

Samson Middle School Geneva County Board of Education

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Executive Summary

Samson Middle School

Introduction

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

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

Description of the School

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

Samson Middle School is one of 3 middle schools in the Geneva County School System. We are located in an area of Alabama known as the Wiregrass. Samson is approximately 90 miles south of Montgomery and 90 miles north of Panama City, Fl.

Samson Middle School was established as a 6-8 middle school in 2010. At that time 6th grade students were moved to the middle school campus and Samson Middle School was established. Current enrollment for SMS is 187 students.

One unique features of that affects the school population is a high amount of government housing in the area. Many local workers are involved in the agriculture industry. Samson has a hard working population but the average household income, in these homes, is low.

School's Purpose

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

The mission of Samson Middle School is to inspire our students to aspire to the highest goals by providing them with skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to be successful in life. We pledge to accomplish this mission by providing a quality instructional program in a positive, safe environment that promotes respect for authority, self, others, and property.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

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

Samson Middle School has made strides in improving test scores and will continue to strive to improve student performance. In 2013-14, we implemented the state standard assessment of ACT ASPIRE for all middle school students. We have implemented a new 5 block schedule for all students that has reduced class sizes tremendously. In addition, by departmentalizing our classrooms and teachers, we have created an environment that has allowed teachers to communicate and collaborate daily regarding student performance. We also hired an additional staff member who will work in our math department to help reduce class size even more and improve performance in the area of math. Professional development will be sought for the teaching staff and teachers will be encouraged to attend workshops to keep them updated on successful teaching techniques.

This year, Samson Middle School will also be improving the area of technology by upgrading the existing computer lab with newer, faster computers and be able to transition from a 4-1 setup to individual computers for the entire lab.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Planning for school improvement was initiated by collecting data from the standardized tests required by the State of Alabama and other sources. The ACT ASPIRE, EXPLORE, STAR Reading and STAR Math, GlobalScholar, and school generated reports such as attendance, discipline, and budgeting reports were included. EducateAL teacher evaluations and Census data were included as well. The initial meetings of the CIP Instructional Leadership members served to establish the purpose, direction, and goals of the CIP development. Meetings were held by the CIP Team members and the system School Improvement Specialist to disaggregate and analyze data and determine areas of focus, strategies, and actions steps. CIP Team members presented findings, specifically current school strengths and weaknesses at a faculty meeting. Meetings were held to encourage support and enhance school improvement through a community effort.

Improvement Plan Stakeholder Involvement

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The responses should be brief, descriptive, and appropriate for the specific section. It is recommended that the responses are written offline and then transferred into the sections below.

Improvement Planning Process

Improvement Planning Process

Describe the process used to engage a variety of stakeholders in the development of the institution's improvement plan. Include information on how stakeholders were selected and informed of their roles, and how meetings were scheduled to accommodate them.

Any parent or community stakeholder interested in serving as a member of the improvement team is encouraged to do so. Those interested are also recruited by staff but basically anyone who has a desire to constructively support and plan for the future is welcome to be a part of the process. Meetings are scheduled after and during school hours to give all stakeholders an opportunity to participate in the process. We also used the surveys through AdvancED to allow feedback for the improvement plan through our school website, and at Parent Information Night.

Describe the representations from stakeholder groups that participated in the development of the improvement plan and their responsibilities in this process.

The CIP team consisted of classroom teachers, administrator, counselor and parents.

- -Parents agree that their role includes supplying the student with appropriate school supplies; responsibility for punctuality, and school attendance; support discipline policies; maintain a time, place, and review of homework regularly; actively encourage and stay involved with students learning.
- -Teachers agree that their role includes teaching necessary concepts to students; providing relevant, interactive assignments; provide student progress in a timely manner; integrate special activities to make learning meaningful and purposeful.
- -Principals and counselors agree that their role includes facilitating positive communication between teachers, parents, and students; fostering a safe, warm, parent-friendly atmosphere; ensuring that disruptive students are corrected, and if necessary, removed from their room.

Explain how the final improvement plan was communicated to all stakeholders, and the method and frequency in which stakeholders receive information on its progress.

- -The school website is continuously updated to inform parents and the community of educational activities and programs.
- -Training for parents and students on state and local academic content and achievement standards, assessments are addressed in 6th grade/new student orientation.
- -Progress reports are sent home every 4 ½ weeks to update parents on student progress.
- -Students are allowed to check-out library books and reference materials.
- -In an effort to increase communication, with both parents and the community, a school marquee sign is updated as needed in front of the school.
- -We have strong attendance at open house and orientations, which we schedule during the evening hours to accommodate our working parents.
- -With the introduction of INOW's Parent Portal, parents are able to access their child's grades, attendance, class assignments, discipline, etc. in real-time as it is entered by the teacher, counselor, and/or principal.
- -We also use PTO Meetings, SchoolCast and Remind101 in order to communicate directly with our parents and students regarding important SY 2014-2015

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information regarding school business.

Technology Diagnostic

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Introduction

The ALSDE Technology Diagnostic is designed to facilitate the process of gathering and analyzing the technology needs which drive the Transform 2020 Technology Plan.

Data

Statement or Question: Data Sources. Select all sources of data used for planning:

Response:

- •Board of Education actions
- •Compliance Monitoring Reports
- •Continuous Improvement Plan
- •Discipline and Attendance Reports
- •EducateAlabama Data
- •End of Course Assessments
- •Federal Government Regulations
- •Formative Assessments
- •Graduation Rates
- •School of Education (SOE) Accreditation Reviews/Reports
- •Principal Walk-Through Checklist
- •Professional Learning Evaluations, Lesson Plans
- SpeakUp Data
- •State Government Regulations
- Student Achievement Data
- •Technology Program Audit, etc.
- •Transform2020 Surveys (*Required)

Needs Assessment

Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with your technology Infrastructure (fast and easy access to network, digital content). Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

In order to assess the areas of need associated with Samson Middle School's technology infrastructure, we analyzed the SMS Technology Inventory. The areas of highest need for SMS are Smartboards in all classrooms, wireless internet access, and improved /updated equipment. According to the inventory, we only have Smartboards in some of our classrooms. We would like to have Smartboards in all classrooms in the middle school so all teachers will be able to use this technology in classroom instruction. Also, currently SMS has no wireless internet access, limiting our options to only hardwired equipment options for teachers to access and use technology in their classroom. Providing wireless internet access will improve our ability to offer and use more technology equipment, enhance BYOD lessons and activities, and integrate technology seamlessly into all classrooms. Samson Middle School has one computer lab. These do have individual desktops for all workstations in the room that were added this year. Currently, this classroom is used to assist our classroom teachers in accessing digital resources to improve learning such as Stride Academy and Global Scholar. Since we have only one lab, currently teachers are only able to use the lab one day a week. In addition, we currently do not have student computers in every classroom for students to be able to use during class. Providing multiple computers in each classroom also provides opportunities for students to use these computers on their school assignments in the classroom.

Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with your technology Inventory (fast and easy access to technology). Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

According to the Samson Middle School's Technology Inventory, the school needs functional computers and mobile cart options. While teachers have access to a teacher-computer within the classroom and a projector, these resources are not accessible to students. Less than 50% of classrooms have computers for student use, but no classroom has enough for whole classroom participation. In order to achieve a climate that encourages student participation in 21st century skills, Samson Middle School would benefit from advanced technology software and technology accessories to use in conjunction with our computer lab that is both student-friendly and student-accessible. Samson Middle School would also benefit from mobile laptop carts and/or IPad carts to further provide opportunities for those classrooms that do not currently have computers for students to access and use in conjunction with instruction.

Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with your technology Student Learning (subject area processes and content; 21st C. skills and dispositions to ensure school, career, and life success). Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

The following software programs have been implemented at Samson Middle School: Stride Academy, Star Testing, Global Scholar, Kuder Assessment and Career Planning Program, McGraw-Hill Online Textbooks in English, Accelerated Reader, and basic word-processing software. According to the CIP Student Survey, students would benefit from access to a wider variety of student-friendly software within the classroom setting. Intervention software that is relevant to today's course of study standards is vital to continued growth in student achievement. Therefore, additional research-based remediation software programs are considered the greatest need related to technology Student Learning at Samson Middle School.

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Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with your technology Professional Learning Program (Teachers, Staff, Leaders, Community). Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

Samson Middle School is committed to providing all faculty and staff professional learning and instructional development as it relates to technology. This is especially the case when referring to interactive whiteboards and research based academic software programs. All teachers participated in an extensive proactive training in the utilization of interactive whiteboards presented by Troy State University Dothan. This training was held during a professional development day in August of 2014. In addition, all teachers were active participants in a fully interactive training exercise that promotes scientifically researched based software programs.

Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with your technology Teacher Use—Teaching (how teachers use technology to teach as well as require students to use technology to learn). Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

According to the latest research related to technology in the classroom, students are more engaged when interactive technology is being implemented during classroom instruction. In the past year, interactive whiteboards (Smartboards) have been installed in just less than 50% of the classrooms on the SMS campus. As a result, student learning has increased dramatically. With this in mind, the primary goal related to technology-teacher use is to provide all classrooms with interactive whiteboards.

Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with your technology Teacher Use—Productivity (how teachers use technology for increased productivity). Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

To effectively implement technology in the classroomwe must have the actual type and number of technology resources available. Also, professional development for teachers on available technology resources. According to the latest Samson Technology Inventory and Teacher Survey, our school is lacking in both of these areas. Our teachers are equipped with a computer to help manage and maintain student performance. An example of this would be recording student grades, attendance and behavior in our state mandated computer software program, INow. In the area of using technology to improve student performance, increase understanding of concepts and advance 21st century skill building, our school is limited in the type and number of resources available. According to our technology survey, every teacher's classroom is equipped with a computer and projector but only some have interactive white boards and/or student assigned technology devices. Although some classrooms house a functioning interactive whiteboard, the goal is to have this resource available to all classrooms.

Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with your technology School Leaders Use—Productivity (how administrators use technology for increased productivity). Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

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Samson Middle School school leaders are committed to using technology to improve and enhance the productivity of the teachers, staff, and students. School leaders greatest needs are wireless internet access and improved technology equipment to increase productivity. School leaders leaders could also use advanced mobile technology applications to improve the evaluation process for teachers by using the app to take notes during evaluations. Wireless internet would improve the connectivity of our school leaders no matter where they are on campus. Technology equipment such as updated scanners, printers, computers, and laptops to use by our school leaders would provide opprotunities for greater productivity and efficiency. Currently, school leaders have used the student information system to assist teachers in tracking grades and providing more accurate and up-to-date grades, and have used Remind 101 to improve communication with students and parents, as well as faculty.

Identify the top 1-3 areas of need associated with other technology program areas. Identify the data sources and actual data results that led you to conclude that these are areas of strength and need.

Samson Middle School utilizes a variety of activities to promote the achievement of learning goals through technology. Our sources of technology based instructional based methodologies are as follows but not limited to: Stride Academy, Global Scholar, online textbooks (McGraw Hill, et. al). The overall goal is to increase student learning and to enhance the overall learning experience. In the future, Samson Middle School seeks to expand these opportunities through the latest trends in

technological advances as it relates to student achievement. Further, as extensive research continues to evolve, Samson Middle School will continue to seek professional development opportunities in the field of technology, as teacher development in the area of technology is vital to the overall academic success of all students. The most significant needs include: additional training and development in software programs, the addition of a new computer lab that would be designated only for technological advancement of students, mobile laptop and/or IPad carts for classroom use, and advanced training and development in the areas of student data as it relates to continued increases in student achievement.

Professional Learning

Based upon the strengths and areas of need listed above, what are your Professional Learning Topics for the upcoming year that involves using technology to improve learner and productivity and prepares students for living and working in a digital world.

Samson Middle School is committed to increased student learning and development, and is specifically focused on increasing mathematics proficiencies. The following professional learning topics will focus on improving learning and productivity while preparing students for living and working in a digital world. All faculty and staff have completed basic fundamental training on all technological academic programs and devices. However, in order to for such advancement to occur, all faculty and staff will be required to complete advanced training both online and interactive in all scientifically research-based programs. (I.E. Stride Academy, Global Scholar, STAR, Interactive Whiteboards, Mobile Carts, and online textbooks.)

Select faculty and staff will be assigned the duty to attend local, state, and national professional learning and development opportunities throughout the school year and beyond.

Samson Middle School's guidance counselor will be scheduled to attend local, state, and national professional learning and development related to INow, ACCESS, and other academic software and programs in the Spring of 2015 and beyond.

All training and development completed by faculty and staff will require turn-around training to be implemented no later than the 2015-2016 school year.

Accountability Questions

Identify one (1) or more activities that focus upon using digital tools to improve achievement of all students with special emphasis upon high need and high poverty students.

Goal 1:

Samson Middle School students will increase proficiency scores in state standardized tests in the area of math.

Measurable Objective 1:

22% of All Students will demonstrate a proficiency score in Mathematics by 05/22/2015 as measured by ACT Aspire Test.

Strategy1:

AMSTI - AMSTI provides materials/kits and manipulatives for mathematics teachers to enhance instructional strategies. AMSTI also provides professional development for the teachers.

Research Cited: Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative. (2013). Retrieved from http://www.amsti.org/

Activity - AMSTI	Activity Type	Tier	Phase	Begin Date		Funding Amount & Source	Staff Responsible
Teachers will use materials from the AMSTI kit during mathematics class to promote student learning, motivation, and interest.	Academic Support Program			08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$0 - No Funding Required	Math and special education teachers attending AMSTI training.

Goal 2:

Samson Middle School will reduce the total number of unexcused absences.

Measurable Objective 1:

collaborate to decrease unexcused absences by five percent by 05/22/2015 as measured by attendance totals at the end of the school year.

Strategy1:

ALSDE Pilot Program for Attendance - Greater focus from the state department of education all the way down to our school to encourage and support increased attendance.

Research Cited:

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Activity - SchoolCast	Activity Type	Tier	Phase	Begin Date		Funding Amount & Source	Staff Responsible
SchoolCast will automatically notify parent/guardian on a daily basis in the event that their child is marked absent in INow.	Parent Involvement			08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$0 - No Funding Required	Attendance Clerk

Identify one (1) or more activities that facilitate and improve the use of telecommunications networks (phone/Internet/email) among educators, students, and parents/community to improve learning.

Goal 1:

Samson Middle School will reduce the total number of unexcused absences.

Measurable Objective 1:

collaborate to decrease unexcused absences by five percent by 05/22/2015 as measured by attendance totals at the end of the school year.

Strategy1:

ALSDE Pilot Program for Attendance - Greater focus from the state department of education all the way down to our school to encourage and support increased attendance.

Research Cited:

Activity - SchoolCast	Activity Type	Tier	Phase	Begin Date		Funding Amount & Source	Staff Responsible
	Parent Involvement			08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$0 - No Funding Required	Attendance Clerk

Identify at least three (3) activities that explain how the network, technical support staff, instructional support staff, and digital teaching and learning resources accessed through the network will be linked to the achievement of learning goals of the District.

Goal 1:

Samson Middle School students will increase proficiency scores in state standardized tests in the area of math.

Measurable Objective 1:

22% of All Students will demonstrate a proficiency score in Mathematics by 05/22/2015 as measured by ACT Aspire Test.

Strategy1:

AMSTI - AMSTI provides materials/kits and manipulatives for mathematics teachers to enhance instructional strategies. AMSTI also

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provides professional development for the teachers.

Research Cited: Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative. (2013). Retrieved from http://www.amsti.org/

ACTIVITY - AIVISTI	Activity Type	Tier	Phase	Begin Date	Funding Amount & Source	Staff Responsible
Teachers will use materials from the AMSTI kit during mathematics class to promote student learning, motivation, and interest.	Academic Support Program			08/04/2014	\$0 - No Funding	Math and special education teachers attending AMSTI training.

Goal 2:

Samson Middle School will reduce the total number of unexcused absences.

Measurable Objective 1:

collaborate to decrease unexcused absences by five percent by 05/22/2015 as measured by attendance totals at the end of the school year.

Strategy1:

ALSDE Pilot Program for Attendance - Greater focus from the state department of education all the way down to our school to encourage and support increased attendance.

Research Cited:

Activity - SchoolCast	Activity Type	Tier	Phase	Begin Date		Funding Amount & Source	Staff Responsible
	Parent Involvement			08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$0 - No Funding Required	Attendance Clerk

Activity - Samson Strong Attendance Incentives	Activity Type	Tier	Phase	Begin Date		Funding Amount & Source	Staff Responsible
	Policy and Process			08/22/2014	05/22/2015	1 *	Samson Middle School teachers and Leadership team

2014-15 Plan for ACIP

Overview

Plan Name

2014-15 Plan for ACIP

Plan Description

Goals Summary

The following is a summary of the goals encompassed in this plan. The details for each goal are available in the next section.

#	Goal Name	Goal Details	Goal Type	Total Funding
	Samson Middle School students will increase proficiency scores in state standardized tests in the area of math.	Objectives: 1 Strategies: 1 Activities: 1	Academic	\$1000
2	Samson Middle School will reduce the total number of unexcused absences.	Objectives: 1 Strategies: 1 Activities: 2	Organizational	\$0

Goal 1: Samson Middle School students will increase proficiency scores in state standardized tests in the area of math.

Measurable Objective 1:

22% of All Students will demonstrate a proficiency score in Mathematics by 05/22/2015 as measured by ACT Aspire Test.

Strategy 1:

AMSTI - AMSTI provides materials/kits and manipulatives for mathematics teachers to enhance instructional strategies. AMSTI also provides professional development for the teachers.

Research Cited: Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative. (2013). Retrieved from http://www.amsti.org/

Activity - AMSTI	Activity Type	Begin Date		Resource Assigned	Source Of Funding	Staff Responsible
Teachers will use materials from the AMSTI kit during mathematics class to promote student learning, motivation, and interest.	Academic Support Program	08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$1000	Funding	Math and special education teachers attending AMSTI training.

Goal 2: Samson Middle School will reduce the total number of unexcused absences.

Measurable Objective 1:

collaborate to decrease unexcused absences by five percent by 05/22/2015 as measured by attendance totals at the end of the school year.

Strategy 1:

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ALSDE Pilot Program for Attendance - Greater focus from the state department of education all the way down to our school to encourage and support increased attendance.

Activity - Samson Strong Attendance Incentives	Activity Type	Begin Date	End Date	Resource Assigned	Source Of Funding	Staff Responsible
	Policy and Process	08/22/2014	08/22/2014	\$0		Samson Middle School teachers and Leadership team

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Activity - SchoolCast	Activity Type	Begin Date		Resource Assigned	Source Of Funding	Staff Responsible
SchoolCast will automatically notify parent/guardian on a daily basis in the event that their child is marked absent in INow.	Parent Involvement	08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$0	No Funding Required	Attendance Clerk

Activity Summary by Funding Source

Below is a breakdown of your activities by funding source

District Funding

Activity Name	Activity Description	Activity Type	Begin Date	End Date	Resource Assigned	Staff Responsible
AMSTI	Teachers will use materials from the AMSTI kit during mathematics class to promote student learning, motivation, and interest.	Academic Support Program	08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$1000	Math and special education teachers attending AMSTI training.
				Total	\$1000	

No Funding Required

Activity Name	Activity Description	Activity Type	Begin Date	End Date	Resource Assigned	Staff Responsible
Samson Strong Attendance Incentives	Students who have no more than 2 unexcused absences qualify to attend the Samson Strong Spirit Events and are deemed eligible for door prizes given away at the events.	Policy and Process	08/22/2014	08/22/2014	\$0	Samson Middle School teachers and Leadership team
SchoolCast	SchoolCast will automatically notify parent/guardian on a daily basis in the event that their child is marked absent in INow.	Parent Involvement	08/04/2014	05/22/2015	\$0	Attendance Clerk
				Total	\$0	