Framework**: Showing the overall support model planned for UVA's work with Jefferson-Houston
4. **Jefferson-Houston Instructional Leadership Audit Summary**
5. **Jefferson-Houston Instructional Leadership Audit Report**
6. **Jefferson-Houston Literacy Audit Summary**
7. **Jefferson-Houston Literacy Audit Report**
8. **Jefferson-Houston Partnership Literacy Support Framework**: A detailed view of the proposed Literacy support model
9. **Jefferson-Houston Math Audit Report**

Please note that this is the second version of this audit report. Dr. Phillips expressed concern about several items in the original literacy audit report from February 15, 2017. We have addressed each of these items in both the literacy audit report and the literacy audit summary. Below you will find the list of concerns from Dr. Phillips (in bold) along with the faculty auditors' (Drs. Carrie Simkin and Julie Gray) responses to these items. As partners, we sincerely appreciate the opportunity to be more explicit about our findings, and to clarify each of the following points according to Dr. Phillips' feedback:

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1. There is a school wide literacy plan – Balanced literacy- PD with Lisa Meyers and ACPS.

Although small group reading instruction (SGRI) lesson plan templates developed by Dr. Lisa Meyers (Independent Consultant) and the curriculum frameworks (balanced literacy) were shared with the auditors by Dr. Phillips and Suzanne Lank (ACPS, Curriculum Developer), at the time of the audit, evidence that teachers were consistently utilizing these SGRI plans to inform their literacy instructional practices was not present (determined through observations and anecdotal conversations with teachers). In addition, SGRI plans are but one piece of a well-developed literacy plan that should articulate a shared vision of literacy instruction and clearly define balanced literacy for all faculty.

2. Did not talk to teachers during observations.

Conversations with the classroom teachers were informal and spontaneous, occurring before and after the auditors' observations. The auditors utilized these opportunities to ask clarifying questions.

3. There are not limited resources at JH- Classroom libraries, leveled book rooms, Nonfiction rooms

Decodable texts for beginner readers were absent from the K-4 bookroom and not consistently present in the primary classrooms. Although the reading specialists reported that a large quantity of non-fiction books had been purchased for the school, they were not yet available to teachers in the bookrooms. Very few classrooms had organized classroom libraries; yes, some had an adequate number of books but very few were organized in a way to make them accessible to students (particularly in grades 3-8).

4. Horizontal alignment- Grade levels meet weekly, one person takes on writing the plans and then the grade level works the plans.

Alignment was stronger in K-2 (as evidenced by observations) but was less apparent in observed literacy instruction of grades 3-8. Although common planning may occur, the instructional approaches utilized between classrooms at the same grade levels varied.

5. Literacy intervention system- Interventionists working with kids. [Administrators] Meet every two weeks with teachers about literacy and data.

This had yet to begin at the time of the audit.

6. Bookroom support- grades 3-8 books are in the room. Nonfiction texts are in specialized book rooms

See answer for #3. Content area instruction was not observed by the auditors, therefore content specific texts may be available in those classrooms. However, the bookrooms that Dr. Simkin toured with the reading specialists did not have an abundance of non-fiction texts.

7. There is a literacy plan in place at JH with a shared vision as the JH staff receive ongoing PD.

When asked for the school literacy plan in the December 2nd kick-off meeting with Drs. Phillips and Sims, Ms. Spivey, and the two J-H reading specialists, Dr. Simkin was given the SGRI lesson plan templates from the J-H instructional faculty's work with Dr. Lisa Meyers. Dr. Simkin was also provided the ACPS Curriculum Framework; however, a J-H specific comprehensive balanced literacy plan has not been provided.

Please let us know if you have any further questions regarding our audit findings. We very much look forward to this collaboration and to working together to ensure that all J-H leaders, teachers, and most importantly, students benefit from our recommended series of supports and professional learning.

J-H Partnership Workstreams

Work	Key Stakeholders	Description	Target Date	Status	Notes
Original Agreement	Alvin Crawley	Legal Agreement for collaboration of parties	December	**COMPLETED**	ACPS Jefferson Houston school administration and instructional leadership and pertinent central office personnel will participate in professional development and coaching based on outcomes of needs assessment
	Terri Mozingo				
	UVA Contracts				
SOW Addendum	Gail Lovette	Scope of Work describing staff, services, & remuneration	January	**COMPLETED**	Eileen Cannon, Program Manager: Onsite progress monitoring and coordination of coordination, development, and oversight of implementation of all partnership efforts including weekly check-ins. Gail Lovette, Project Director: Progress Monitoring of all tasks and regular written syntheses of progress for ACPS and VDOE. Anatolii Utkuzov, Business Manager: administrative support for all UVA tasks.
	Natalie Mitchell				
	Chris Phillips				
**UVA Partnership Oversight and Development**				
Governance	ACPS, UVA	Attend all monthly Governance meetings to provide monthly reports/feedback (TBD) on project progress and performance.	Monthly	**ON TARGET**	
**Task 1- Initial Needs Assessment**				
Needs Assessment	KPD Education	Surveys, meet with staff & leadership	December/ January	**COMPLETED**	Write up to be shared with ACPS mid-February
	UVA Reading	Observation, interviews, survey, student data	January	**COMPLETED**	
	UVA Math	Observation, interviews, survey, student data	January	**COMPLETED**	
**Task 2- Leadership Assessment and Coaching and Building Instructional Leadership Capacity**				
Leadership	KPD Education	Commence leadership coaching of the ACPS Jefferson-Houston administration. (SOW)	February	**ON TARGET**	
	KPD Education	Instructional leadership capacity building for sustainability of efforts (KPD Education)	February	**ON TARGET**	
	Dr. Gail Lovette	Instructional leadership capacity building for sustainability of efforts (Summer 2017 Workshop)	Summer	**PLANNING**	
**Task 3- Intense Instructional Support**				
Coaching: CLASS	MyTeachingPartner	MTP is a web-mediated, individualized coaching approach focused on improving teacher-student interactions. Train all ACPS Jefferson Houston teachers in the CLASS tool and provide supporting materials; implement the My Teaching Partner (MTP) protocol.	10 cycles	**ON TARGET**	
	JH K-2 Staff: 17 engaged				
**Task 4- Reading Professional Development and Responsive Coaching**				
Literacy	Literacy Institute	Provide multiple, iterative professional development to teachers in foundational knowledge of literacy and the effective implementation of differentiated word knowledge instruction.	Summer Literacy Institute	**PLANNING**	
	Dr. Carrie Simkin	Instructional capacity building (professional learning with targeted, responsive coaching in differentiated reading instruction within the balanced literacy model)	January		*See Literacy tab*

J-H Partnership Workstreams

Work	Key Stakeholders	Description	Target Date	Status	Notes
Task 5- Math Professional Development and Responsive Coaching					
Math	Faith Peddie	Provide multiple, iterative professional development to teachers in foundational knowledge of numeracy and effective instruction in mathematics.	Summer CRA PD	**PLANNING**	
	Susan Birnie	Instructional capacity building (professional learning with targeted, responsive coaching in math)	March	**LAUNCHED**	
Tasks 6 and 7- Program Evaluation of Extended Day and Family Involvement					
Program	Chris Phillips, Natalie Mitchell, Nancy Deutsch	Evaluate the effectiveness of the outsourced Extended Day program.	June	**ON TARGET**	
Program	Chris Phillips, Natalie Mitchell, Nancy Deutsch	Evaluate the family training initiative undertaken by Jefferson-Houston and ACPS district level stakeholders	July	**ON TARGET**	

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	Literacy	Math	Leadership
Areas of Strength	- Teacher buy-in for a balanced literacy instructional approach - Teachers eager to grow their practice - District-wide support for balanced literacy instruction	- Guided math instructional approach across K-5 - Broad adherence to ACPS pacing guide, supporting common assessment & progress monitoring goals	- Mutual support for personal/ professional/career growth among J-H leaders and staff - Teachers, staff, and administration actively discuss curriculum issues and instructional strategies
Areas in Need of Support	School-wide definition and understanding of differentiated and balanced literacy instruction at levels appropriate for student development	- Leveraging progress monitoring towards effective differentiation - Professional development on implementing best practices with manipulatives and CRA (Concrete/Representational/Abstract) instructional approach	- Staff and leadership seeking more clarity on roles and responsibilities - Staff collaboration over school-wide behavior code and master scheduling options
Major Recommendations	Direct coaching for J-H Reading coaches in order to support job-embedded professional development on differentiated literacy instruction across J-H faculty	- Targeted instructional support of teachers (based on classroom data) by UVA coaches - Collaboration with J-H math coach on short-term and long-term grade-level PD objectives - Instructional leadership support provided to build and sustain progress monitoring system within and across J-H grade levels	School leadership coaching in order to: - Help J-H develop clear roles & responsibilities, along with knowledge, attitude, skills, aspiration, and behaviors (KASAB model) that support each role - Establish and refine communication systems between and among leaders and faculty

J-H Partnership Support Framework

	Instruction & Positive School Culture	Literacy	Math	Leadership
Remainder of 2017 School Year	K-2 My Teaching Partner 1:1 Coaching 17 Teachers, Specialists, Paras 10 Cycles	Weekly Coach-the-Coaches EdThena to extend feedback cycles	Weekly coaching with targeted grade levels (6, 7) EdThena to extend feedback cycles	1:1 Coaching for identified school leaders Strategic Planning & Teacher Leadership Development (sustainability)
Summer 2017	TBD with Strategic Planning	Literacy Institute	**C**oncrete **R**epresentational **A**bstract CRA & Differentiated Math Instruction PD	UVA Instructional Leadership Workshop
Launching 2017-2018 School Year	TBD with Strategic Planning	Coaching support Co-Teaching model refined Progress Monitoring system refined	Differentiated Instruction & Progress Monitoring program based on PD and 2017 lessons learned	1:1 Leadership coaching (sustainability)

Priority School Partnership: Instructional Leadership Audit Report
Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School, Alexandria City Public Schools

Content Area Expertise	School & Instructional Leadership		
Observers	**KPD Education**		
	Kim Dockery Ed.D.	**Gail Ritchie, Ph.D., NBCT**	**Jeannie Waters**
	Before retiring in 2015, Kim Dockery served as Chief Academic Officer, Assistant Superintendent of Special Services, Principal, Assistant Principal, and Teacher in Fairfax County Public Schools. She is currently working with the Virginia Department of Education on the statewide implementation of balanced assessment practices and performance-based assessment. Dr. Dockery served as an Adjunct professor at UVA's Curry School of Education teaching in the Administration and Supervision program from 2009 to 2016. Her research areas of interest are executive functioning, school wide literacy practices, teacher and collective efficacy and leadership.	Dr. Ritchie is a 27-year veteran of Fairfax County Public Schools and recipient of numerous grants and awards, including Teacher of the Year (2000). Served as Adjunct Faculty for 15 years in George Mason University's Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning program. She has over ten years of experience coaching teachers and teacher leaders with a focus on continual improvement in content/curriculum knowledge, instructional practices, cultural proficiency, and collaboration. Her research areas of expertise include teachers as researchers, early literacy and math, professional learning, and responsive instruction.	Jeannie Waters is 21-year veteran of teaching and supervision with experience as a teacher, instructional coach, assistant principal, professional development specialist and principal. She has ten years of experience coaching administrators and teaching teams through base-school administration with a focus on restorative thinking, continual improvement through instructional practices, cultural proficiency, and knowledge in child development. Ms. Waters has been a Student achievement facilitator and professional development specialist at the Maryland State Department of Education in the areas of special education and early childhood education.
Dates	11/28/16: Dr. Dockery met with Dr. Phillips. 12/5/16: Survey administration to all three groups (Principal, Admin, teacher)		
School Summary/ Context	Jefferson-Houston Pre-K through eighth grade school in Alexandria, VA made up of approximately 565 students. A large majority of students (69%) receive free and reduced-price meals, while a small minority (approximately 13%) receive English language (ELL) support. There are five Pre-K and two to four classrooms in kindergarten through eighth grade. The administrative staff at Jefferson-Houston has experienced rapid change in the last three years. All three survey groups agreed that the rapid change creates opportunities and challenges in the current functioning of the school. In approaching leadership needs within the school, there are two areas that stand out in relation to the recommendations related to staff and staff who are new to their roles. The first is clarity in roles, responsibilities, and expectations for each staff member, including coaches and administration. The second area related to that is the theme of communication around the roles and responsibilities and subsequently expectations. In approaching these two themes, KPD Education will focus on the development of		

	school-wide structures and processes to build skills and ownership of all staff members. The "KASABS" (Joellen Killion 2013) model of supporting this work will be utilized. Thus, as the roles, responsibilities, and expectations are clarified, the accompanying **k**nowledge, **a**ttitude, **s**kills, **a**spiration, and **b**ehaviors will be used to set goals for gaining confidence and competency in these roles. This will be done in collaboration with developing systems work in Alexandria related to PLC development to utilize common language.		
Observation Summary	Kim Dockery, Jeannie Waters and Gail Ritchie met with identified groups for 1.5 hours to administer surveys and open-ended questions. Two surveys were utilized (OECD survey modified for present setting and School Culture Survey). Some of the information that is necessary to get a complete picture from the report reflects the confusion regarding roles and expectations related to administration and instructional leaders and the ability to put management and instructional leaders together. In the short term recommendations, establishing role definition and expectations for all admin team members as well as ensuring communication between all members will contribute to improving all areas of school functioning. Overall there was agreement on several areas related to school culture (i.e.Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.and agreement between the teachers and principal that the following conditions did not exist; Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule and The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff). Others areas show a disagreement in perception (i.e School leaders have the capacities to carry out teacher monitoring and evaluation and The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff; disagreement between admin team and teachers)		

		Short Term Recommendations	**Long Term Recommendations**
School Level Data	Jefferson-Houston has experienced a high number of administrative changes as well as a high amount of teacher turnover. ● Principal's 3rd year ● Academic Dean's 1st year ● Assistant Principal started in December ● 50% of staff hired within past 2 years	Communicate short term goals (Master schedule, clarification of roles and responsibilities) to provide clarity about direction of school to involve and retain existing staff.	School leaders collaboratively create school handbook defining culture, identifying operating structures and expectations
Areas of Noted Strength	**Teachers High**: Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues. **Admin High** Team of expert staff come together to address contextual or current challenges. **Principal High**: Members of our school community seek alternatives to problems/issues rather than repeating what we have always done	Clarify roles of admin, teacher leaders, teachers and instructional coaches in meetings, including MTSS, team and data meetings to continue to increase effectiveness of school collaboration.	

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Targeted Areas for Growth	**Teacher High Priority for growth**: When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair. Structures in schools encourage the development of leadership teams. **Admin High priority for Growth**: School leadership frameworks exist to provide coherence and guidance on the characteristics and responsibilities of school leaders. **Principal High Priority for Growth**: Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff. Our school schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff	KPD Coaches will partner with J-H staff towards teacher leadership: Buy in on Summer PD KPD Coaches will partner with J-H administration to develop Admin roles & responsibilities KPD Coaches will partner with J-H administrative team to develop systems of communication between and among admin, staff KPD Coaches will work with J-H leadership to develop staff roles & responsibilities KPD Coaches will partner with J-H leaders to develop master schedule for 2017-18	KPD Coaches will partner with J-H leaders to develop faculty handbook; including roles and expectations in handbook to create continuity in expectations and responses over time 1:1 Leadership Knowledge/Skills Development Coordination with Alexandria initiatives in PLC structures, roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
Conclusions	The survey results indicate a group of staff members highly passionate about the students and student outcomes at Jefferson-Houston. They also speaks to the staff members valuing each other. All groups reported the difficulty that staff mobility has brought and the challenges that a new team of leaders encounters within their own team and across the school. There was a great openness to supporting the new admin team members as well as recognition that developing structures collaboratively with staff is a desired state, if not always achievable because of the current teacher mobility. It is important to note that responses are perceptions and that all individuals cannot completely understand the reality of different roles and responsibilities within and across a school. That being said, where there are perceptions regarding areas important to the success of a school's student outcomes, the perception becomes the reality and an opportunity to provide clarity. For example, both the teacher leaders and the principal understand that the behavior code and master schedule were not developed collaboratively. The reality is that with the high degree of staff change, to have done so earlier is practically impossible. However, now understanding that and seeing where that fits in the priorities of the school, an opportunity is afforded to address the behavior code and master schedule in a way that develops the school culture of collaboration and develops ownership for the outcomes. There is desire and need identified through the surveys to create a framework/model for leadership development in administrative team and teacher leader team. Dr. Phillips has also indicated that development of teacher and administrative team leadership is a strong priority. The short- and long-term objectives identified above are focused on pieces that increase the effectiveness of current processes, and build other processes that contribute to staff being able to execute their roles and responsibilities at the highest levels possible.The development of structures including administrative and teacher expectations through a school handbook would support continuous improvement and clarity in a school where there is high mobility. In addition, ACPS central office can and should reinforce the structures with all administrators and teachers as the PLC concepts that are being developed become division priorities.		

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The Leadership Audit team for Jefferson-Houston consisted of three individuals. A brief bio for each follows.

Kim P. Dockery, Ed.D. Before retiring in 2015, Dr. Dockery served as Chief Academic Officer, Assistant Superintendent of Special Services, Principal, Assistant Principal, and Teacher in Fairfax County Public Schools. She is currently working with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) on the statewide implementation of balanced assessment practices and performance-based assessment. She has served as an adjunct professor at UVA's Curry School of Education teaching in the Administration and Supervision program from 2009-2016. Dr. Dockery's research interests have focused on executive functioning, literacy practices, and teacher/collective efficacy.

Jeannie F. Waters: Jeannie Waters is a 21-year veteran of teaching and supervision with experience as a teacher, instructional coach, assistant principal, professional development specialist and principal. She has ten years of experience coaching administrators and teaching teams through base-school administration with a focus on restorative thinking, continual improvement through instructional practices, cultural proficiency, and knowledge in child development. Her experience also includes work at the Maryland State Department of Education as a Student Achievement Facilitator and professional development specialist in the Division of Special Education and Early Childhood Interventions where she also collaboratively created Maryland Response to Intervention.

Gail R. Ritchie, Ph.D.: Dr. Ritchie is a 27-year veteran of Fairfax County Public Schools and recipient of numerous grants and awards, including Teacher of the Year (2000). She served as Adjunct Faculty for 15 years in George Mason University's Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning program. Dr. Ritchie has ten years of experience coaching teachers and teacher leaders with a focus on continual improvement in content/curriculum knowledge, instructional practices, cultural proficiency, and collaboration. Her research areas of expertise include teachers as researchers, early literacy and math, professional learning, and responsive instruction.

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The audit was accomplished by working with staff in three groups. Kim Dockery met with principal, Dr. Chris Phillips. Jeannie Waters met with most of the staff on the admin team, and Gail Ritchie met with teacher leaders who volunteer for the teacher leadership team (a regular standing team at Jefferson-Houston). Two leadership surveys were utilized to get a picture of school leadership and school climate. The surveys were based on surveys that have been utilized in the field: the OECD School Leadership Analysis, and the School Culture Triage Survey. The OECD School Leadership Analysis was adapted and shortened to make the survey applicable to all three leadership stakeholders within the school. The School Culture Triage Survey was given in total. In addition, a series of open-ended questions were designed to be utilized with all three groups in order to have a conversation around leadership that captured details pertinent to Jefferson-Houston.

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The OECD School Leadership Tool Kit was developed in 2006-2007 with 22 educational systems in 19 countries participating; the work helped define the major conceptual framework categories and questions that focus on identifying and prioritizing the work of school leaders. This work identified four policy levers which, taken together, can improve school leadership practice. They are: 1. (Re)Defining school leadership responsibilities, 2. Distributing school leadership, 3. Developing skills for effective school leadership, and 4. Making school leadership an attractive profession. For the purposes of this audit, questions were edited to more fully represent the stakeholders within the school, removing questions that were more external and those which were more related to district practices that fall outside of the realm of control for the Jefferson-Houston staff.

The second tool that was utilized was the School Leader's Tool for Assessing and Improving School Culture by Christopher R. A Wagoner. This survey allows schools to evaluate three main aspects of school culture: professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality, and self-determination/efficacy. Recent research linking school culture to student achievement has propelled the professional learning community initiatives and broadened the definitions of successful practice to include collaboration, teacher dialogue and leadership, and collective efficacy. In this framework of school improvement, there is a shift away from the isolated individual teacher in the classroom to teams of educators talking about practice and student work with a collective responsibility for all students.

The open-ended questions were developed with the goal of engaging teachers and administrators in a conversation that allowed responses to be more personalized to the leadership culture at Jefferson-Houston. It also allowed the addition of other ideas and concerns to be brought up and for thinking to emerge that came from the stakeholders at the school.

One additional area that was added to the OECD School Leadership Analysis was a third column, beyond 'current state' and 'desired state.' This was an area that allowed survey participants to prioritize the desired state into immediate needs, summer, next fall and long terms needs as well as to identify areas that were not priorities. This was extremely helpful in ensuring that the audit did not become a conversation about rapid actions being taken within the school all at once. Survey tools are included in references and attached to this report.

This report represents initial findings. There were two follow up areas that the UVA team would like to address. The first area is in including the primary instructional leaders (i.e. IB Coordinator and Data Coach) within the school admin team that participated in the survey. The team that participated in the survey included the assistant principals, psychologist and social workers. Because the instructional leaders have many responsibilities, they were not asked by the principal to attend the audit meeting, making the instructional leadership questions difficult to gauge and calibrate as many of the persons attending this school admin team honestly stated that their role was not in the instructional sphere of knowledge. The administration team spoke of the work that had been done with this team to expand support at the school, allowing Dr. Phillips and Dr. Simms to leave the building for Division meetings, something that had not been possible earlier. Follow up with instructional leaders and others working

with the administration team will also allow a more complete picture of all of the many leadership roles within Jefferson-Houston.

Overall there were areas that all three groups agreed upon as well as those that with markedly different responses. There are staff that have been at J-H for many years, experiencing over 10 principals and assistant principals. All three groups agree that the current admin team has many new members. This is Dr. Phillips' third year, his academic dean's 1st year, and a new AP was hired in December. In addition, Dr. Phillips has hired over 50% new staff over the last two years.

Results are presented by survey participants in three different groupings

- principal,
- existing teacher leadership team, and
- principal determined admin leader team

Results highlight areas that are perceived to be high (positive) and areas that are perceived to be low and therefore areas for consideration for growth. Preferred situation identifies areas for change that are already perceived to be of importance; these are further described as a high (address right away), medium (address this summer), or low (address next year) priority. Where numbers are included, the score is the average of the group response and Highs and Lows are relative to a 5 point scale. This means that there are sometimes relative strengths and relative areas of concern.

Teachers Leaders Survey Results

OECD School Leadership Analysis

Leadership Responsibilities

Current Situation Low: School leadership frameworks exist to provide coherence and guidance on the characteristics and responsibilities of school leaders. (2.5)

Current Situation High: School leaders take an active role in teachers' professional development. (3.25)

Preferred Situation Low: School leaders have the capacities to carry out teacher monitoring and evaluation. (3.6)

Preferred Situation High: School leaders have sufficient autonomy to lead the practices most likely to improve student learning. (4.8)

Distributed School Leadership

Current Situation Low: Middle level managers and other potential leaders have opportunities for leadership development. (2.25)

Current Situation High: Team of expert staff come together to address contextual or current challenges. (3.7)

Preferred Situation Low: Accountability mechanisms reflect distributed leadership arrangements. (3.7)

Preferred Situation High: Structures in schools encourage the development of leadership teams. (4.4)

Developing Skills for Effective Leadership

Current Situation Low: Networks (virtual or real) exist to provide leadership development opportunities for principals and leadership teams. (2.1) Recruitment panels receive guidance and training for assessing the knowledge, skills and competencies of leadership candidates. (2.1)

Current Situation High: Leadership development provision is based on analysis of need. (2.7)

Preferred Situation Low: Potential leaders are identified and encouraged to develop their leadership practices. (4.1)

Preferred Situation High: Networks (virtual or real) exist to provide leadership development opportunities for principals and leadership teams. (4.4) Leadership development strategies focus on skills for goal setting, assessment and accountability. (4.4)

Teachers Leaders Survey Results
School Culture Triage results

Professional Collaboration

Low: The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.   (2.4)

High: Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.   (3.8)

Affiliative Collegiality

Low: Our school reflects a true "sense" of community. (3.0) There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebrations including holidays, special events and recognition of goal attainment. (3.0)

High: Teachers and staff tell stories of celebrations that support the school's values. (3.6) Teachers and staff visit/talk/meet outside of the school to enjoy each other's company. (3.6)

Self-Determination/Efficacy

Low: When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair. (2.3)

High: School members are interdependent and value each other. (3.6)

Administrative Team Survey Results
OECD School Leadership Analysis

Leadership Responsibilities

Current Situation Low: School leadership frameworks exist to provide coherence and guidance on the characteristics and responsibilities of school leaders.

Current Situation High: School leaders have the capacities to carry out teacher monitoring and evaluation.

Preferred Situation Low: School leaders have the capacities to carry out teacher monitoring and evaluation.

Preferred Situation High: School leaders are encouraged and supported in building collaborative cultures among teachers.

Distributed School Leadership

Current Situation Low: Accountability mechanisms reflect distributed leadership arrangements

Current Situation High: Distributed leadership is recognized and reinforced in existing policy (e.g. in national leadership frameworks).

Preferred Situation Low: Teams of expert staff come together to address contextual or current challenges.

Preferred Situation High: Leadership tasks are widely distributed in schools.

Accountability mechanisms reflect distributed leadership arrangements.

Middle-level managers and other potential leaders have opportunities for leadership development.

Structures in schools encourage the development of leadership teams

Developing Skills for Effective Leadership

Current Situation Low: Recruitment panels receive guidance and training for assessing the knowledge, skills and competencies of leadership candidates.

Current Situation High: Leadership development provision includes the right balance of theoretical and practical knowledge and self-study.

Preferred Situation Low: Networks (virtual or real) exist to provide leadership development opportunities for principals and leadership teams.

Preferred Situation High: Leadership development provision is based on analysis of need.

Potential leaders are identified and encouraged to develop their leadership practices.

School Culture

Current Situation Low: Youth "voice" is considered in decision-making by regularly meeting with randomly selected groups of students to obtain feedback.

Current Situation High: There is a school Mission Statement or Vision Statement that includes a stated commitment to diversity and/or global citizenry.

Preferred Situation Low: Preferred Situation High: School leaders are involved in teacher recruitment decisions.

School leaders take an active role in teachers' professional development.

Administrative Team Survey Results
School Culture Triage results

Professional Collaboration

Low: Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule.

The planning and organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.

High: Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.

The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.

Affiliative Collegiality

Low: Our school reflects a true "sense" of community

High: Teachers and staff tell stories of celebrations that support the school's values.

Self-Determination/Efficacy

Low: When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair.

High: The school staff is empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.

Principal Survey Results

Dr. Phillips chose to focus on Preferred Situation and the relative priority. He saw current and preferred situation as being close to the same and preferred to answer in the preferred status category.

Leadership Responsibilities
Immediate Priorities:
> School leaders are encouraged and supported in building collaborative cultures among teachers
> School leaders have the capacity to carry out teacher monitoring and evaluation
> School leaders take an active role in teacher's professional development
> School leaders have discretion over strategic direction setting.

Distributed School leadership
Immediate priorities
> Teams of expert staff come together to address contextual or current challenges

Developing Skills for Effective Leadership
> Leadership development provision includes the right balance of theoretical and practical knowledge and self-study

School Culture
> Teacher evaluation is used for instructional change

School Culture Triage Survey

<u>Professional Collaboration</u>

High:

Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues

The planning and organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.

Low:

Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule

The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.

<u>Affiliative Collegiality</u>

High:

Teachers and staff visit/talk/meet outside of school to enjoy each other's company

Low:

Our school schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff

There is a rich and robust traditions and celebrations including holiday, special events and recognition of goal attainment.

<u>Self Determination/Efficacy</u>

High:

Members of our school community seek alternatives to problems/issues rather than repeating what we have always done

The school staff is empowered to make instructional decision rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.

Low:

When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair

Conclusions & Recommendations

There is need and desire identified through the surveys to develop a frame work/model for leadership development in administrative team and teacher leader team. Dr. Phillips has also indicated that development of teacher and administrative team leadership is a strong priority. There are several themes noted in both the teacher and administrative team summer development priorities around clarifying roles and expectations and corresponding skill development that can begin immediately and also move into summer and fall 2017.

There is consensus that staff and administration spend a great deal of time on behavioral issues with widely varying consensus on the current success, although all three groups report great efforts in dealing with poverty and trauma-involved students. The admin team has noted the reduced discipline

demands, noting that teachers are dealing with many students experiencing trauma and that crisis support is critical and time consuming. There is a desire to know and do more in this area.

In approaching leadership needs within the school, there are two areas that stand out in relation to the recommendations, the first is clarity in roles, responsibilities, and expectations for each staff member, including coaches and administration. The second area related to that is the theme of communication around the roles and responsibilities and subsequently expectations. In approaching these two themes, KPD Education will focus on the development of school wide structures and processes to build skills and ownership of all staff members. The "KASABS" (Killion 2013) model of supporting this work will be utilized. Thus, as the roles, responsibilities, and expectations are clarified, the accompanying knowledge, attitude, skills, aspiration, and behaviors will be used to set goals for gaining confidence and competency in these roles.
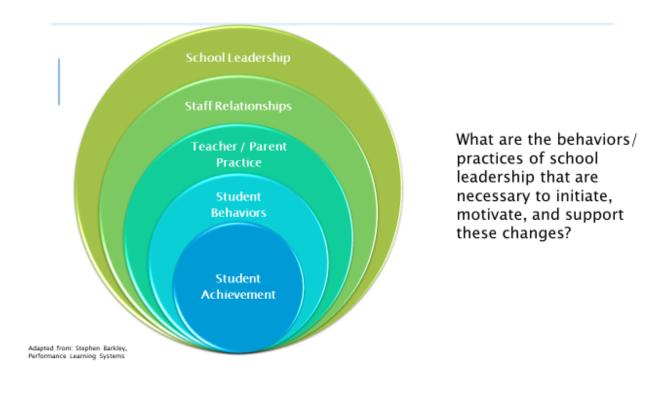
KASABs	Indicators of Success	Evidence
Knowledge	What is the new knowledge gained? What will indicate it?	How will I know this knowledge has been acquired?
Attitude	What beliefs or values are changed? What indicates the change?	How will I know these changes occurred?
Skill	What skills have been acquired?	How will I know these skills were present?
Aspiration	What drive, motivation, and/or expectations have changed?	How will I know the aspiration has changed?
Behavior	What behaviors have changed?	How will I know behaviors have changed?

Priority School Partnership: Instructional Leadership Audit Report
Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School, Alexandria City Public Schools

Current recommendations include:

1. Intensive support for the Academic Dean and new Assistant Principal as well as development of the leadership team with several instructional members included. Skill development will begin with the Academic Dean and Assistant Principal together and separately which will assist in developing a strong leadership team (as one individual is brand new to the role and the other is in year one).
2. Facilitate Master Schedule team meetings to develop working schedule for 2017-2018 school year, clarifying roles, structures and processes.
3. Facilitate necessary skill development priorities by initiating summer planning processes that allows teachers to be part of identifying needs and solutions.
4. Review the instructional audits. Alignment of areas is critical to reducing layers of overlapping recommendations. Skill development for the administrative and teacher leader teams as they plan for summer and fall work will increase involvement and allow staff to broaden influence as building leaders.
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The graphic below delineates the importance of strong leadership skills and behaviors in getting to the desired student outcomes. (Barkley)

School Leadership

Staff Relationships

Teacher / Parent Practice

Student Behaviors

Student Achievement

Adapted from: Stephen Barkley, Performance Learning Systems

What are the behaviors/ practices of school leadership that are necessary to initiate, motivate, and support these changes?

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Stephen Barkley. http://barkleypd.com/

Priority School Partnership: School Literacy Audit Report
Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School, Alexandria City Public Schools

Content Area Expertise	Literacy Instruction
Observers	Carrie Simkin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Reading Education Julie Gray, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Reading Education
Dates for Data Collection	**12.2.16** (10:00am): Scheduled audit kick-off meeting with Dr. Simkin, Dr. Chris Phillips (Principal), Dr. Sara Sims (Academic Principal), Ms. Shawanda Spivey (Improvement Coach), and the J-H reading specialists: Ms. Heather Shea (nee Sannelli) and Ms. Teal Miles. **12.13.16**: scheduled meeting with Dr. Simkin and the J-H reading specialists **12.13.16** and **12.16.16:** Literacy instruction observations conducted by Dr. Simkin and Dr. Gray **1.5.17 until 1.15.17**: Online Teacher Survey window (5 of 48 staff members completed- 10% response rate)
School Summary/ Context	Jefferson-Houston (J-H) is a public, co-ed pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) through eighth grade school in Alexandria, VA made up of approximately 565 students. A large majority of students (69%) receive free and reduced-price meals, while a small minority (approximately 13%) receive English language (ELL) support. The number of classrooms varies across grade levels. There are five Pre-K and two to four classrooms in kindergarten through eighth grade. Classroom instruction is supported by two reading specialists who are assigned to specific grade levels (K-5 or 6-8), eight Special Education teachers, four ELL teachers, and seventeen teaching assistants. Unfortunately, teacher retention has been problematic for several years. This year there are twelve new classroom teachers, three new SPED teachers, and one new ELL teacher. The consistent loss of faculty affects morale, as well as instructional consistency and the school's ability to build a common understanding of literacy development and effective literacy instruction within its faculty. In recent years, a district-level shift away from the highly scripted *Success for All* reading program to a more balanced literacy approach has afforded teachers more autonomy in designing their language arts instruction. Dr. Lisa Meyers (independent educational consultant) had worked with the teachers along with the district leadership to support the implementation a balanced literacy approach specifically targeting small group reading instruction (SGRI). At the time of the audit, evidence that teachers were not consistently utilizing the SGRI plan templates, developed by Dr. Meyers, to inform their literacy instruction was not present. In addition, SGRI is but one piece of a well-developed literacy plan that should articulate a shared vision of literacy instruction and clearly define balanced literacy for all faculty. Without a consistently implemented school-wide literacy plan or a language arts curriculum with specific grade level targets that align with Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOLs), grade levels are working to develop their own language arts curriculum that represents a balanced literacy approach with varying degrees of success. The result is a lack of vertical (between grade levels) and horizontal (within grade levels) alignment of instructional

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Priority School Partnership: School Literacy Audit Report
Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School, Alexandria City Public Schools

	routines, and approaches.		

Data Collection Summary	The data collection processes selected to capture a complete picture of the literacy instruction includes both quantitative and qualitative information. The attached report reflects these collection processes through classroom observation notes, teacher survey results, review of student assessment data, and teacher and specialists' interviews. All data have been analyzed relative to research based instructional practices, curriculum alignment, and management of a literacy program. Specific recommendations are offered in the attached report. The data collection processes included: 1. Classroom observations of reading and writing instruction with spontaneous and informal conversations with classroom teachers before and after instruction ; 2. Scheduled meetings with reading specialists and administrators; 3. Online teacher survey; and 4. Examination of student assessment data.
	
	20 observations in 22 classrooms, focused on elements of instructional quality and the quality of teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions. Literacy instruction in one to four classes at each grade level (K-8) were observed, as well as specialized support classes including English Language (EL), Talented and Gifted (TAG), and Special Education (SPED). The major instructional quality indicators addressed by the data collection practices and the attached report include:
	
	    1. Learning Culture, Student Engagement, and Materials
	    2. Instructional Practices
	    3. Assessment
	    4. Professional Development
	    5. Literacy Leadership
	
	Please see the attached report for more extensive detailing of findings in each of the above areas.		

		Short Term Recommendations	**Long Term Recommendations**
School Level Data	• Review of MTSS Tier List • Review of DLST 2015-2016 • Review of SOL Pass Rates 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 • PALS data unavailable at time of audit		
Areas of Noted Strength	• Balanced literacy is an instructional goal with district support • Teachers are eager for guidance with their literacy instruction	• Continue to offer opportunities for collaboration among teachers and with school and district leaders	• District and school leadership should continue to work with teachers to provide multiple opportunities for students to read and listen to meaningful literature

Priority School Partnership: School Literacy Audit Report
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Targeted Areas for Growth	- Teacher retention rate is problematic and affects morale, as well as instructional consistency, and building and growing knowledge within the faculty - Unclear expectations of instructional practices including teacher scaffolds and differentiation within a balanced literacy approach. - Purposeful, interactive discourse that inspires critical thinking and facilitates discourse with students, varies across classrooms - Limited resources and reading materials in classroom libraries; no decodable text for beginner readers consistently present in primary classrooms or in the bookrooms - Lack of vertical (between grade levels) and horizontal (within grade levels) alignment of instructional routines and approaches - Literacy Intervention system informed by assessment and guided by student needs and growth, is not apparent - Reading Specialists' roles are unclear, as they have been tasked with coaching as well as other instructional duties; require support to act effectively as literacy coaches	- Continue to utilize district resources (UVA Reading can support) - UVA Reading will coach the reading coaches to continue to build instructional capacity across grade levels - To support Jefferson-Houston's language minority students, interactive, oral based instructional routines must be considered as vital as explicit and systematic instruction. - UVA will provide trainings in literacy interventions for those teachers responsible for planning and delivering interventions	- Targeted summer literacy institutes (in the areas of reading development, struggling readers, effective literacy instruction, and word study) - Targeted summer Instructional Leadership Workshop in literacy and numeracy development/instruction for school and district leadership - Development of a long-term professional development plan to support teachers' instructional practice - Creation of a literacy leadership committee - Horizontal and vertical alignment of instructional goals - Review and streamline assessment system
Conclusions	**Please see the attached report for comprehensive findings and conclusions.** Although Jefferson-Houston has shifted to a balanced literacy approach, it lacks the direction of a shared vision and alignment within and between grade levels. The mismatch between instructional approaches and students' needs requires further examination. If differentiated instruction is expected across grade levels, then a common definition and explanation of the instructional practice needs to be developed. Teachers will also require professional learning and on-going literacy coaching to make differentiation a reality in their classrooms. If Jefferson-Houston's goal is to enhance reading proficiency of all students, a shift to a literacy coaching model is vital in supporting teachers' transference of new teaching techniques to their instructional practice.		

Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School Literacy Audit Report

Information collected, compiled and analyzed by

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Literacy Audit Report
Reading/Writing Instructional Audit

Executive Summary

Strengths

- Generally positive classroom environments and teacher-student interactions

- Classroom management is generally appropriate

- Balanced literacy is an instructional goal

- Transitions within and between classes are efficient

- Teachers are eager for guidance with their literacy instruction

Challenges

- Teacher retention rate is problematic and affects morale, as well as instructional consistency, and building and growing knowledge within the faculty

- Unclear expectations of instructional practices including teacher scaffolds and differentiation within a balanced literacy approach.

- Purposeful, interactive discourse that inspires critical thinking and facilitates discourse with students, varies across classrooms

- Limited resources and reading materials in classroom libraries; no decodable text in the bookrooms or present in classroom libraries (more explanation below)

- Lack of vertical (between grade levels) and horizontal (within grade levels) alignment of instructional routines and approaches (more explanation below)

- Literacy Intervention system informed by assessment and guided by student needs and growth was not apparent at the time of the audit; **however, since the audit, the school has reported that a system has been put into place to address interventions**

- Reading Specialists' roles are unclear, as they have been tasked with coaching as well as other instructional duties; require support to act effectively as literacy coaches

Recommendation Summary

1. Materials
    a. Classroom Libraries: Need updating and additional resources to support differentiated literacy instruction. Decodable texts for beginner readers were not consistently present in primary classroom libraries nor available in the K-4 bookroom. Very few classrooms had organized classroom libraries; although some had an adequate number of books, very few were organized in a way to make them accessible to students (particularly in grades 3-8).
    b. Although the reading specialists discussed a large quantity of non-fiction books being purchased for the school, they were not yet available to teachers in the bookrooms, etc. Content area instruction was not observed therefore content specific texts may be utilized by specific teachers; however, the bookrooms that were toured by the observers, with the reading specialists, did not contain an abundance of informational texts.

2. Instructional Practices
    a. Alignment of instruction and instructional goals within and across grade levels. Alignment was stronger in K-2 (as noted by conversations and observations) but was not apparent in most observed instruction (particularly 3-8); although common planning may occur, the instructional approaches observed varied widely.
    b. Clear expectations for differentiation of instruction to meet the needs of all students and encourage student engagement
    c. Greater understanding of how to scaffold support of students' developing literacy skills

3. Assessment
    a. Clear expectations of how assessment results inform instructional practice are needed
    b. Review assessment system to ensure efficient assessment of students' growing language and literacy skills. Particular attention should be paid to a streamlined progress monitoring system.

4. Professional Development

a. Students' needs within and across grade levels should inform professional development opportunities for teachers.

b. A multi-year professional development plan should be developed and professional development opportunities should be differentiated for teachers.

c. Peer observation and coaching opportunities should be scheduled to allow teachers to collaborate and understand vertical alignment across grade levels.

5. Reading Specialists

   a. Job description needs to be clearly defined

   b. Shift to a coaching model or the hire of additional literacy coaches is needed to support teachers' growing understanding of effective literacy instruction

Scope of Work

The data collection processes selected to capture a complete picture of the literacy instruction includes both quantitative and qualitative information. The document reflects these collection processes through classroom observation notes, teacher survey results, review of student assessment data, and teacher and specialists' interviews. The student data and teacher survey results produce quantitative data, while the teacher and specialists' interviews, as well as the classroom observation notes, yield qualitative data. All data have been analyzed relative to research based instructional practices, curriculum alignment, and management of a literacy program. Specific recommendations are offered. The data collection processes included:

1. Classroom observations of reading and writing instruction with informal, spontaneous conversations occurring with teachers before or after class
2. Meetings with reading coaches and administrators
3. Online teacher survey
4. Examination of student assessment data

Meetings

On December 2, 2016 at 10:00 am, Dr. Simkin met with the school leadership and reading coaches for over an hour to begin the audit process. Present at this meeting were: Dr. Chris Phillips (Principal), Dr. Sara Sims (Academic Principal), Ms. Shawanda Spivey (Improvement Coach), and the J-H reading specialists: Ms. Heather Shea (nee Sannelli) and Ms. Teal Miles.

Additionally, Dr. Simkin met with the reading coaches separately from the school leadership team on December 13 to discuss literacy instruction at Jefferson-Houston to further inform this aduit.

Observations

Informed observation is central to understanding classroom instruction. Twenty minute observations in twenty-two classrooms, focused on elements of instructional quality and the quality of teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions. Classroom observations by Drs. Carrie Simkin and Julie Gray occurred on 12/13 and 12/16/16. Literacy instruction in one to four classes at each grade level (K-8) were observed, as well as specialized support classes including English Language (EL), Talented and Gifted (TAG), and Special Education (SPED). Spontaneous, informal conversations with teachers occurred before or after instruction to answer any questions that the observers may have had or to gather input from the teachers to help inform the audit. The major instructional quality indicators addressed by the data collection practices and this document include:

1. Learning Culture, Student Engagement, and Materials
2. Instructional Practices
3. Assessment
4. Professional Development
5. Literacy Leadership

Teacher Survey

   Jefferson-Houston faculty were asked to anonymously respond to twelve questions within an online teacher survey. Five of forty-eight faculty members completed the survey (10%), with an equal number of K-2, 3-5, 6-8 teachers, as well as specialists responding. The overall teaching experience of respondents ranged from two to fourteen years, while teaching experience at Jefferson-Houston ranged from zero to six years. Teachers' range of teaching experience and grade levels within the respondent pool, suggests the teacher survey results are potentially representative of the Jefferson-Houston faculty but given the small number of respondents, caution should be utilized in generalizing the results.

Background and Description of Jefferson-Houston's Literacy Program

   Jefferson-Houston (JH) is a public, coed pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) through eighth grade school in Alexandria, VA made up of approximately 565 students. A large majority of students (69%) receive free and reduced-price meals, while a small minority (approximately 13%) receive English language (ELL) support. The number of classrooms varies across grade levels. There are five Pre-K and two to four classrooms in kindergarten through eighth grade. Classroom instruction is supported by two reading specialists who are assigned to specific grade levels (K-4 or 5-8), eight Special Education teachers, four ELL teachers, and seventeen teaching assistants. Unfortunately, teacher retention has been problematic for several years. This year alone there are twelve new classroom teachers, three new SPED teachers, and one new ELL teacher. The consistent loss of faculty affects morale, as well as instructional consistency and the school's ability to build a common understanding of literacy development and effective literacy instruction within its faculty.

In recent years, a district-level shift away from the highly-scripted *Success for All* reading program to a more balanced literacy approach has afforded teachers more autonomy in designing their language arts instruction. Dr. Lisa Meyers (Independent Educational Consultant) had worked with the teachers along with the district leadership to support the implementation of a balanced literacy approach specifically targeting small group reading instruction (SGRI). At the time of the audit, evidence that teachers were consistently utilizing these SGRI planning templates, developed by Dr. Meyers, to inform their literacy instruction was not present. In addition, SGRI is but one piece of a well-developed literacy plan that should articulate a shared vision of literacy instruction and clearly define balanced literacy for all faculty.

Without a consistently implemented school-wide literacy plan or a language arts curriculum with specific grade level targets that align with Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOLs), grade levels are working to develop their own language arts curriculum that represents a balanced literacy approach with varying degrees of success. The result is a lack of vertical (between grade levels) and horizontal (within grade levels) alignment of instructional routines, and approaches.

Learning Culture, Environment, Student Engagement & Materials

Classroom management and positive classroom environments for learning are notable strengths of Jefferson-Houston teachers. In general, teachers' observed interactions with students were warm and inviting but teachers' support of "purposeful talk" that inspires critical thinking and facilitates discourse with students (Allington, 2002, p.743), varied greatly across classrooms and grade levels. Jefferson-Houston students were generally attentive and compliant, but student engagement also varied across classrooms. In kindergarten, students were generally engaged in instructional activities led by the classroom teacher, or quickly reengaged by the lead or an

assistant teacher. Second and fifth grade students were equally focused on instructional tasks

through interactions with peers and scaffolded support from their classroom teacher. Conversely,

in at least one classroom within remaining grade levels, students were not consistently on-task

during language arts instruction. Although the disparity between students' engagement in literacy

activities across grade levels may have partly been due to the impending winter holiday break,

disengagement was highest in classrooms where whole group instruction or long periods of

independent work took place. In addition, teachers seemed unaware of students' disengagement,

as few attempts were made to reengage students in classroom activities.

Books & Materials

Generally, teachers reported the materials they possess are insufficient to differentiate

instruction and meet the needs of students working above and below grade level. Yet, the

majority of K-2 classrooms were print rich, meaning classrooms had a preponderance of grade

level appropriate posters, charts, poems, teacher read alouds, journals, and collections of fiction

and information texts in an accessible classroom library. However, the dearth of materials was

apparent in the K-2 leveled bookroom. Although it provides multiple copies of guided-reading

books (fiction and non-fiction), the variety and number of texts needs updating in order to

support multiple classrooms and grade levels simultaneously running guided reading groups.

Decodable texts for beginner level small-group reading instruction and to support differentiated

phonics instruction, were also noticeably absent from the K-2 book room and classrooms.

Conversely, the print rich environment of third to eighth grade classrooms varied greatly,

particularly in terms of the quality of their classroom libraries and resources posted on

classroom. Content area instruction was not observed therefore content specific texts may be

utilized by specific teachers; however, the bookrooms that were toured by the observers, with the

reading specialists, did not contain an abundance of informational texts.

Jefferson-Houston's literacy program has been strengthened by a recent shift to a more balanced approach to teaching reading and writing, including direct instruction of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies. A balanced literacy approach is supported by reading research (Pearson, 2002) and studies of exemplary teachers, which have found outstanding teachers of reading and writing understanding the many variables affecting literacy development and understand how to support students' developing word level skills (phonics, sight word knowledge, vocabulary, fluency, etc.) while simultaneously scaffolding their understanding (comprehension) while reading.

At the heart of a balanced reading approach is the intentional development of students' love for reading and writing. Jefferson-Houston teachers should provide multiple opportunities for students to read and listen to meaningful literature, both of which can be very motivating to students if the text is purposefully chosen to meet students' interests. Students also require opportunities to write for a variety of purposes; manipulate and apply their growing word knowledge skills and interact in peer discussions. In addition, reading and writing should be integrated across the curriculum, which allows for increased opportunities for students to read and write across the day, and helps students see relationships across disciplines.

Lack of Consistency

One of the most substantial and overarching challenges to effective instruction at Jefferson-Houston is the lack of consistency in teachers' approaches to teaching reading and writing across and within grade levels. While teachers have some guidance in terms of the content of their instruction from the VA SOLs and district curriculum standards, they also have considerable leeway in developing their own lessons, materials, and instructional methods, given the recent

shift towards balanced literacy instruction. Although variation within teachers' reading and writing is expected and lauded, the goal should always be "planned, intentional, focused instruction" (Ford & Opitz, 2008, as cited in Fresch, 2008, p.71) that supports all learners. Classroom teachers with greater knowledge of reading development and/or experience designing balanced literacy instruction, have embraced the current flexibility in Jefferson-Houston's language arts program and have taken the opportunity to mix several pieces of programs and approaches to meet the needs of their students. Unfortunately, many Jefferson-Houston teachers do not possess background knowledge or experience with balanced literacy instruction, which has led to a fragmented literacy approach with unclear goals for targeting the needs of students achieving above and below grade level expectations. For example, small group reading instruction was observed and discussed by teachers but the level of differentiation and scaffolding provided to students varied greatly across classrooms and between grade levels. To differentiate and meet the needs of all students, students must receive considerably more instruction and materials within their zone of proximal development and with appropriate scaffolds aligned with their level of reading development, affording them more opportunities to increase their reading ability.

The mismatch between instructional approaches and students' needs requires further examination. If differentiated instruction is expected across grade levels, then a common definition and explanation of the instructional practice needs to be developed. Clarity about expectations of differentiation at the upper grade levels (6-8) is particularly vital, as very little differentiated literacy instruction was observed at these grade levels. Teachers will also require professional learning and on-going instructional coaching to make differentiation a reality in their classrooms.

English Language Learners Support (ELL)

Recent research syntheses have concluded that the key components of literacy development for native English speakers are similar for English language learners (August & Shanahan, 2006; Gersten & Geva, 2003). In 2006 the *National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth* (NLP; 2006) was convened to synthesize current research on English language acquisition and literacy development. The panel found that all students benefit from "instruction that cognitively engages students in literacy-rich activities coupled with explicit teaching on specific literacy components" (O'Day, J., 2009, p.109) but skilled ELL readers may require more "instruction that combines interactive and direct approaches" (Genesee et al., 2006, p.139–140), as well as "building greater knowledge of oral English language simultaneously, so the literacy tools provided by instruction can be used to maximum advantage'' (Shanahan & Beck, 2006, p.436). Although ELLs' oral language development in English was found to have a profound effect on developing literacy skills in English, their comprehension skills often "do not appear to develop to the same extent as those of their language-majority peers" (Lesaux, Koda, Siegel, & Shanahan, 2006, p.100). Consequently, ELLs' development of comprehension skills often falls behind their native English speaking peers' development, even when their word level skills are on par with native English speakers.

To support Jefferson-Houston's language minority students, interactive, oral based instructional routines must be considered as vital as explicit and systematic instruction. Scaffolded reading and writing support must also be integrated across the curriculum, which would increase opportunities for students to read and write across the day, and help students see relationships across disciplines.

Reading Intervention System

According to Fuchs & Fuchs (2006), an effective intervention program needs to be engaging and present a comprehensive approach to reading and writing. It should also be driven by relevant assessments and provide students with significant opportunities for authentic reading and writing experiences with an expert literacy teacher. Although at the time of this audit, a clearly defined literacy intervention system was not functioning at Jefferson-Houston, resource teachers were pulling students for additional instruction outside of the language arts block. Unfortunately, there was no clear system for identifying students for intervention or monitoring their growth. In addition, there appeared to be little oversight of the instruction provided during students' intervention time.

Interventions offered should significantly increase the intensity of instruction and opportunities to practice specific literacy skills. In addition, interventions should be guided by, and responsive to, student data, while motivating and engaging students. Jefferson-Houston's current intervention system lacks the intensity and instructional focus to significantly improve students' reading achievement. Hopefully the discussions of a tiered intervention system, informed by data and targeted to students' literacy needs, become a reality in the spring.

Reading Specialist/Literacy Coaching Support

Jefferson-Houston has two reading specialists (K-4, 5-8) who have traditionally spent the majority of their time working with small groups of students for literacy intervention. However, their focus has recently shifted to include data collection, pushing into classrooms during language arts instruction, and providing literacy coaching support to classroom teachers. Unfortunately, the role of a literacy coach and a reading specialist are quite distinct and require very different allocations of time. If Jefferson-Houston's goal is to enhance reading proficiency

of *all* students, it is recommended that the reading specialists shift to a literacy coaching model, where more of their time is dedicated to supporting teachers' literacy instruction. As literacy coaches, they could provide ongoing, job-embedded professional development. Feedback from literacy coaches could take the form of in-class coaching including observing teachers, conferencing and co-planning with teachers, and modeling instructional strategies. It is the feedback and in-class coaching that result in teachers transferring new teaching techniques to their practice (Dole, 2004, p.465).

The core activities of a literacy coach include conferencing with teachers, administering and discussing assessments, modeling, observing, and co-planning (Bean and Dagen, 2012, p. 53). As a majority of these activities become lost to fulfilling other priorities, the literacy coach's influence will diminish. It is vital that the literacy coaches' roles are clearly defined and expressed to the Jefferson-Houston faculty, so collaborative relationships within a trusting environment can be established, and positive instructional changes can occur.

Assessment System

Many teachers commented that they were unsure how assessment results were expected to influence their instruction or what type of on-going monitoring they should be using. Clear expectations about the use of assessment data and a more streamlined progress monitoring system could be extremely helpful if the assessment discussions directly connect to instructional goals and approaches. Similar progress monitoring tools within and between grade levels would lead to a more reliable and valid measurement of student progress. It is also important that assessment data is easily accessible to teachers, specialists, and administration, to ensure the analysis of individual students and groups of students, occurs more readily and frequently. This would help guarantee that assessment and instructional planning are more closely and consistently linked. Easily accessible data would also improve the likelihood that assessment results influence classroom instruction. Increased time for conversations, problem solving and more in-depth analysis of data and how it should inform teaching practices would be a practical goal for Jefferson-Houston faculty.

Professional Development

Professional development (PD) that helps teachers become experts in literacy instruction is of the utmost importance. Currently Jefferson-Houston has a PD block on Mondays from 2:45-4:00 for all teachers. Unfortunately, weekly allotted time is also shared by other academic areas and therefore literacy professional development is one of many PD focuses for faculty. Differentiation of PD offerings by teacher needs and interests, as well as student needs, is unclear. Furthermore, expectations for implementation and sharing of knowledge gained through professional development is undefined, leading to varying levels of impact on instructional practices with students.

If a consistent approach to teaching reading, writing, and spelling is to be successful, then school-wide professional development is necessary to ensure all teachers are clear on instructional expectations and a minimal teacher knowledge base is developed. The most effective professional development "highlights transformation rather than tinkering" (Bean & Dagen, 2012, p.358). School-wide professional development would ensure that instructional changes truly occur because teachers would develop a collective responsibility for using best teaching practices and would be able to collaborate more effectively.

Developing a multi-year and multi-level professional development plan coupled with the creation of an in-house literacy coach position would be an excellent option for school-wide literacy professional development. Research on effective professional development has shown that it must "occur on a regular basis and over time, providing for a cycle of improvement" (Bean & Dagen, 2012, p. 359). A staff developer would be able to provide teachers with theory and demonstration, while a literacy coach could provide ongoing, job-embedded professional development. Feedback from a literacy coach could take the form of in-class coaching including

observing teachers, conferencing and co-planning with teachers, and modeling instructional strategies. It is the feedback and in-class coaching that result in teachers transferring new teaching techniques to their practice (Dole, 2004, p.465). Therefore, simply training teachers is not enough.

If a literacy focused instructional mission is developed and all teachers receive meaningful, ongoing professional development to support a move toward increased consistency in literacy instruction across the school, then a logical next step would be to provide increased opportunities for grade-level and across-grade level communication among teachers. Currently, teachers report that they have little knowledge about how their colleagues teach reading, writing, and spelling. The lack of collaboration between grade levels and often within grade levels is a detriment to effective literacy instruction because it limits the vertical and horizontal alignment of materials and instruction.

Leadership

Although Jefferson-Houston has a broad focus on a balanced literacy approach, it lacks the direction of a shared vision, instructional mission, and literacy plan that could be consistently articulated by teachers. Using a distributed leadership approach, in which teacher leaders from each grade level join together to form a literacy leadership committee that is headed by a literacy coach and administrator, would be an excellent way to tap into teachers' expertise and promote interactions among teachers. It may also help improve the teacher retention rate, as teachers feel more invested in the school.

A literacy leadership committee could schedule cycles of peer observations so teachers could observe each other and see how reading, writing, and spelling instruction is being supported and scaffolded in different classrooms and grade levels. In addition, the committee could organize study groups in which faculty read and discuss books and articles about different facets of literacy instruction, in order to continue discussions of best practices (Bean & Dagen, 2012, p.371). Finally, a literacy leadership committee could work together to develop a school wide literacy plan that includes instructional goals, programs/approaches to support initial and supplemental instruction, and a detailed professional development plan. Time lines, action steps, responsible personnel, resources needed, and evidence of success should be defined.

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	Assessments	**Instructional Practices**	**ELL Support**	**Resource Support**	**Professional Development**
Spring 2017	Review & streamline assessment system Progress Monitoring System piloted	Horizontal and vertical alignment of instructional goals	Brainstorm long-term support	Coach the Coaches' Model	Literacy coaching support
Summer 2017			Summer Literacy Institute	Summer Literacy Institute	Summer Literacy Institute
Year 2	Refine Progress Monitoring System	Refine Small Group Differentiated Reading Instruction	Develop co-teaching model	Literacy Coaching Support	Literacy Coaching Support Peer Observation System developed and piloted in the spring

Priority School Partnership: School Mathematics Audit Report
Jefferson-Houston PreK-8 School, Alexandria City Public Schools

Content Area Expertise	Mathematics Instruction
Observers	Robert Berry, Ph.D., Mathematics Education at the University of Virginia Faith Peddie, Doctoral Student at the University of Virginia for Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction Casedy Thomas, Doctoral Student at the University of Virginia for Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction
Dates	12/13/2017: Onsite Classroom Observations, Staff Interviews (K, 1, 4) and Admin Interview 1/25/2017: Math Instructional Coach Interview
School Summary/ Context	Jefferson-Houston is a K-8 school with three to five classrooms per grade level. Jefferson-Houston teachers have access to laptop carts as well as a learning lab. Last year's overall Standards of Learning math scores did not meet accreditation requirements for the Virginia Department of Education. With a 63% overall pass rate in mathematics, J-H was within a narrow margin for making enough progress to receive accreditation, indicating that it is possible for J-H to make targeted, specific instructional improvements to expect to meet benchmarks within the coming year(s). Teachers at J-H stated that they follow the pacing guide developed by the school district. Additionally, grades K-5 plan from the Math Expressions curriculum and grades 6-8 plan from the Big Ideas curriculum.
Observation Summary	Dr. Robert Berry, Faith Peddie, and Casedy Thomas visited Jefferson-Houston on December 13th, 2016 to observe math instruction in kindergarten, first, fourth, and fifth grade classrooms, followed an instructional team meeting/interview with K, 1st, and 4th grade teachers. Additionally, the Curry team interviewed J-H principal, Dr. Christopher Phillips. Ms. Peddie followed up by interviewing the J-H math instructional coach, Ms. Holly Tate, on January 25th, 2017. Dr. Berry and Ms. Peddie analyzed the interview data along with classroom observations to determine overall areas of strength and growth in the current mathematics instructional program. Areas of strength and recommendations for further support are noted below. It is important to note that these data are representative of the times of collection and as partnership stakeholders continually monitor student progress, support recommendations may be adjusted accordingly.

		Short Term Recommendations	Long Term Recommendations

School Level Data	*Grades K-2 assessment results from 2/1 and 2/2 were not available for inclusion at the time of audit finalization.*
	
	Grades 3-5 administered common assessments in early January. The Instructional Coach and teaching teams worked together to indicate standards that show mastery of 80% or higher, standards that showed mastery of 70% or higher, and standards that showed mastery of 60% or less. The 3rd through 5th grade teams plan to reteach any standards that averaged 60% or less. The strands that contains the most standards to be retaught are indicated below:
	
	   ● Grade 3:
	      ○ Patterns, Functions, and Algebra
	   ● Grade 4:
	      ○ Computation and Estimation
	      ○ Measurement and Geometry
	   ● Grade 5:
	      ○ Number and Number Sense
	      ○ Computation and Estimation
	
	The middle school common assessment is a benchmark that was developed by the district lead and the instructional coach and was administered on January 10th. Based on accreditation benchmarks, a target passing score for middle school students would be 70%. At this
		UVA Math specialists can work with Ms. Tate & Dr. Phillips to plan and provide grade level-specific PD in grades 3 through 5 to support teachers in selecting, preparing, and implementing appropriate tasks for reteaching within the noted strands.	Revisit progress monitoring system for grades 6-8

	time, there are no comparative benchmark measures from earlier in the year at the middle school grade levels. • 6th grade: Average score <50% • 7th grade Honors: Average score <60% • 7th grade Regular: Average score <40% • 8th grade: Average score <60% • Algebra 1: Average score <60%		
Areas of Noted Strength	Observers noted evidence of differentiated instruction in K-1, whereby teachers rotated groups for mini-lessons and the rest of the class worked in small groups on daily objective skill practice. Students used tools and created representations to solve problems. Observers interviewed administration to determine school wide mathematics goals. All grade levels are expected to: 1. Plan according to the district-wide pacing guide to ensure that instruction is standards based, 2. Structure their weekly lesson plans around the Guided Mathematics model, and 3. Teach whole group lessons with the concrete, representation, and abstract approach. Additionally, grades 3-8 are expected to implement the Think Through Math computer program for intervention.		**Implemented and continuing with JH team: Ms. Tate will continue to support grade level teams by providing resources at weekly planning meetings and pushing in to support instruction in grades K-5.

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	Observations and interviews provided evidence of the following: ● Guided mathematics with tiered small group instruction observed in grades kindergarten, 1st, and 4th grade. ● Think Through Math computer program implemented in 4th grade. ● Use of manipulatives observed in kindergarten, 1st (popsicle sticks, base ten blocks, coins), and 4th grade (base ten blocks). ● During interviews, teachers provided evidence to support their alignment with the district pacing guide. Observations confirmed that teachers were following the district pacing guide in kindergarten, 1st, 4th, and 5th grade.		
Targeted Areas for Growth	Interviews with administration suggested that school wide expectations appeared to be inconsistent within middle school classrooms, grades 6-8. During the onsite visit, we were unable to see evidence of instruction in grades 6-8 due to scheduling conflicts. Therefore, the targeted areas of growth in grades 6-8 represent information collected from interviews and an analysis of Benchmark data: ● Guided Mathematics with targeted small group instruction is absent in many	Targeted coaching by Curry math specialist(s) in specific classrooms identified by partnership stakeholders, school leadership, and J-H math coach UVA math specialists will work with J-H math coach and school leadership to develop its progress monitoring system for mathematics.	**Spring to Summer PD/Sustainability Goal:** UVA math specialist(s) will work with middle school math department for pacing and planning of instruction to include the concrete, representation, abstract approach.

middle school classrooms. ● Conceptual understanding is not emphasized in all classrooms and teachers are unsure how to scaffold instruction using the concrete, representation, abstract approach. ● Formal assessment data is not consistently tracked within the middle grades. K-5 Grade level teams expressed varying concerns not related to the school wide expectations: ● In an interview, two grade levels said that small group instruction was suffering without consistent support from an aid. More specifically, they feel that teachers and school support staff are stretched too thin. ● In an interview, two grade levels expressed that they are unsure how to use data to tier their students. ● In an interview, two grade levels shared that they are seeking support/training with provided manipulatives and resources.	UVA math specialists will provide targeted instructional coaching with teachers to leverage progress monitoring to then plan differentiated instruction. **Grade level-specific professional development in grades 3 through 5:** --modeling the tools (including manipulatives) and representations that will help students make connections among concepts (based on teachers' stated needs)	**Targeted Summer Instructional Leadership Workshop** in literacy and numeracy development/ instruction for school and district leadership ****UVA Math specialist will work with assessment data, Mrs. Tate, and Dr. Phillips to prioritize objectives for single PD sessions for spring 2017 and 2017-18 pre-service sessions**
Conclusions	The UVa math specialist team was most impressed with both the interviewed administrator's and teachers' ability to articulate the school-wide mathematics expectations. We believe this speaks to administration-led professional development over the past two years. To be specific, all teachers received support with the Guided Mathematics model last year and all teachers are receiving training related to unpacking the standards this year.	

In the short-term, we conclude that teachers will need specific support around differentiated instruction according to assessment data. Additionally, we believe that weekly coaching sessions with the middle grades should be implemented to ensure that teachers are supported with developing effective mathematics teaching practices in which learners are reasoning mathematically, connecting mathematical ideas, use multiple representations of mathematics concepts, and engaged in productive mathematics discourse to develop depth in mathematics understanding. Longer term, professional development should focus on developing depth in mathematical knowledge for teaching and unpacking frameworks for effective mathematics teaching practices. Topics of professional development include, but are not limited to, maximizing small group time and use of manipulatives that support building procedural fluency from conceptual understanding.