

**Grace Snell Middle School
Targeted Assistance School Plan
2011 -2012**

A. Use such program’s resources under this part to help participating children meet the same state’s challenging student academic achievement standards expected for all children.

Grace Snell Middle School’s (GSMS) targeted assistance Title I program will coordinate its resources to assist participating students to meet the same challenging Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in grades 6-8 and Gwinnett County Public School’s Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) student achievement standards through an aligned focused effort. Research based professional development initiatives will be geared towards strengthening content knowledge, pedagogy, instructional practices, and effective implementation of the Quality Plus Teaching Strategies (QPTS) in math and reading/language arts. Title I teachers will be added to the connections department to provide additional instruction to participating students in math and reading/language arts. Additional teachers will be hired as funding permits. Title I teachers will provide additional math and reading support based on the targeted students’ identified need in grades 6-8. Classes will operate under reduced class sizes allowing teachers to provide a nurturing environment, allow for more individualized instruction, and build stronger relationships and academic connections with students. We will be developing and encouraging assessment practices that incorporate the effective use of test data and frequent monitoring of student progress. Teachers will use prior year CRCT scores, formative, interim and benchmark assessments to determine students’ needs. Multiple criteria developmentally appropriate for students will be used to identify students eligible for Title I services: standardized testing, local school assessment, RTI criteria, teacher recommendations, and academic achievement (grades). Stronger parent relationships will be created and sustained through continuous communication by way of newsletters, email, telephone conferences, social networks, workshops and/or information sessions on topics related to students’ academic success. As funds become available, we will purchase materials/resources for math and language arts, as well as offer extended learning courses in the areas of language arts/reading and mathematics before and after school, and/or on Saturdays.

Materials/ Supplies	Math	Reading/Language Arts
E-readers		Grades 6,7,8
Fiction/ Non-fiction novels	Grades 6,7,8	Grades 6,7,8
Periodicals		Grades 6, 7, 8
Software licenses	Grades 6, 7, 8	Grades 6, 7, 8
Coach books	Grades 6,7,8	Grades 6,7,8
Buckle Down books	Grades 6,7,8	Grades 6,7,8
Student Response Systems	Grades 6,7,8	Grades 6,7,8

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B. Ensure that planning for students served under this part is incorporated into existing school planning.

Planning for the academic success of students participating in Grace Snell MS' Title I program will run concurrently with existing school wide academic planning, the professional development calendar, and instructional monitoring. In addition, the following collaborative sessions will provide Title I teachers with the opportunity to discuss and share insights on the academic and behavioral progress to ensure that the needs of their students are met. These opportunities will be on-going throughout the year and will ensure that teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators are actively involved in monitoring the needs of targeted students. Parents will be involved in collaboration and professional learning in order to foster a strong home and school connection. The shared drive will be used to store notes from meetings and make them available to anyone unable to attend. Meetings to ensure student success include content area vertical team meetings where teams meet weekly to collaborate on data driven decisions that will guide instruction; Student Support Team (SST) meetings which is a general education problem- solving committee process established in every school, the purpose being to improve student performance by providing support to both students and teachers; Response to Intervention (RTI) which is an ongoing process of using student performance and other data to guide instructional decisions. Title I teachers will collaborate with ESOL, Special Education, regular education teachers and counselors to plan and coordinate instruction for common students. In addition, parent conferences, teacher observations, assessment discussions, and staff meetings will be held on a regular basis.

C. Use effective methods and instructional strategies that are based on scientifically based research that strengthen the core academic program of the school.

- a. give primary consideration to providing extended learning time, such as extended school year, before and after school, and summer programs;*

Targeted Title I students will participate in extended learning time on a rotational basis in language arts/reading and math content areas. Weekly Help Days are offered and teachers provide additional help/tutorial sessions based on student need. Students who fail are offered the opportunity to review those failed skills and recover with a passing grade of 70% by attending Comet Academy. Saturday tutorials are offered for skills review and CRCT preparation in addition to connection courses in math and language arts/reading. A plan will be in place to ensure

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students needing extended learning time will be identified and receive summer school services.

- b. help provide and accelerated, high-quality curriculum, including applied learning; and*

Professional learning offered at the local school will provide strategies utilized by teachers including real world experiences to show relevance of the subject, games, and manipulative activities to reinforce taught skills, and computer software including iPass and Study Island site licenses to enhance learning and reinforce basic skills. Study Island is a researched web based instruction practice assessment. Peer tutors and smaller class/group settings provide one-to-one reinforcement. Staff will participate in professional learning that introduces and reinforces the use of technology, differentiated instruction, and research based instructional strategies. Staff will also utilize QPTS, which are research based instructional strategies, to teach the AKS curriculum, which is correlated with Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) to strengthen the core academic program of the school.

- c. minimize removing children from the regular classroom during the regular school hours for instruction.*

Title I teachers serving Title I students will provide instruction in math and reading/ language arts during the connections block to eliminate any disruption or create an increase in instructional classroom time in grades 6th, 7th and 8th. This approach also minimizes removing students from the regular classroom setting. We will hire two Title I math teachers and two Title I reading/ LA teachers. The teachers will be in classrooms only serving Title I students. The Title I classes will occur during students' connections time period; therefore, students will not be removed from their regular academic content classes. We will also use available funds to pay for teachers focused on meeting the needs of Title I qualifying students in Extended Learning Time (ELT) sessions. Title I funds will be used after all available resources from the local school and the county level have been exhausted. The ELT may be in the form of Saturday School Programs, Before School Programs (before the start of the school day), After School Programs, or additional academic sessions during the regular school day. An ELT Director and book keeper will be hired to assist with support and ordering materials to assist and facilitate the ELT program. The local LSTC will work during off contract hours during the summer to assist with analyzing and aggregating data, providing technological support, introducing teachers to new technology to be used in the classroom as well professional learning with staff. This

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will ensure academic success for every student. Everything possible will be done to maximize the resources and opportunities to meet the needs of struggling Title I students and to empower them to reach grade level mastery and beyond in their academic efforts.

D. Coordinate with and support the regular education program, which may include services to assist preschool children in the transition from early childhood programs such as Head Start, Even Start, Early Reading First, or State-run preschool programs to elementary school programs.

GSMS's Targeted Assistance Title I program will coordinate with and support the regular education program in both student achievement initiatives and efforts to foster strong community relations as funds become available through the following initiatives:

Elementary to Middle School Transition

Counselors will provide on-going guidance and support of rising sixth graders. If funds are available, a meet-and-greet event for parents will be offered as a prime opportunity to disseminate information packets, website information, parent portal, and PTA information using our Comet Peer Leaders. Fifth grade middle school visitation day will allow future 6th grade students an opportunity to become familiar with the building, observe students and teachers in classrooms actually teaching and learning, and hear academic and behavior expectations of school administrators. Elementary school students' questions will be addressed during shadow day to assist with making the transition and to ease student worries. A rising sixth grade "Jump Start" program will be provided if funding permits. The program will acclimate rising 6th graders to the day to day middle school environment and assist with the transition. Students will be exposed to behavior expectations, curriculum and meet and greet teachers.

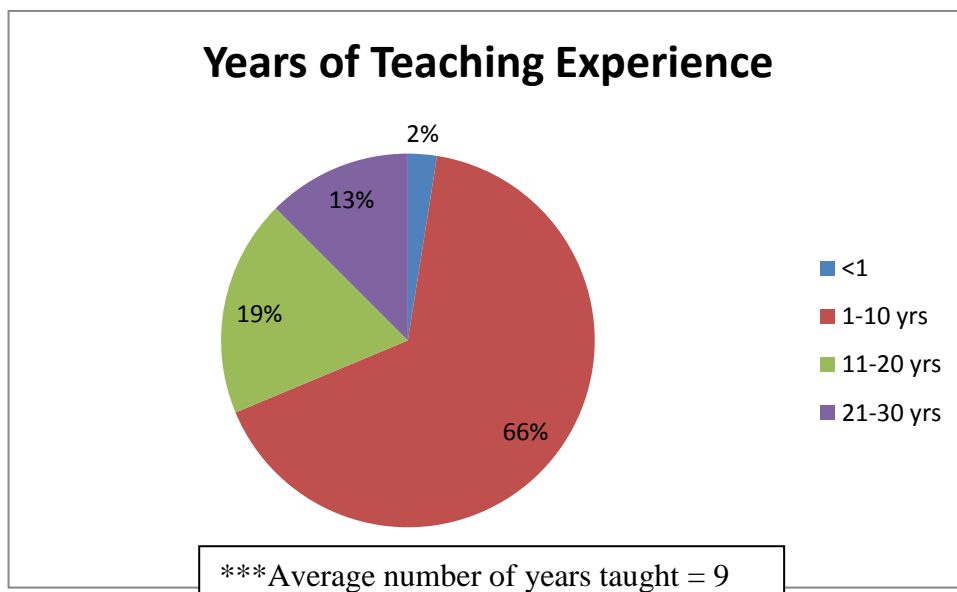
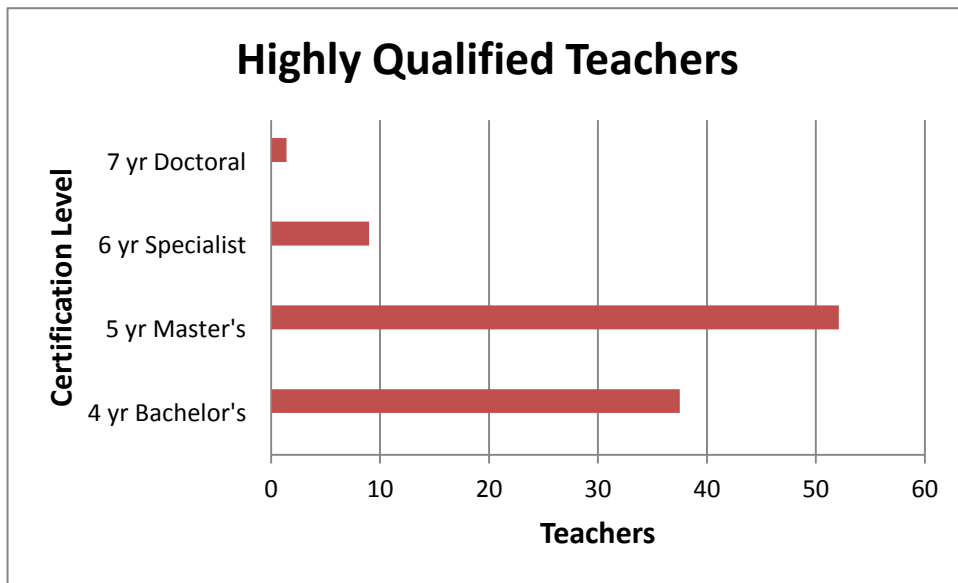
Middle School to High School Transition

The guidance department will work closely with high school counselors in an effort to prepare students for a successful transition. Classroom academic guidance will be provided throughout the year to address topics that promote a smooth transition. We will conduct vertical team meetings with high school teachers to coordinate AKS standards, discuss scheduling processes, and clarify graduation requirements. Collaborative planning will provide the teaching staff the opportunity to determine what skills are repeatedly resulting in strong and/or weak areas on standardized tests. High school visitation day/night planned for rising 9th grade students/parents will provide an opportunity for all to learn important information that is critical not only to entering high school, but exiting high school (i.e.

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graduation requirements, practice with FASFA, etc.). To ensure that the transition from high school to higher level education is smooth and to motivate at risk students, we will collaborate and visit colleges and careers to offer students career options. Students and parents will be given opportunities to visit local colleges. Parents will be offered workshops to assist with the transition to high school. Parents will be provided opportunities to learn more about Grace Snell Middle School and high school expectations through parent workshops and meetings offered at various dates and times during the school year.

E. Provide instruction by highly qualified teachers.



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Grace Snell Special Endorsements

Special Endorsement	#
Gifted	18
ESOL	2
National Board Certified	1
Special Education	19

Title I Staff Years of Experience and Certification Levels

Position	#	Years of Experience	Certification Level
Administrator	1	14	Doctorate
Teacher – Rdg/LA	1	12	Doctorate
Teacher –Rdg/LA	1	22	<i>Master's</i>
Teacher – Math	1	10	<i>Bachelor's</i>
Teacher- Math	1	15	<i>Bachelor's</i>

The certification and years of experience listed in graphs and charts above reveal that 100% of our staff is highly qualified in the areas in which they teach. Presently 60% of our teachers hold advanced degrees.

Other characteristics of Grace Snell Middle School Staff include:

- 18 staff members hold a Gifted Endorsement
- 2 staff members hold an ESOL Endorsement
- 1 staff member holds National Board Certification
- 19 staff members hold Special Education Certification
- All paraprofessional hold Georgia Professional Certificates

F. Provide opportunities for professional development for teachers, principals, and paraprofessionals, including, if appropriate, pupil services personnel, parents and other staff, who work with participating children in the Title I program or in the regular education program.

From the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a call for education reform has been at the forefront of American consciousness, with the top priorities driving school improvement today being raising the bar and closing the achievement gap (Fullan, 2004). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, legislation intended to improve student

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achievement and change the culture of America's schools, is based on four key principles:

Stronger accountability for results; greater flexibility for states, school districts, and schools in the use of federal funds; more choices for parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds; an emphasis on teaching methods that have been demonstrated to work(United State Department of Education, NCLB, 2001).

Grace Snell provides high quality and ongoing professional development for all staff including Title I teachers to enable all children in the school to meet the state's academic achievement standards. This is evidenced by GSMS' professional development and collaboration opportunities. We will conduct monthly Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings where teachers and administrators continuously seek and share learning to enhance their effectiveness as professionals with the common goal to improve student achievement. During Differentiated Instruction Training, teachers will learn collaborative learning strategies that allow them to meet the needs of all students. We will implement technology enhancements and training to increase student achievement in math and literacy (i.e. Mimeo's, "clickers" response system). When funding becomes available, iPASS and Study Island training will be provided for math/reading teachers. We will provide visits to the Ron Clark Academy, conduct book studies, provide writing training, and implement researched based Quality Plus Teaching Strategies. Daily common planning time will provide teachers the time to plan for the academic success of students, discuss and share insights about the academic and behavioral progress of students, and ensure that teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators are actively involved in monitoring the needs of targeted students. Depth of Knowledge Training will help teachers measure the required depth or complexity of knowledge standards and assessment items. County- required teacher planning days will allow time for staff development. We will also provide county level professional learning courses; conduct Universal Design in writing assessments. This training will advance our teachers through in depth analyses of reviewing individual test questions to ensure equity for all learners. Teachers will be taken through this common language process in order to create common assessments by critically looking at the level of test questions. We will also allot time for content area vertical team planning sessions. All teachers and paraprofessionals will have opportunities to participate in county level professional learning.

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The goal of all staff development will be to promote the use of research-based strategies to address academic improvement. Through close analysis of our school's data, a significant gap in our students' abilities with verbal and non-verbal skills pertaining to common vocabulary throughout all subject areas was revealed. Becker (1977) noted that to close the gap between students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and those who do not, schools should use systematic programs of vocabulary instruction throughout the grades. Carroll (1971) made the same recommendation as a result of his review of the research on effective practices for the educationally disadvantaged. Finally, recent federal documents have identified vocabulary instruction as one of the essential elements of literacy development for students at risk (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002; NICHD Report of the National Reading Panel, 2000). Grace Snell Middle School's Local School Improvement Plan emphasizes the need to increase students' test scores in the areas of reading and writing. Teachers are focusing on embedding common vocabulary throughout all subject areas to help fortify student verbal and non-verbal skills.

"If anything concerns me, it's the oversimplification of something as complex as assessment. My fear is that learning is becoming standardized. Learning is idiosyncratic. Learning and teaching is messy stuff. It doesn't fit into bubbles" (Michele Forman, 2001 Teacher of the Year). Teachers at Grace Snell Middle School are always cognizant of the fact that teaching and learning do not fit into bubbles. Students have different ways of learning, and teachers utilize and continue to seek varying strategies to facilitate students' learning styles. Grace Snell Middle School realizes that effective assessment practices have the power to transform learning by involving students in the assessment of their learning. The purpose of assessment is not to rate, rank, or sort students but to provide meaningful feedback which leads to higher performance for all students (Marzano, 2010). As funding becomes available, Title I paid teachers will attend off-site conferences on researched-based effective strategies such as Marzano's *Assessment Summit* and *Building Engaged Schools Summit* to supplement ongoing strategies and boost student interest and engagement. Program participants will then disseminate the information to other teachers of students currently enrolled in the TAS program at Grace Snell Middle School followed by a book study on *Building Academic Vocabulary*, one of Marzano's strategies.

Grace Snell Middle School plans to provide the following collaborative training opportunities for parents and teachers: technology enhancements and training for parents (i.e. technology, understanding data, and how to use online/ hands-on supplemental materials, differentiating strategies). Ron Clark Academy is a model visited by educators around world, the innovative researched based strategies are ground breaking and pervasive throughout this academy. Realizing that our school is part of our community and

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understanding the need for a close collaboration with business leaders, parents will help sustain a successful school and impact student achievement. By allowing parents to participate in the professional learning of differentiation instruction by attending the Ron Clark Academy will link the concepts taught at school to home and will ultimately impact student achievement. Parents will have the opportunity to learn vital strategies to help their at-risk students achieve success and understand the relevance in building a school culture in which all stakeholders are actively involved.

G. Provide strategies to increase parental involvement.

Grace Snell Middle School provides a culture of excellence that prepares all students to reach their maximum potential today, tomorrow and beyond. Parents play a critical role in the success of our students. Parents who take an active role in their child's education improve student achievement and behavior. GSMS has included a variety of means to increase parental involvement. For example, we will have monthly "Coffee and Chat" with the principal, Ms. Spraggs; a monthly school-wide newsletter; teacher websites to include, homework, class work, and class messages. We will provide parents/guardians with a copy of team management plans, syllabi, and annual Curriculum Nights events outlining content area AKS. In addition, teachers will have the option of emailing progress reports every two weeks and conferences will be available by phone, face-to-face, or email, based on the needs of each family. Child care will be offered to assist the needs of parents with younger children. This will afford parents the opportunity to focus better on the nightly workshops to be offered.

Grace Snell Middle School plans to increase parental involvement by incorporating more ELL interpreters for conferences and providing classes and workshops for parents. We will also provide an on-line informational setting via Facebook to outline school events and up-to-date information. There will be more opportunities for students to have more literary connections through school-designated programs such as movie nights, teen read week, parents as guest speakers and mentors, and include more business partners from our community. These incentives will be provided in order to further bridge the gap between our students' homes and school.

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H. Coordinate and integrate Federal, State and local services/programs including violence prevention programs, nutrition programs, housing programs, Head Start, adult education, vocational and technical education, and job training.

Grace Snell Middle School provides various programs to support at risk students. These programs include Comet Challenge (daily extended learning time during the school day); Comet Academy (before/after school academic recovery); online state assessment practice; CRCT Prep classes on Saturdays and during connections; math and language arts enrichment and remedial classes during connections; and an additional connections class to provide instruction during the connections block in the areas of math and reading/language arts. In addition, GSMS has an attendance program in place to address students with frequent absences (SARC Program) and a study skills class during the connections block which focuses on organization, critical thinking, and problem solving. Special education students attend Life Study classes, Wednesday Help Days, and additional tutorial days are scheduled by students and teachers, and GCPS scheduled summer school opportunities are available.

We will coordinate with David Jones and Title I social workers (McKinney Ventos Homeless Program) to meet the needs of our homeless students as well as coordinate services with the ESOL and migrant department. This will minimize removing students from the regular classroom setting. Counselors and the local school's resource officer will visit the classrooms to deliver lessons on bullying, cyber safety, drug awareness, attendance issues, and so forth. We will coordinate services with Title II and III when appropriate and as the need arises. A Health and Wellness Fair will take place and the school's cafeteria staff will conduct classroom talks on nutrition. We will have a seamless summer program and an afterschool snack program provided through federal services.

As funds are made available we will coordinate and facilitate the following: career/college fairs; visit the Ron Clark Academy; arrange community partner field trips, implement parent support classes and workshops, engage the school community in service projects; implement PSAT preparatory classes on Saturdays; participate in cluster vertical team meetings as the need arises.

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I. Assist participating children in meeting the State’s proficient and advance levels of achievement by—

a. coordinating resources from Title I with other resources

from federal, state, and local programs provided at our school by creating opportunities for the Title teachers (math and language arts) to collaboratively learn and plan (professional development). Title I funds will be used to hire supplemental teachers and materials including e-readers, books, periodicals, software licenses, student response systems (clickers), and so forth. Teams of teachers across all content areas, as well as common subject areas, will use a variety of funding sources and personnel resources to support instruction. As a result, students will become exposed to a variety of teaching strategies and assessment tools that will increase student achievement. Teachers will use a variety of assessments i.e., CRCT, interim assessments, and ACCESS to determine strengths and weakness of students. The data gathered will drive the instruction. In addition, Title I teachers will work collaboratively with special education, resource, and ESOL teachers who will directly support and collaborate on a continuous basis to meet the needs of the Title I students. When teaching using technology, all teachers will use the resources provided through state and federal funds in our media center to enhance hands-on instruction that appeals to varying learning styles. Finally, GSMS will coordinate resources from Title I with guidance to offer nutrition and drug awareness programs. These programs will be implemented based on student needs and their impact on our Title I students’ academic achievement.

b. reviewing, on an ongoing basis, the progress of participating children and revising the targeted assistance program, if necessary, to provide additional assistance to enable such children to meet the State’s challenging student academic achievement standards, such as an extended school year, before and after school and summer programs, training for teachers regarding how to identify students who need additional assistance and training for teachers regarding how to implement student academic standards in the classroom.

In order to ensure student achievement, we will monitor the Title I students’ progress through various means, i.e. pre and post-tests, common assessments, interim assessments, quizzes, computer software assessments (iPASS), and the CRCT. Title I students will be monitored through the disaggregation of formal and informal classroom and district assessments. Students who continue to perform below standards will, on an on-going basis, be offered the following re-teaching

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opportunities if additional funds are available: Comet Academy (after/before school academic recovery); CRCT prep classes on Saturdays and during Connections; Extended Learning Opportunities i.e., Saturday and before/after school; Extended Learning Time during the school day (Comet Challenge); a Study Skills class during Connections which focuses on organization, critical thinking, and problem solving; Life Study classes for special education students; Wednesday Help Days; Math Exemplars; tutorial days scheduled by students and teachers; GCPS scheduled summer school opportunities; a ten-day summer school boot camp for students failing the spring administration of the CRCT

If students continue to require additional assistance in meeting the academic achievement standards they will be entered into the SST and or RTI process.

J. Include Title I paid staff in general professional development and school planning activities and have them assume limited duties that are assigned to similar personnel not paid by Title I funds. These include duties beyond classroom instruction that do not benefit participating children, so long as the amount of time spent on such duties is the same proportion of total work time to similar personnel at the same school.

Grace Snell Middle will not distinguish Title I paid staff from non-Title I paid staff in general professional development and school planning activities. Title I paid staff's duties and responsibilities will be no different from their peers. They will be expected to serve on bus, cafeteria, restroom, or hall duty for the duration of time as any other staff member. They are allowed to sponsor any club/organization if they choose to do so. Opportunities to join the Title I, Local School Plan of Improvement (LSPI), Advisement, Field Day, or other planning committee will be offered. Title I paid staff will be granted the opportunity to participate/present during scheduled curriculum meetings, professional learning (PL) meetings, Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS), team meetings, content meetings, parent workshops, or other meetings not mentioned. Teachers will receive "Title I Release Days" to help the transition from the Title I Targeted plan to Title I School-Wide plan, if funds permit. These funds will only be used to fund teachers that are directly working with Title I students. Training/professional development offered throughout the year will be open to Title I paid staff as well.