

Transylvania County Schools
Mid-Point School Improvement Plan Review
Fall 2016

Brevard Middle School

Jeff Bailey, Principal
Lynda Jayne, SIP Chair

Executive Summary

Description of the School

Describe the school system'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 system serves?

Brevard Middle School ranges between 500 and 600 students in grades six through eight. The current enrollment is 508 which is down slightly over the previous years. Our students come from primarily two elementary schools. The population is just over 7,000 people in the town of Brevard and around 33,000 in the county. 51% of the people live in a rural setting. The student body is 78% White, 9% Black, 7% Multi Racial, and 4% Hispanic. 54% of students are on free and reduced lunch. 34% of students are Exceptional Children population with 16% of that Academically Gifted and the other 18% identified as needing Special Education services. The age group 55 and up represents almost one-third of our total population in the county. Traditionally, our school has been a high performing school on standardized tests and performing better than the state average in most categories.

Mission, Vision, and 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 expectations for students, staff, and other stakeholders.

Vision: Students, educators, parents and the community will work together to provide all students with a well rounded education including academic and extracurricular educational experiences in a safe and supportive environment, that will allow them to achieve success and personal responsibility through the three R's: Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships.

Mission: BLUE for Blue Devils:

Believe All Children Can Learn, (Rigor)

Learn for the Future, (Relevance)

Unify our School Community, (Relationships)

Enrich through a Safe and Supportive Environment.

BMS is student focused. Every decision, discussion, goal, and strategic plan is based on the student needs. The staff all work together with the same goal in mind. Stressed throughout the vision and mission are the 3 R's. Rigor can be seen daily throughout all classrooms through deliberate instruction of critical thinking skills. Teachers push students to be better than they ever thought they could be using differentiated instructional strategies. Clear learning objectives, interactive notebooks, and personalized education for all students are evidence of how the school strives to help students make connections with what they are learning. The curriculum is made relevant for students by incorporating 21st century skills and teachers pushing themselves to stay abreast of current technology and topics that will spark student interests. Clubs and other extracurricular activities have taken root through these connections and the gains they have made. Recently, robotics, mountain biking, art guild, and chess clubs have helped many students expand their talents and skillsets. At the heart of all of this are positive relationships. Building and growing

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relationships with students makes learning possible. Addressing the whole child through careful and constant consideration of students' academic, social and emotional needs enables the school to meet its goals.

Notable Achievements and Areas for Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas for improvement over the past three years. Additionally, describe areas for growth and improvement for the school in the next three years.

Brevard Middle School students have shown above expected growth of measured skills through the NC evaluation system for the core academic areas. More students are engaging in challenging music, art, cycling, chess, and science extracurricular activities, as well as the athletic program. Over the next three years, the staff is working toward increasing the "grit" mindset of all students and demonstrating greater student proficiency on the NC evaluation system for the core academic areas.

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Goal Performance and Data Analysis

District Strategic Plan Goal: #2--Every student has a personalized education.	School Goal: All students will demonstrate personal growth as measured by classroom data, district wide assessments and/or state assessments.
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What data is needed to complete a review of the goal?

Teacher standards data, MasteryConnect benchmarks data, data from IEP testing, data from AIG testing, and EVAAS information for each student and for each teacher are needed to determine if the goal was met.

Did we meet our goal/objective? (If yes, describe your current state and next steps for improvement)

-OR-

Is the goal in-progress or not yet addressed:

If in progress, note status:

At this point, Brevard Middle School (BMS) has not meet the goal of all students demonstrating personal growth. However, great strides have been made toward meeting it! As a school for the 2014-2015 academic year, expected growth was achieved with a growth index of 1.02.

Every student has a personalized education through co-teaching methods and differentiated instruction. Regular education teachers are co-teaching with Exceptional Children's (EC) and Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) specialists across all grade levels and curriculum. These co-teaching teams work together to plan and modify lessons, activities, and assessments that will target each child's learning needs. Teachers consistently study and interpret data to see the learning progress of each individual student receiving their instruction. They then tailor their instruction by collaborating with other teachers, analyzing current research, and/or using online resources found on MasteryConnect (MC) and Schoolnet. The next steps for improvement include reaching schoolwide goals for growth in student learning. Another avenue for improvement is facilitating opportunities for co-teaching teams to observe each other, as well as other co-teaching teams within the district. Co-teachers will continue to use their co-planning time to inspect assessment trends for standards of the curriculum. Then, they will brainstorm and implement lessons and strategies that will facilitate individual student's growth within his proficiency level.

If not yet addressed, explain why and your plan for starting:

How are we doing over time (trend)?

Since 2013, BMS has made significant gains, according to North Carolina End of Grade assessments. The scores from the 2015 school year reflect that BMS met growth with an index score of 1.02. This is

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slightly lower than the 2014 index score of 2.18 (exceeded growth). In 2013 the school did not meet growth and had an index score of -6.75.

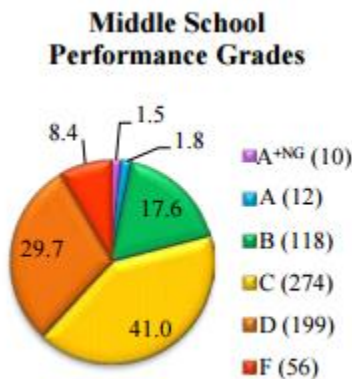
Brevard Middle School earned a performance grade of C in 2014 which was calculated based on an achievement score of 60 and a growth score of 85.4. In 2015, BMS earned a performance grade of C which was calculated based on an achievement score of 65 and a growth score of 82.5.

How are we doing compared to the district (comparison)?

According to the 2014–15 Performance and Growth of North Carolina Public Schools Executive Summary (September 2, 2015), BMS is one of two schools in Transylvania County Schools (TCS) that had a positive growth index score for 2014-2015. Grade level proficiency for TCS is 64.9% and for BMS it is 63.5%. Scores also indicate that students at BMS are performing better than those at the other middle school in the district, especially in mathematics. In reading BMS had a School Performance Grade (SPG) of 68 and RMS had an SPG of 64. In mathematics BMS had an SPG of 63 and RMS had an SPG of 48. The overall SPG for both schools were in the C range. BMS met 83.7% of Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) targets for subgroups while RMS met 65.2% AMO targets.

How are we doing compared to like schools (competitive)?

According to the 2014–15 Performance and Growth of North Carolina Public Schools Executive Summary (September 2, 2015), 41% of all middle schools in NC earned an SPG of C. Brevard Middle fell into this category with an SPG of 68 in 2015. This is an improvement compared to an SPG score of 65 in 2014.



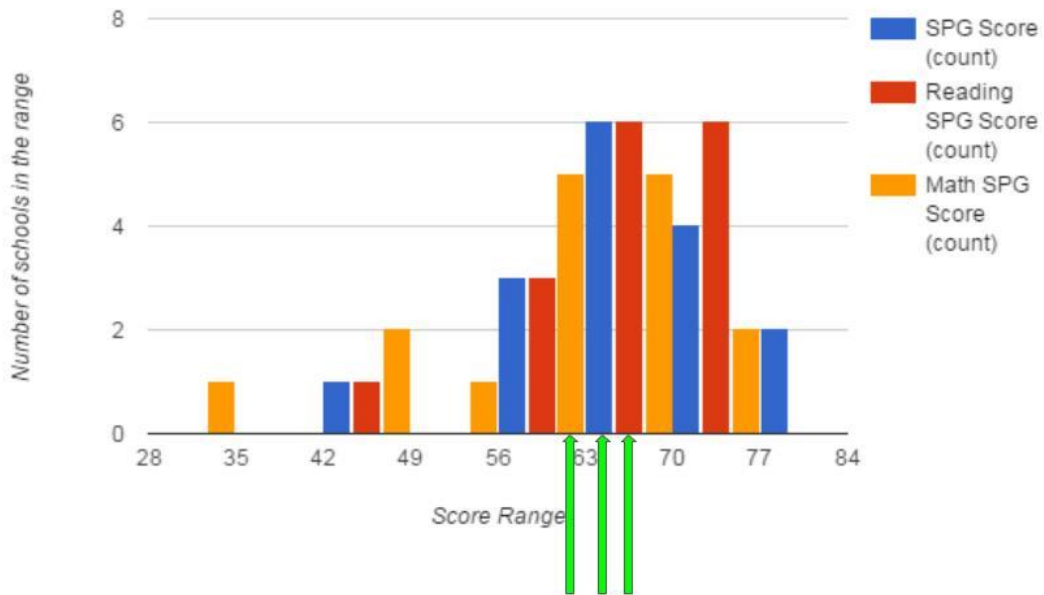
retrieved from:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/exsumm15.pdf>

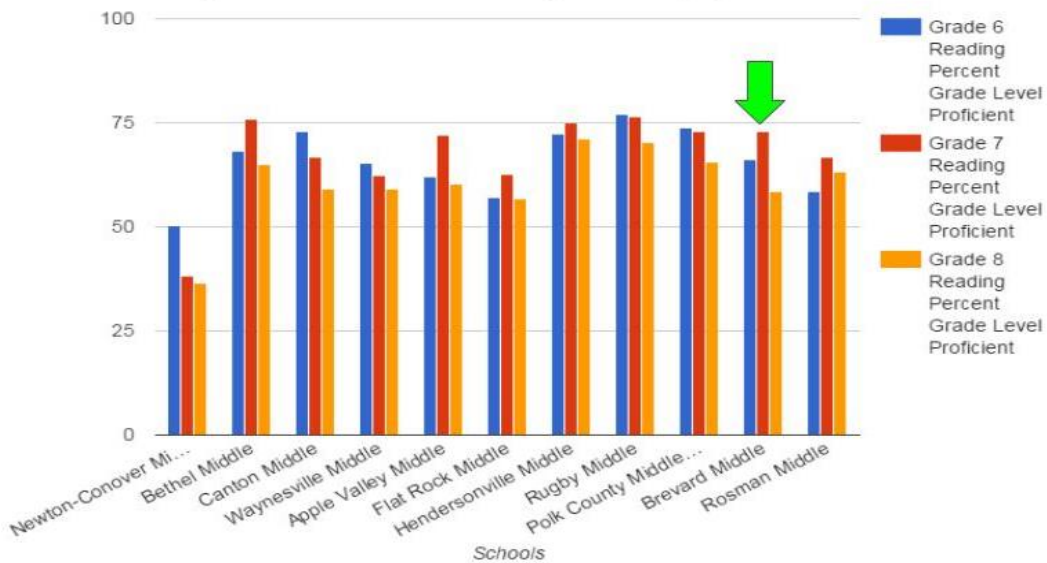
BMS Reading SPG score is 68. All comparable middle schools fall into the B to D range, with the average SPG of 66. Rosman Middle School (our only other district middle school) is at 64, while Newton Conover, the school closest to BMS in demographic and makeup, is much lower at 42. They are nowhere near comparable to BMS growth or targets. Their growth goal was not met and their EVAAS growth status is -17.54, while BMS met growth at +1.02.

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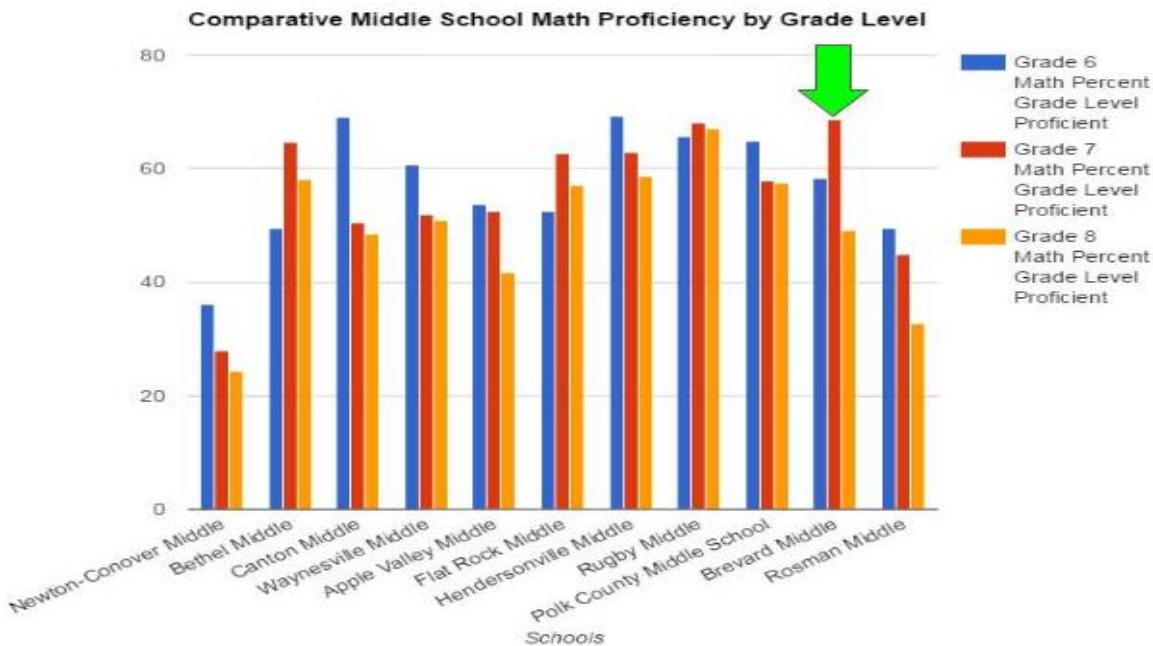
Comparative Middle Schools SPG Scores: BMS
Overall SPG 68; Reading 68; Math 63



Comparative Middle School Reading Proficiency by Grade Level



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1. What are the celebrations and the data to support them?

Growth is being made where it hasn't before, such as in 6th grade math. BMS teachers are becoming accomplished at differentiation for all students! Other schools have come to observe our co-teaching model! Teachers have successfully completed Rick Welsh's (NoBox Inc.) co-teaching training! Co-teaching teams earned high marks on their observations by administrators, which means they're collaborating well together! Students are seeing both teachers in the classroom as equals, rather than teacher and assistant, as well as seeking help in instruction from both! Not being able to tell which students are EC students and which students are regular education students when someone enters a classroom! EC students are being successful in the classroom and excelling in their academics! AIG students are being pushed to think more critically and are actually being challenged! Some AIG students are taking accelerated courses online at BMS - wow! Supporting data comes from the 2014–15 Performance and Growth of North Carolina Public Schools Executive Summary (September 2, 2015), teacher observations by administrators, feedback from consultant, Rick Welsh, and weekly PLC discussions.

2. What are the opportunities for improvement and the data to support them?

The school performance grade is designated on a 15 point scale, and BMS is 2 points from earning an SPG of B. If we increase proficiency rates in reading and math in our weakest areas, this could have a significant impact on the overall SPG.

Based on the disaggregated data, only 30% of students with disabilities are considered grade level proficient. Implementing a co-teaching model with fidelity check-ins is expected to have a positive impact on their performance on state assessments.

Additionally, male students are underperforming in reading compared to female students. While 69.4% of females students at BMS scored at the grade level proficient mark in reading, only 61.7% of male students were considered to be grade level proficient. In addition to the school providing specialized

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reading instruction support to at-risk students in a separate reading class, the English/Language Arts (ELA) teachers should investigate strategies to increase student engagement and evaluate current texts for possible gender bias. The subgroup, boys and particularly 8th grade African American boys, has been identified as a group that needs particular focus and is being served in a new boys' reading enrichment (Blue Devil Time-BDT) group.

3. What other data do we need?

MasteryConnect is being used to collect daily formative assessments and semi-annual Benchmark assessments by reading and math teachers. Using this data, teachers should be able to differentiate instruction more effectively and identify specific standards that are troublesome for students. We need to review this data, along with work samples and other formative assessment data, on a weekly basis to determine which standards to re-teach or remediate because they are not yet mastered by at risk students.

Many teachers are also working with students to set individualized goals for learning and teaching a growth mindset in their daily lessons. A method of collecting that data as students are making progress towards these goals and developing a growth mindset needs to be developed Ideas:

1. Student supplied data about what would make them interested in reading.

2. Data from the use of interactive notebooks. How are the scores of the students whose teachers utilize this strategy and the notebooks go from grade to grade?

4. What are our next steps as indicated by the data?

Our next steps for improvement include reaching schoolwide goals for growth and proficiency in student learning. Continue what is happening in 6th grade two-teacher teams. Data from this year's co-teaching teams and three consecutive years of test scores from these teams to determine growth and effectiveness.

5. What recommendations does the team have for mid-course corrections, changes, or improvements to this goal?

None at this time, continue on path.

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Goal Performance and Data Analysis

District Strategic Plan Goal: #3--Every student, every day has excellent educators.	School Goal: BMS faculty will develop and participate in professional development driven by state standards and 21st Century technology.
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What data is needed to complete a review of the goal?

Data needed are Teacher Working Condition Survey results from the 2014-2015/2015-2016 school year and direct feedback from teachers about the Professional Development (PD) sessions offered and the effectiveness of the training on their use within the classroom. Also if any of the PD resulted in a product or student generated work and analysis of those outcomes are warranted.

Teacher participation in PD to address the identified areas of student need are essential to meeting this goal.

Did we meet our goal/objective? (If yes, describe your current state and next steps for improvement)
-OR-

Is the goal in-progress or not yet addressed:

If in progress, note status:

BMS is progressing towards meeting this goal. PD opportunities are offered by the district on early release days and designated work days. During the 2014-15 school year, teachers spent 547.9 hours in staff development training. Professional development opportunities that are content-specific are limited by funding and availability. In response to this, BMS has focused PD on two areas of need: students with disabilities and increasing reading proficiency. Prior to the beginning of the school year, co-teacher teams participated in two half-day training sessions to review best practices for inclusion. This was followed by a three-day intensive training session for one co-teaching team with Rick Welch (NoBox, Inc)(paid for by the EC/district). The next step is for co-teacher teams to complete a series of observations and planning sessions with each other to share strategies and provide feedback.

The English/Language Arts (ELA) department completed a book study on *Strategies that Work* by S. Harvey and A. Goudvis and provided a training session for other teachers to share methods to integrate reading comprehension strategies across the curriculum. Materials were provided to support a greater focus on supporting academic literacy instruction in all classrooms. Other teachers have the option to extend this training by reading the book *Strategies that Work* by S. Harvey and A. Goudvis, and working collaboratively with an ELA teacher to implement selected strategies. The 8th grade ELA teachers attended a five day NCCAT Training titled "*Reaching Reluctant Readers: Bringing Boys To Books.*" They have begun a boys' book club during the enrichment (Blue Devil Time-BDT) and are actively seeking resources to purchase books of particular interest to those reluctant readers.

Other PD sessions that have been provided have focused on faculty use of resources like MasteryConnect (MC), Google Classroom, SchoolNet, and the new TCS webpage platform. Teachers

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continue to implement what they have learned to enhance instruction. The accessibility of assessment data from MC, assignments presented through Google Classroom, and updates to teacher webpages are evidence of the progress being made toward these goals.

The BMS Instructional Technologist also offers individualized PD weekly on teacher-identified topics. Teachers can sign up through email or the BMS webpage. Weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) discussions present opportunities for sharing successes and frustrations in meeting students' needs. Administrators at BMS recognize the diversity of needs among the teachers, therefore they are setting the standard for an engaging PD that is directly related to BMS's School Improvement goals. The next PD workday is geared toward a GRIT mindset.

If not yet addressed, explain why and your plan for starting:

How are we doing over time (trend)?

Over the last several years a large portion of the PD offered at BMS has focused on technology resources because of the one to one initiative. All students now have their own Chromebooks to use at school and home, funded by the Golden Leaf Grant. As this has been fully implemented, there has been an increased need for other training. Differentiated instruction, formative assessment, and student engagement have also been areas of focus for in-house PD sessions. Many teachers have expressed the need for training that is specific to the content area they teach. Over the next two years, it will be important for teachers to have opportunities to participate in content specific training and to have some different options for teachers who are in various stages of their professional careers. Additionally, BMS is committed to stay abreast of the latest uses of technology in the classroom, and PD sessions will be developed and offered as needed.

How are we doing compared to the district (comparison)?

According to the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, 91% of BMS teachers agree or strongly agree the PD is aligned with the SIP and that they have adequate training to utilize technology. We are slightly higher than the district and North Carolina schools at 89% agreeing they are aligned to SIP.

How are we doing compared to like schools (competitive)?

According to the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, BMS is ahead of schools in the district and state in utilization of technology, as teachers in other schools only agreed 75% of the time.

1. What are the celebrations and the data to support them?

BMS faculty have attended on-site technology in-service training 547.9 hours during the 2014-2015 school year! During 2015-2016 school year, BMS offered four sessions of in-house PD to meet the needs of BMS staff and staff members lead other staff development sessions. Other schools have sent personnel to participate in our staff development! Teachers are successfully implementing Google Classroom and MasteryConnect into daily lessons. Each BMS teacher has an up-to-date, creative web page. 36% of teachers have their National Board Certification and/or a Master's Degree. During PLCs, teachers discuss their implementations of skills learned in trainings and their future needs for further skill development.

2. What are the opportunities for improvement and the data to support them?

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One opportunity for improvement will be professional development for BMS faculty facilitated by 8th grade ELA teachers who attended a 5 day NCCAT training session called "Reaching Reluctant Readers: Bringing Boys To Books." Data shows a significant drop in EOG scores for boys in 8th grade. New techniques and strategies for improving scores for boys, especially in 8th grade, will be shared among faculty and implemented into their instructional practices immediately.

Those teachers without up-to-date, creative web pages need to improve their pages and keep them up-to-date.

We need to continue gathering needs from staff and developing more targeted PD, making it more individualized according to the teacher and student needs. We need extra support for new staff who have missed previous PD opportunities.

3. What other data do we need?
2016 Spring Reading Benchmark results.

Inventory of PD sessions attended by staff members in the last two years and comparative data for the district.

Bank of PD options that are cost effective and align with teacher's Professional Development Plan goals.

Inventory of teacher training options that could be offered in-house using teacher leaders and based on needs of teachers/students.

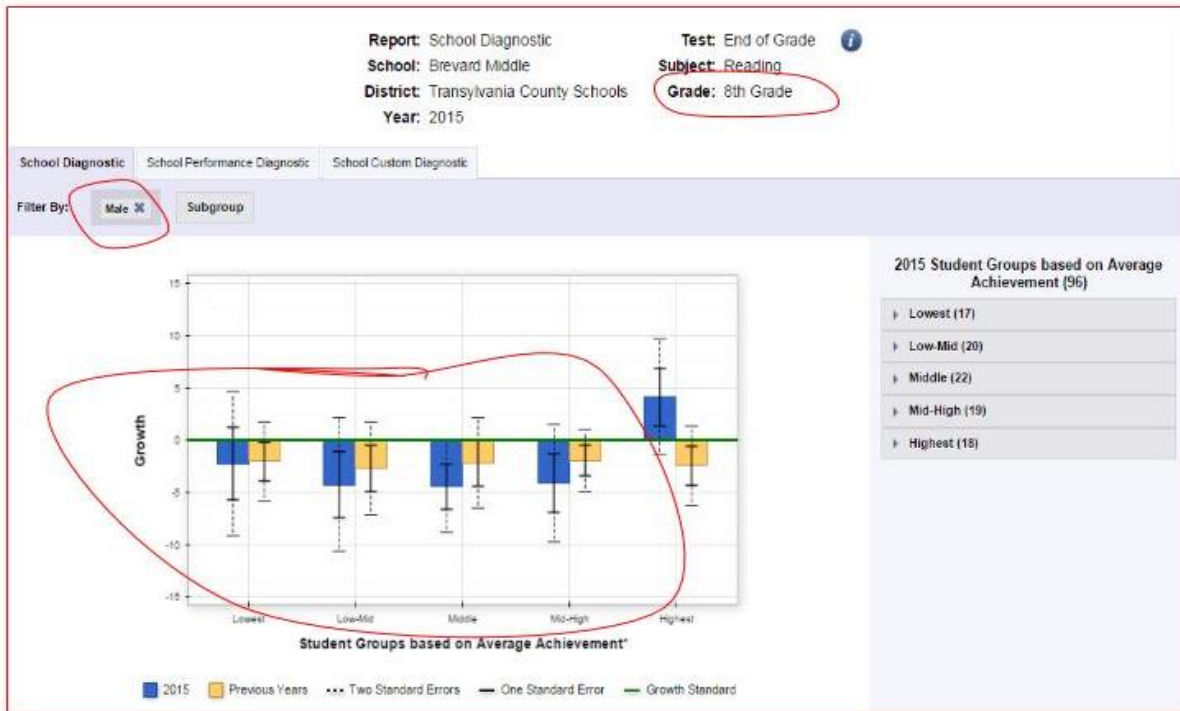
To what level are we implementing within the classroom...observation: develop a Google Form for snapshot walk-throughs to check on implementation.

4. What are our next steps as indicated by the data?

Development of a survey to assess teacher implementation of strategies and programs, as well as their need for additional training.

Male students in grade 8 in four out of five cohorts underperformed in the area of reading in 2015. Based on this data 8th grade ELA teachers will investigate texts, strategies, and training opportunities that will have a positive impact on student learning.

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5. What recommendations does the team have for mid-course corrections, changes, or improvements to this goal?

Develop an interest inventory for future PD planning sessions.

Research and compile a bank of free (online?) PD options that are specific to teacher/student needs.