

## Coventry Public Schools

Beth Giller, Principal,  
George Hersey Robertson Intermediate School  
**Goals: 2016-2017 School Year**

### 1. Identify, define, and measure the critical skills and attributes that are required for success and align systems to continuously improve student performance and achievement.

- Analyze Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) data to inform curricula realignment, instruction, and the development of formative and performance based assessments across grades 3-5.

*Under the guidance of our Director of Teaching and Learning, and with the assistance of our K-12 Math and ELA Specialists, SBAC English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics data was disaggregated for teachers' analysis. In September, teachers were provided assessment results of their former students to reflect on the prior year's instruction and accuracy of their student performance expectations. Teachers also received SBAC results for this year's students to analyze areas of strengths and challenges.*

#### English Language Arts

*Reading (literary and informational texts), Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Research are the content categories of the SBAC ELA. Students' overall reading score data and target data on these categories were carefully analyzed by classroom teachers and reading specialists. SBAC data revealed that our work in Speaking and Listening last year was effective, and as such those learning activities would continue. Given the reading results, literary text appeared more challenging than informational text, and therefore became the focus of teachers' Student Learning Objective (SLO) goal this year. Reading assessments and significant learning tasks were revised to include standards based questions for both literary and informational texts. The SBAC Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) were also identified as formative assessments in both literary and informational texts, research, and revision. [Released by the State of Connecticut, the Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) are SBAC aligned electronic assessments teachers can use throughout the school year to focus on more focused sets of related concepts in mathematics and English language arts (ELA)]. A plan was developed to use the narrative, opinion, and informational Brief Writes to familiarize students with this form of writing. Student Work Protocols (SWP) were completed by grade level teams after writing on-demands and IAB administration and scoring. The use of the IABs this year provided valuable information about students' understanding of question types, reading progress, and stamina for computerized tasks. In addition, to support teachers' instruction a book study of Jennifer Serravallo's Reading Strategies brought groups together to share successful and effective instructional strategies to use for specific skills and strategies to improve students' reading comprehension.*

#### Mathematics

*Similar to the work in ELA, SBAC Mathematics data was disaggregated to inform planning and instruction. To begin, SBAC results are used as one data point to identify those students who would benefit from math intervention or math enrichment at GHR. SBAC data not only provides valuable information on students' abilities, but it is used to determine content areas in need of focus, and which Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) to administer. Our K-12 Mathematics Specialist supported our teams by identifying the IABs that correlate with the areas of emphasis, and scheduled the administration based on the pacing of instruction. Careful analysis of these assessment outcomes provided teachers with valuable information regarding*

*students' understanding of a variety of question types, skills, and strategies. Teachers then created mini-lessons and learning activities differentiated upon students' needs to be used in math stations. The use of anchor charts, math notebooks, effective instructional strategies and high levels of student engagement were noted during Instructional Rounds of Mathematics classes.*

- Provide the structures and support to teachers to ensure effective transition to Eureka mathematics to further develop students' conceptual understanding of mathematics and increase students' mathematical fluency.

*Many GHR teachers worked last summer to develop their understanding of Eureka mathematics. Each grade level team was provided six days of professional learning time for collaboration with Coventry's K-12 math specialist to deepen teachers' understanding of Eureka math. We learned from the districts we visited last year that lessons could be subdivided and pacing could be a challenge in the first year of implementation. Given this information, teachers reviewed each module carefully to plan essential learning tasks (identified as 'must-do's') and "may-do's" (if time allowed) for students. Eureka vocabulary and instructional strategies were new and different for both teachers and students. Specific training on Eureka Sprints (fluency practice) assisted teachers to engage students in fluency improvement. The ongoing work included, Lesson at a Glance, assessment development including modified assessments, and problem solving activities. Pacing of instruction was carefully monitored throughout the year to ensure all units of study would be covered prior to standardized assessment administration. It is expected that pacing will need to be revised from year to year as students increase their familiarity with Eureka vocabulary and practices.*

- Continue to foster collaborative cultures established providing the opportunities for collaborative inquiry to improve pedagogy with increased teacher ownership in the use of Student Work Protocol.

*GHR grade level teams work collaboratively and meet twice weekly for planning purposes. Planning looks very different from one day or week to the next. Upon completion of district benchmarks, Instructional Team meeting time is focused on the assessment data and how it can be used to inform instruction. The K-12 ELA and Math Specialist have facilitated Student Work Protocols to further guide teachers' instruction during these meeting times. Teachers identify students' strengths and challenges with assessment question types when completing the Student Work Protocol, but even more importantly, teachers discuss those instructional strategies that result in the best outcomes and plan next steps for instruction. Specifically identifying highly effective instructional strategies is a powerful component of the SWP. Teachers appreciate the support from our K-12 Specialists in completing the SWP. SWP were completed after scoring the three writing on-demands, and the math and ELA IABs.*

- Establish an Ad hoc committee to research, review and develop the structures necessary to incorporate Social Studies content into English Language Arts (ELA).

*As intended, an Ad hoc committee was established to research, review and develop structures to embed Social Studies into literacy instruction during English Language Arts. The purpose of embedding Social Studies into ELA is to provide more instructional time to science given the adoption of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The complexity of the content areas at the elementary level has become increasingly challenging with standards' revisions over the past several years. This shift will provide teachers with some relief in feeling the need to be experts in four subject areas (ELA - reading and writing, math, science, and social studies).*

*A meeting schedule brought representatives from each grade level and our reading intervention program together three times. Committee meetings were held November 8, November 29, and January 10. During these meetings, research articles and sample schedules were reviewed and discussed, and feedback presented on proposed plans. A three-year plan was created beginning with Grade 5 in 2017-2018. All Grade 5 teachers will teach ELA/Social Studies, and either Math or Science. Summer curriculum work will include integrating social studies content into ELA instruction. Grades 3 and 4 will maintain their current practice this year, with a possible shift similar to Grade 5 for Grade 4 in 2018-2019.*

- Work collaboratively with CNH staff and administration to coordinate Instructional Rounds focused on Grades 5 & Grade 6 mathematics instructional practices and curriculum to build continuity and understanding between grade levels and stronger vertical alignment.

*Instructional Rounds is a valuable tool to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and develop a culture of collaboration. Grade 5 teachers from GHR observed Grade 6 teachers at CNH on November 2, and Grade 6 observed Grade 5 on March 29. While teachers benefit from observation, the biggest benefit of Instructional Rounds is the discourse that takes place among teachers after the observations. This collaboration resulted in shared strategies and resources, self-reflection, and increased awareness about the importance of deepening understanding of standards and expectations from one grade level to the next. It also deepens teachers' understanding of the vertical articulation of the standards. Our CNH colleagues observed seamless transitions between stations during Eureka math workshop with high level of student engagement. The observations, coupled with the discourse regarding management, procedures, and expectations resulted in powerful professional learning for all.*

- Work collaboratively with CGS staff and administration to build continuity and understanding between grade levels in the areas of assessment, intervention, and special education to ensure effective transitions for all students from Coventry Grammar School to George Hersey Robertson School.

*We continue to collaborate with our CGS colleagues to ensure effective transition between Grades 2 and 3 by scheduling vertical Instructional Rounds in the fall and spring. Instructional Rounds included classroom observations as well as valuable discourse. Classroom teachers have continued to develop their understanding of grade level expectations, structures, and instructional practices. This is important as our students transition from one building to another.*

*In addition, a Reading Improvement Plan Grades 2-3 was developed for the purpose of review and evaluation of reading benchmark assessments, intervention, and special education programs and practices. Benchmark assessments, along with end of year assessments have been reviewed to ensure vertical alignment and consistency in data gathering and reporting. Discussions also included reading intervention service delivery models that support all students, whether general or special education students. Tier II and Tier III criteria and potential program use have been researched extensively by our Director of Teaching and Learning, and educators involved have identified those programs that will best support our students.*

*A topic of discussion and thorough review between Grades 2 and 3 were the Grade 3 Literacy Scope and sequence, as well as learning tasks and assessments. Tasks and assessments include CCS aligned question stems for constructed responses, multiple choice questions with more than one answer, and brief writes, all to expose students to the rigor of not only standardized assessments, but increased expectations outlined by the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS). Grade 3 shared assessments with Grade 2 to further develop the vertical*

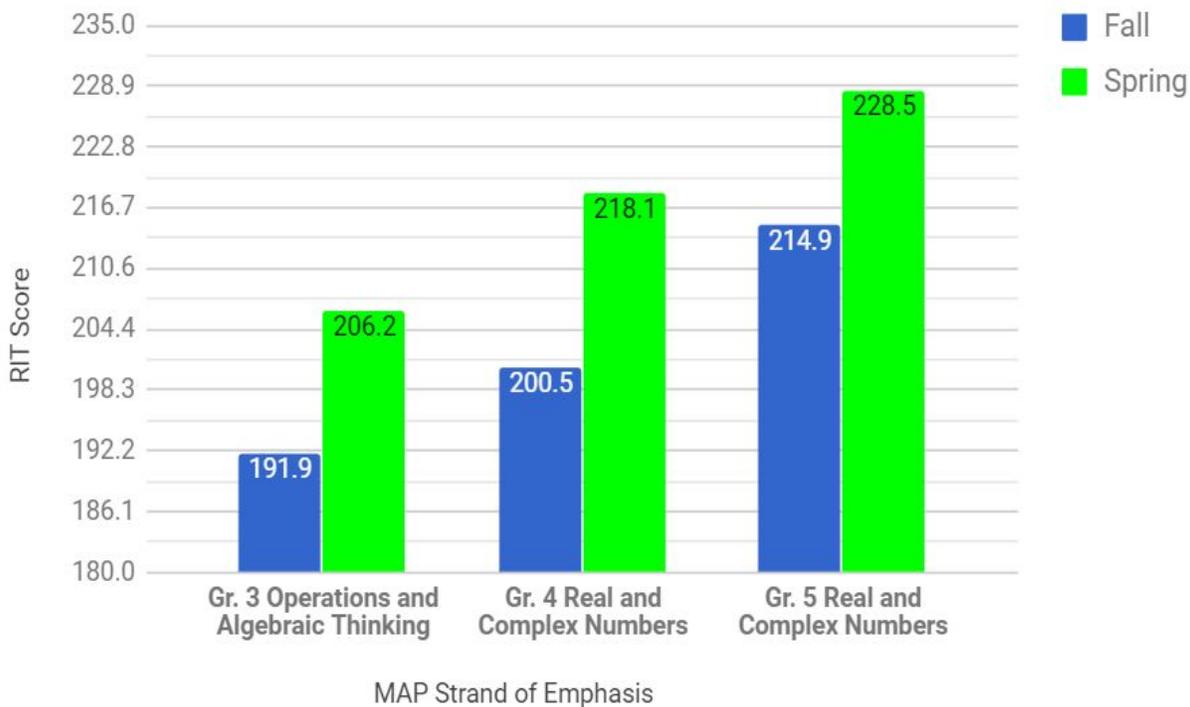
articulation in assessments. This work will continue as our K-5 ELA curriculum is reviewed and revised as needed in 2017-2018.

**SMART Goals:**

Students in grades 4-5 will increase their RIT score by 11 and 10 RIT points respectively in MAP Mathematics strand Numbers and Operations strand as evidenced by the Spring 2017 MAP assessment.

Students in grade 3 will increase their RIT score by 13 RIT points in MAP Mathematics strand Operations and Algebraic Thinking strand as evidenced by the Spring 2017 MAP assessment.

**George Hersey Robertson MAP Math 2016-2017  
Strand of Emphasis**

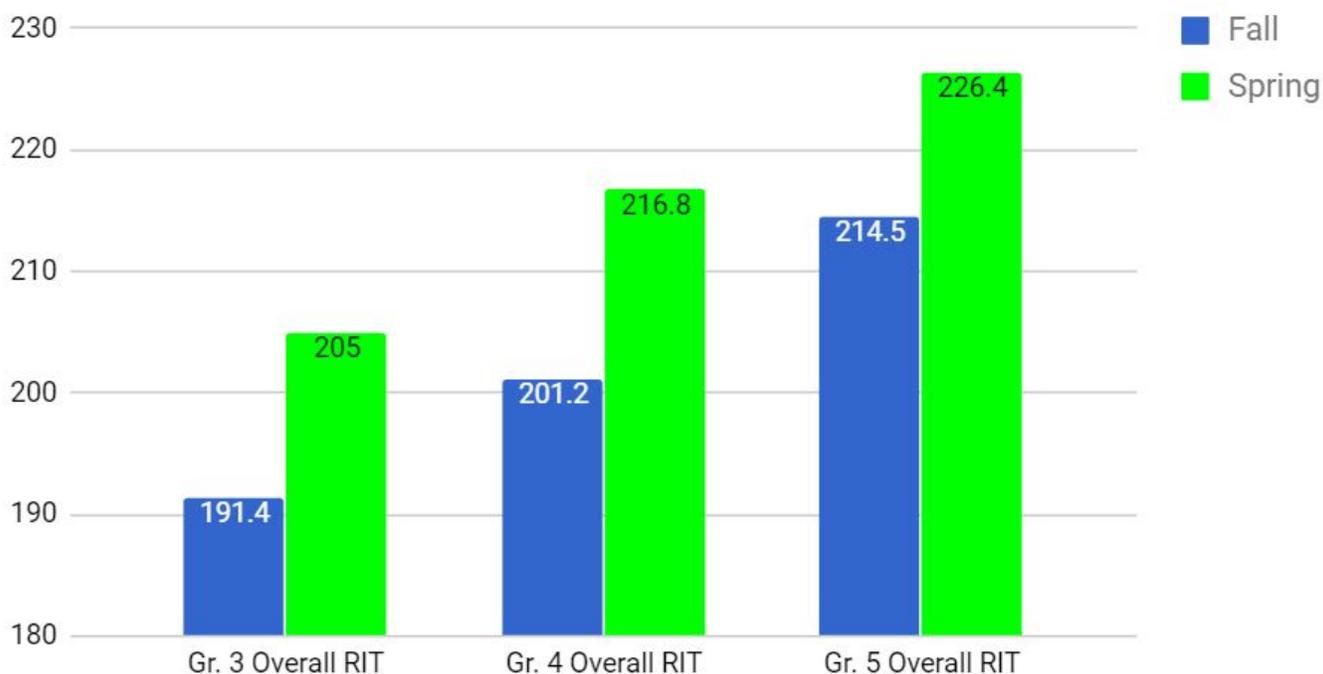


Students in Grades 3 - 5 made impressive gains in MAP Mathematics from Fall 2016 to Spring 2017. SMART goals above are written for students to achieve one year's growth. The correlation between SBAC Areas of Emphasis and MAP Components have been identified, and as such the MAP Strand of Emphasis in Grade 3 is Operations and Algebraic Thinking, and in Grades 4 and 5 it is Real and Complex Numbers. In their relative strand of emphasis, Grade 3 students grew 14.3 RIT points (1.3 RIT points beyond one year's growth), Grade 4 17.6 RIT points (6.6 points RIT beyond one year's growth) and Grade 5 students 13.6 RIT points (3.6 RIT points beyond one year's growth).

There are several factors that count account for this growth. First, the pilot of Eureka mathematics program this year raised the rigor of instruction and expectations in mathematics. Coventry’s K-12 Mathematics Specialist worked with our teachers throughout the year to ensure appropriate pacing, to align mathematics learning tasks and assessments to Eureka and CCS. In addition, analysis of the data from the administration of the SBAC Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) informed our instruction to specifically focus on areas of students’ challenges. Review materials were created by teachers for use at math centers during math workshop.

## GHR MAP Math 2016-2017

### Overall RIT



The overall RIT score growth is impressive as well. Growth for our Grade 3 students was 13.6, Grade 4 15.6, and Grade 5 11.9 RIT points, respectively.

Students in grades 3-5 will increase their reading comprehension by three levels as evidenced by the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) in Literature as evidenced by the Spring 2017 assessment.

The BAS results from fall 2016 to spring 2017 are impressive with 90.3 % of our students growing three or more reading levels, which is one year’s growth as deemed by Fontais and Pinnell’s Benchmark System. This was the first year for BAS administration by classroom teachers, grades 3-5. In re-benchmarking at mid year for our intervention students, it was determined that some of the fall scores may have been inflated by misinterpretation of the results. To note, 38% of our students grew four or more reading levels over the course of one year. Those students who did not grow 3 levels include students that we have been monitoring closely throughout the year, varying interventions as appropriate, as well as those students who were already above grade level or at Z, the highest level possible.

<b>BAS Level Gain Fall 2016 to Spring 2017</b>									
<b>Grade</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
3		2	10	79	30	8	3	3	1
4			5	56	39	17	6	1	
5	2*	1	17	65	26	9	2	1	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

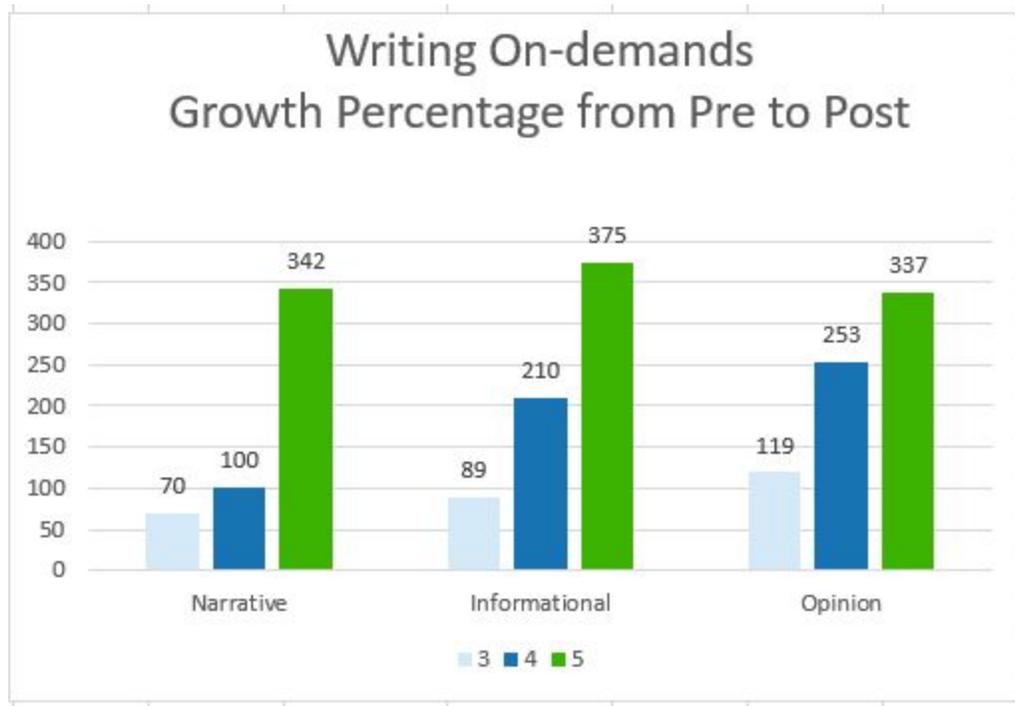
\* At Z in the Fall

<b>Intervention BAS Level Gain Fall 2016 to Spring 2017</b>									
<b>Grade</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
3		1	1	9	10	6	1		1
4			1	12	9	4	4		
5		1	1	10	7	2	1		
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>1</b>

Students receiving reading intervention services also made impressive growth. 94% grew 3 or more levels. A few of those students who did not grow three levels, entered intervention later in the year. In addition, special education referrals are pending for two students. Most often instruction for students in reading intervention begins with the Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI). If sufficient progress is not evident, the type of intervention is evaluated with consideration given to Visualizing and Verbalizing, Foundations work, or a hybrid of research based interventions to meet students' individual needs.

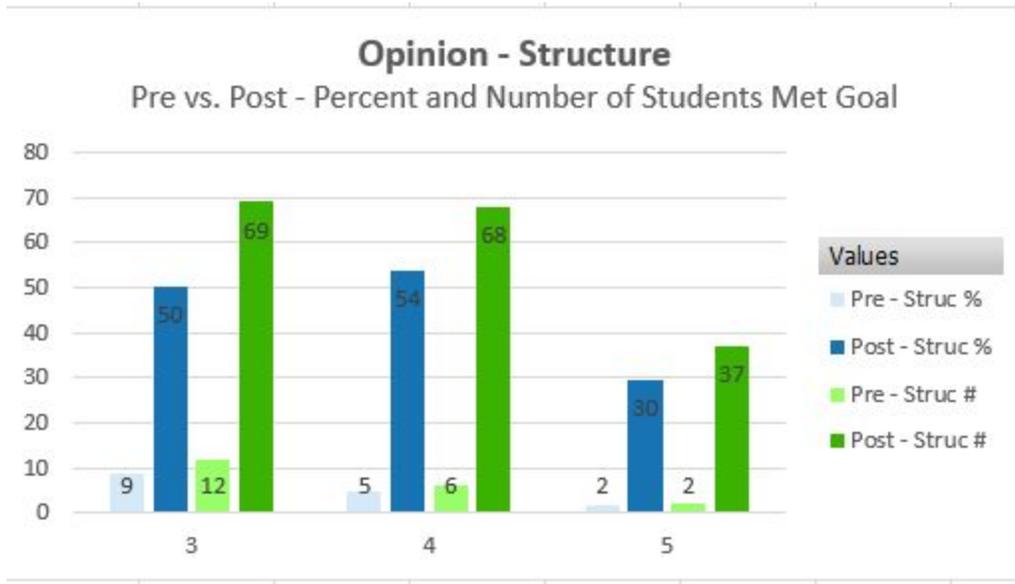
Students in grades 3-5 will increase their writing scores in the Structure, Development and Language Conventions on the Spring 2017 post on-demand assessment using the Teachers College Learning Progression Rubrics.

Significant student growth in writing is evident by all of the data. Below reflects students' growth in the scored on-demand assessments from the writing pre on-demands administered in the fall to writing post on-demands in the spring. Narrative posts were administered in November, Informational were administered in February and Opinion in April, 2017.

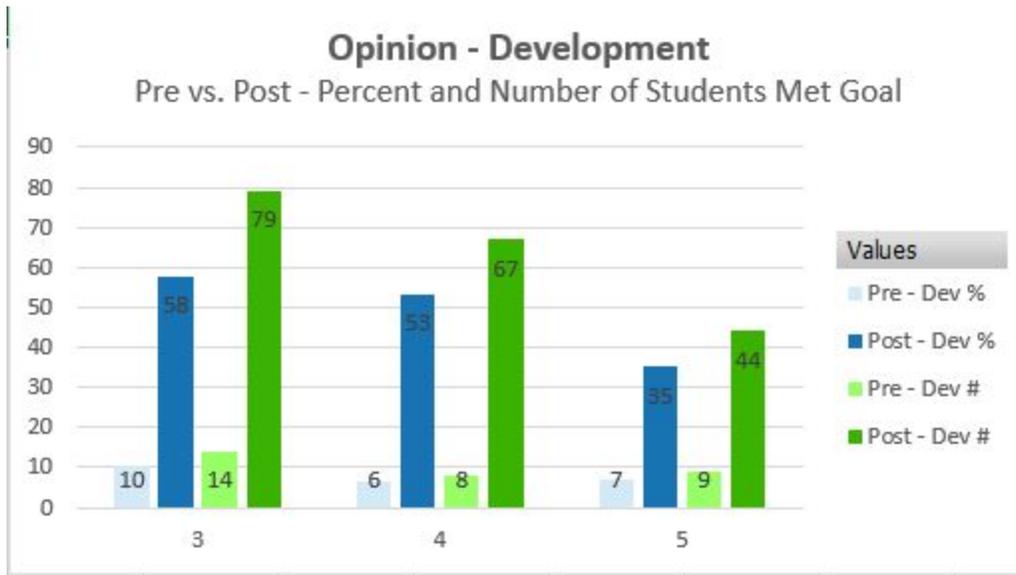


*Students in grades 3 - 5 are expected to produce well developed, organized pieces of opinion, informational, and narrative writing. Over the past few years, we have changed how we score students' writing, changing rubrics to best align with the work. With the onset of SBAC testing, we scored students on-demand pieces with the SBAC writing rubrics. As we transitioned to Columbia University's Teachers College Writers Workshop, we used a hybrid rubric of SBAC and Teachers College. This year, the rubric was revised to be more student friendly, so that students could clearly understand the established expectations by grade level. Our expectations are high and I believe our writing across all three grade levels is stronger than the data suggests. Nevertheless, calibrated scoring, along with effective use of Teachers College learning progressions will be an area of focus moving forward.*

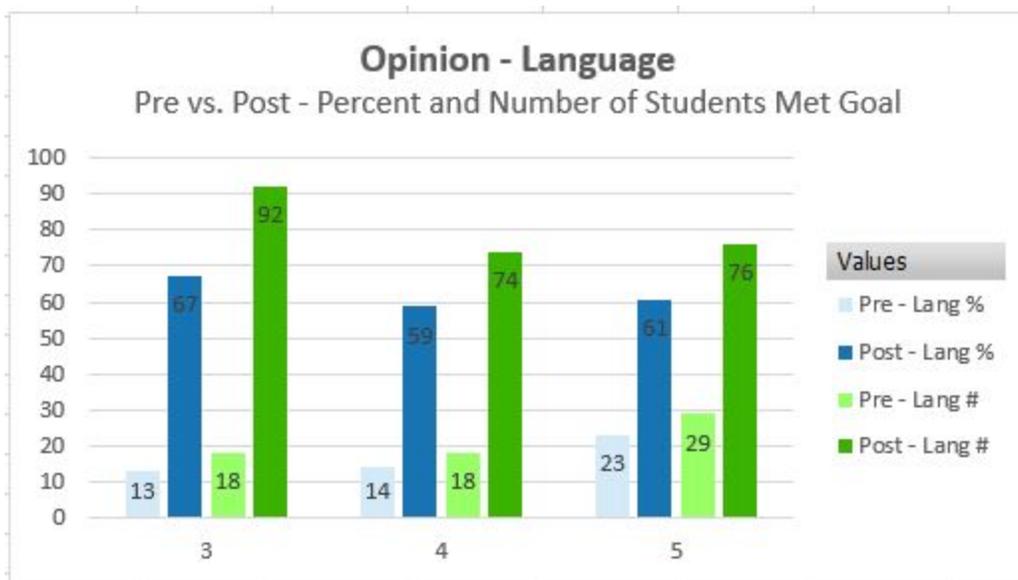
*Below are the results of pre and post opinion on-demand writing. Narrative and informational data was also gathered, although were taught earlier in the year. The opinion writing is the most recently taught.*



*Structure includes overall organization: the lead, introduction, transitions, ending/conclusion, and paragraphing.*



*Development includes elaboration and craft. Adding specific details and/or evidence is heavily weighted. In addition, the extent to which students include sensory details, figurative language, and strong vocabulary whether it is strong verbs and adjectives, or content specific vocabulary use in informational writing is evaluated in Development.*



*Language Conventions includes spelling and punctuation, including accurate punctuation of dialogue and quotes.*

□ □

### **Whole School Indicator:**

All students in grades 3-5 will develop academic and/or behavioral student goals and monitor individual standards based learning targets, as evidenced by student and staff data points.

*The GHR Whole School Indicator goal is a derivative of the district wide book study, Leaders of Their Own Learning. The expectation after professional development with the K-5 staff in October was that classroom teachers would establish learning targets in reading and writing. The purpose of learning targets is to help students define what they are learning and why they are learning it, enabling them to monitor their progress toward the learning goal and giving them the language for and practice with metacognition. In addition, learning targets help stimulate students' motivation. Learning targets are evident in classrooms daily, not only as first stipulated in reading and writing, but targets are evident in many classrooms across all subject areas. In addition to academic targets, teachers have included behavioral learning targets as well.*

*Not only do teachers monitor students progress towards achieving the learning targets, students monitor their progress by setting reasonable goals. In the beginning of the year, teachers guided students in establishing realistic goals to achieve the learning targets. Over the course of the year, students have developed their understanding of goal writing, and for the most part write their own. Teachers will review student's goals during conferencing time to ensure success and accountability. Reflection is also an important part of the goal writing process, and as such, students are asked to reflect on the daily and/or weekly goals.*

## **2. Maintain and promote a positive and respectful learning community.**

- Conduct comprehensive program review to ensure appropriate continuum of services for our students emotionally, behaviorally, and socially challenged.

*Students' needs are becoming increasingly more complex, and as such a myriad of programs are needed to provide students with the support needed to be successful. Over the course of the year, and in collaboration with the PSSS Director, special education programming and staffing have been carefully evaluated. At this time we will continue with two team-taught classes (one special educator and one general education teacher in a classroom) at each grade level to provide the additional support identified in students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). General education and special education students have access to high quality intervention programs and interventionists. The GHR reading intervention service delivery model is strong as we identify students in need of reading intervention and identify service implementers on an individual basis. This year we transitioned to that model in mathematics as well.*

*GHR's Transition Room provides students with access to an alternate setting as needed due to substantial emotional or behavioral dis-regulation. Our district's Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) has been a valuable resource this year, providing recommendations to staff in programming for students.*

*In addition, the Autism program that was developed and implemented at CGS this year is expanding to GHR next year. Planning meetings with involved administrators and the EASTCONN support staff provided recommendations and the information needed to make decisions regarding staffing and locations for our ABA room next school year.*

- Continue to develop partnerships with community-based organizations to promote health and wellness opportunities for students and families throughout the year.

*Within our GHR community, we promote exercise and wellness for students. Fitness for Life, a Wednesday morning exercise program run by our Physical Education teacher continues to be successful. In addition, after school activities, including multi-sport, skiing, hiking, and a trip to the adventure park, were all well attended by students. Healthy Snacks and Celebrations for special events are promoted throughout the year with suggestions and recipes shared with parents. Nutrition Nuggets, a monthly newsletter, provides health and wellness tips on a range of topics throughout the year. We are fortunate to have parents that volunteer their time to bring exercise and relaxation techniques to students. Teachers provide students with brain/movement breaks using GoNoodle.*

*In addition, we continue to collaborate with Coventry's Human Services to provide mentoring services by high school students to some of our children in need of additional support. The district Wellness Committee sends periodic updates to families as well sharing wellness across the district.*

- Collaborate with GHR extended community to provide programs and activities that foster positive school climate, support school initiatives, and inform/educate parents about initiatives.

*GHR staff continues to promote a positive school environment by reinforcing CARES (Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy, and Self-Control) as well as recognizing acts of kindness. Principal's Forum participants bring forth students' suggestions to support positive behaviors. The unveiling of our Spike's Buddy Bench on the playground provided students with the opportunity to look out for peers in need of a buddy to play with at recess. This has been a wonderful addition to our playground, with students using it frequently and appropriately. Monthly Spirit(wear) Days at GHR result in a sea of green and gold as students and staff proudly wear their school colors. The NED Show supported our kindness message and growth mindset to the GHR community in October. In April, Staff Professional Development topic titled Adult Practices to Promote Positive Behavior in the Classroom: Effective Strategies for Success, encouraged staff to revisit and reinforce strategies to promote positive behaviors.*

*Growth Mindset, a school and district initiative, was visible from the first day of school across GHR with bulletin boards decorated with messages focused on the importance of having a Growth Mindset and the Power of YET. Staff members presented Growth Mindset to parents at the October PTO meeting. Author James Dongweck presented his writing process and books in which Growth Mindset is embedded to students and parents in November.*

*Additional presentations to parents at PTO meetings included our district website overview and notifications and an informative Eureka math presentation. GHR Reading Room staff sponsored an overview of reading intervention to parents in February. Our Math Interventionists sponsored Math Mysteries, a math night for students and parents in March. Finally, an orientation for incoming grade 3 parents in May provided parents of our youngest students with an overview of a day in the life of a third grade student.*

### **Parent Feedback Goal**

- Increase opportunities for parents to participate and observe students' learning and growth mindset within our learning community as measured by staff data points.

*Parent partnerships are a powerful means of supporting our students emotionally, socially, and academically. Our goal this year included providing parents with five opportunities to engage in school activities so they could observe students' learning and growth mindset. This increased our celebrations of learning across the building, with the majority of teachers holding three whole class celebrations (writing celebrations, movies in science and social studies, and math centers). Additional strategies and staff data points included Weekly Mystery Readers, Weekly student developed newsletters, parent volunteers, and presentations at PTO meetings. In addition, students' goals and their reflections on goals were shared with parents to provide parents with insight to stimulate discussion about school. Students in reading intervention take books home to read with or to their parents to reinforce their learning and share their progress. The use of Google Classroom offers parents the opportunity to view class assignments and their child's work in progress (Google docs) guided by specific feedback from their teacher.*

### **3. Recruit, retain and develop high quality staff at every level.**

- Provide technology coaching opportunities to ensure meaningful integration of technology, including the 3D printer, to increase student engagement and enrichment opportunities.

*Over time, we have realized that integration of technology into the curriculum is most effectively accomplished by taking a personalized approach. More specifically, it is optimum to introduce an idea or outcome to a small group and then follow up with individuals to support collaboration opportunities for our District Technology Coach. In follow-up to team meetings, our tech coach scheduled time with teachers upon request to plan and co-teach lessons embedding the use of Google Classroom, Google Cardboard, and our recent addition of a Chromebook cart.*

*In collaboration, our tech coach, Media Specialist, and CEP teacher identified a project between kindergarten and grade 5 students using the 3-D printer. Kindergarten students' handprints make a great momento for parents. CGS teachers worked with K students to prepare handprints to send over to our fifth grade students, who then prepared them to go to print - 3-D print that is.*

- Support teachers in sharing their professional expertise by encouraging participation in Connecticut's Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM) to act as cooperating teachers, mentors and host teachers in support of district partnerships with local universities.

*GHR staff support Coventry's university partnerships. This first year of ECSU's full year internship program was a great success at GHR. Our intern was placed with a Grade 4 teacher/mentor, substituted across the building, student taught in grade 4, and is currently subbing for one of our grade 3 teachers on maternity leave.*

*Teachers continue to volunteer their time and expertise to host Junior Interns, pre-student teaching candidates, and student teachers. Not only have we accommodated placements directly from UCONN and*

*Eastern, we support Coventry graduates in need of observation hours to gain acceptance to education programs, and support high school students exploring potential majors.*

*In addition, teachers act as Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM) mentors to new teachers and support the TEAM system by scoring participants' module papers. Following is a list of how GHR staff have supported this school and district goal this year:*

- ❖ 5 teachers TEAM training in August*
- ❖ 1 teacher TEAM trained in October*
- ❖ 8 teachers trained in TEAM paper scoring*
- ❖ 5 teachers mentoring Year 1 or Year 2 teachers this year*
- ❖ Full year ECSU intern*
- ❖ Fall - 3 student teachers (St. Joseph's Grade 3 Special Education, Eastern Grade 4 & PE)*
- ❖ Fall - 2 Junior Interns from UCONN*
- ❖ Fall - 6 pre-student teaching candidates*
- ❖ Winter - 4 teachers with interns*
- ❖ Spring - 3 student teachers (Grade 4, Grade 5, and PE)*
- ❖ Spring - HS student observing Speech and Language*
- ❖ Spring - MCC student applying to UCONN - in need of observation hours - Grade 4*
- ❖ Spring - Media Center Intern - UCONN - 2 days/week*
- ❖ Spring - Grade 3 special ed - UCONN Jr Intern*
- ❖ Spring - 7 teachers with interns*

*To note, Mr. Stephen Merlino, with the support of Mr. Petrone, has been instrumental in fostering these partnerships. The various levels of teaching candidates, along with our multiple university partnerships, make it extremely challenging to track.*

- Through the structure of Instructional Team meetings bi-weekly, provide teachers with mini-trainings in the areas of goal setting, effective instructional strategies, and assessment to further develop capacity of our educators.*

*To support teachers' success with existing and newly introduced areas of focus, bi-weekly team meetings' agendas included mini-trainings/review of effective instructional strategies, conferring forms, and presentation rubrics for 21st Century Skills. In addition, the K-12 Mathematics and ELA Specialists attended meetings to support teachers through the completion of Student Work Protocols (SWP) for Literacy and Mathematics Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) and writing on-demands. Completion of SWP result in collegial discussions among teachers regarding effective instructional strategies, and levels and types of differentiation to ensure student success. The objective for these bi-weekly meetings was to further develop the capacity of our educators at the elementary level.*

*Updates and review of the GHR School Improvement Plan also became part of the Instructional Team Meeting agendas to recognize the level and success of the work throughout the year and to share the collective responsibility of the plan. The alignment of teachers' professional goals to the School Improvement Plan is evident in review.*

*Both the district technology coach and media specialist were scheduled to attend Instructional Team meetings for built-in collaboration opportunities. Not only did this time result in capacity building for*

*teachers in the areas of informational literacy and technology integration, it provided the collaboration time to ensure the success of teachers' professional goals.*