

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**I.D.ii**  
**High School Assessments**

This section is designed to report High School Assessment (HSA) results for students who are required to pass the High School Assessments in order to graduate. School systems are also asked to provide information on the programs and interventions that are in place to support students in meeting this requirement.

Instructions:

1. Complete Worksheet #1 to show how the school system has structured its sequencing of assessed high school courses for the majority of its students (e.g. the grade level in which specific courses are offered, etc.). Please check only one box for each assessed course.

<b>Worksheet #1: Sequencing of Assessed High School Level Courses</b>	
<b>Assessed Course</b>	<b>Grade Level in which the Course is Offered for the Majority of Students</b>
<b>Algebra</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Prior to Grade 9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12
<b>English 2</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12
<b>Biology</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12
<b>Government</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 12

2. Please complete Tables 2.1 and 2.2 which indicate ONLY the passing status of high school students for whom passing the High School Assessments is a graduation requirement. Absent the precise flags in their data management systems, local school systems are asked to provide pass rates for *current tenth graders* or *lower grades*, recognizing that there are some tenth graders who entered grade 9 earlier than fall 2005.

For each assessment:

- Provide the passing status of these high school students to the extent to which you know this information.
- If a school system finds that it does not have a high level of accuracy for this data set, the local school system should designate it as such.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**High School Assessments (continued)**

Instructions:

Using Table 2.1, provide the passing status of students in tenth grade in 2006-2007.

For each assessment:

- Provide the number of 10<sup>th</sup> graders who took the assessment while in grades 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10.
- Of those takers, provide the number and percentage of students who passed as of the tenth grade.

**Table 2.1: HSA Performance<sup>2</sup> of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Cohort**

Subgroup	English II			Biology			Government			Algebra/Data Analysis		
	# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
<b>All Students</b>	172	110	64	174	115	66	181	128	71	198	76	38
<b>American Indian/Alaskan Native</b>	0			0			0			0	0	
<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	1	1	100	1	1	100	1	1	100	1	1	100
<b>African American</b>	73	32	44	74	37	50	80	42	53	88	19	22
<b>White (Not of Hispanic Origin)</b>	93	76	82	94	75	80	121	96	84	104	56	54
<b>Hispanic</b>	5	1	20	5	2	40	4	2	50	5	0	0
<b>Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)</b>	85	48	56	87	52	60	91	61	67	103	34	33
<b>Special Education</b>	16	2	13	16	4	25	19	4	21	23	2	9
<b>Limited English Proficient (LEP)</b>	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	50	1	0	0
<b>504 Plans</b>	2	2	100	2	1	50	1	1	100	2	1	50

<sup>2</sup> It is possible that local school systems will not have data to report in every column for this cohort.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**High School Assessments (continued)**

Instructions:

Using Table 2.2, provide the passing status of students in ninth grade in 2006-2007.

For each assessment:

- Provide the number of 9<sup>th</sup> graders who took the assessment while in grades 6, 7, 8, or 9.
- Of those takers, provide the number and percentage of students who passed as of the ninth grade.

**Table 2.2: HSA Performance<sup>3</sup> of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Cohort**

Subgroup	English II			Biology			Government			Algebra/Data Analysis		
	# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed		# of Takers	Passed	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
All Students	0			0			0			143	106	74.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native										0		
Asian/Pacific Islander										0		
African American										65	50	83.3
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)										74	59	79.7
Hispanic										5	2	40
Free/Reduced Meals (FARMS)										65	47	72.3
Special Education										5	2	40
Limited English Proficient (LEP)										1	0	0
504 Plans										2	1	50

<sup>3</sup> It is possible that local school systems will not have data to report in every column for this cohort.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**High School Assessments (continued)**

**1. IDENTIFY PRACTICES, PROGRAMS AND/OR STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN PASSING THE HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS:**

In your response, and where applicable, include:

- What professional development activities are being provided to teachers in assessed areas. Include timelines where appropriate.
- Progress made toward alignment of curriculum with local and State assessments. Include timelines where appropriate.
- How students in danger of not passing are identified.

**1. Professional Development Activities**

Somerset County Public Schools endorses the definition of professional development as stated in the MSDE Guidance Document for the Master Plan Update. It is defined as “a set of integrated professional development activities that extend over a relatively long period of time, include direct follow-up in schools or classrooms, provide opportunities for practice and feedback, and require a substantial investment of resources”. A system initiative to increase student achievement at the secondary level was started by integrating a 75 minute Professional Development period into the secondary teacher’s workday once per week. School administrators are responsible for developing and aligning a site level integrated professional development plan with the SCPS Master Plan and Bridge to Excellence Action Strategies. Plans are based on the Maryland Professional Development Planning Guide and must include both follow-up and resources. The site plans are submitted to the Assistant Superintendent prior the start of school. Principals are asked to revise the plans throughout the year based on available data. Monthly reports of participation follow up, and findings are given to the office of the superintendent.

In 2006, the Afternoon Professional Development (APD) sessions were devoted to topics including: Differentiated Instruction, Understanding By Design, Analysis of Assessment Data (including HSA), Strategies for Reading, Creating and Using Spiral Reviews in Math, Looking at Student Work, and Questioning Strategies. All of these topics focus on improving instruction and assessment in order to increase student achievement. In January of 2007, the *Coalition of Essential Schools* (CES) school reform organization partnered with Washington High School and began working weekly at the APD sessions. CES worked with the staff to improve lesson alignment with curriculum, raise expectations for students and initiate teacher collaboration within content areas. In addition to the topics covered at the site level, the district level Professional Development days were devoted to the topics from Classroom Instruction that Works.

Professional development at the high school level targeted Core Courses, including the HSA courses. Summer sessions were held for Government, Biology, English and Algebra teachers in which they reviewed curriculum, analyzed the HSA data, and identified strategies for making the students active learners. Teachers also attended a workshop on the new online Government course available through MSDE. English teachers worked with a consultant from Wicomico County Public Schools on curriculum alignment and assessment development. Math teachers spent 7 days during the summer with the county Math

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

consultants working to revise the scope and sequence, create spiral reviews and complete the benchmark assessments. The math consultants came back to each secondary school three days during the school year, to assist in analyzing data, observe lessons, model lessons and coaching teachers. Local teachers took advantage of the Governor’s Academy workshops offered by MSDE. During the summers of 2006 and 2007, three teachers participated in Algebra, six in Government, three in English II, and two in biology.

**LOCALLY GUIDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/WORK** - During the Summer of 2006 through the Spring of 2007, the following curriculum, instruction, and assessment tasks were completed:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Days</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>English</b>	1	Reviewed effective teaching strategies, revised scope and sequence and developed common assessments	2
<b>English</b>	4	Reviewed alignment, matched indicators to existing curriculum	5
<b>English</b>	1	Reviewed newly revised scope and sequence and instructional materials	11
<b>Math</b>	3	Developed strategies and content for explicitly providing more mathematics instruction through Career and Technology programs	10 CTE
<b>Math</b>	7	Revised existing Math 6 – Algebra 2 curriculum, developed benchmark assessments and spiral reviews, implemented system math lesson plan format	18
<b>Social Studies</b>	1	Participated in History and Government - “Successful Strategies for Government HSA” , led by Talbot County Public Schools consultant	5
<b>Science</b>	3	Reviewed teaching strategies 8-12 Science-, revised scope and sequence and developed common assessments.	5
<b>Math</b>	15	Used math consultants to go in all 4 secondary schools to observe, coach and work with math and CTE teachers, and to assist in the analysis of data from the benchmark assessment after each administration of the benchmarks	20

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area were:

- 1.1.10 Implement systematic professional development on specific, selected strategies related to targeted achievement gains.
- 1.1.34 Provide supportive, differentiated professional development through Instructional Facilitators
- 3.6.11 Provide team/collegial discussion and reflection of strategies to enhance student achievement and engagement through APD
- 3.7.2 Provide on going support to teachers as they incorporate differentiated learning strategies into their classroom.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**2. Alignment of Curriculum with Local and State Assessments**

<b>Summer Workshops for Alignment of Curriculum and Assessments</b>			
<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Activities</b>	<b>Teachers</b>
Math	June 18-22, 2007	Curriculum and Assessment	12
Social Studies	June 18-22, 2007	Curriculum and Assessment	11
English	June 25-29, 2007	Curriculum and Assessment	12
Science	July 2,3,5,6, 2007	Curriculum and Assessment	11

In 2005, SCPS implemented a new plan for curriculum review and revision in all content areas maximizing teacher, administrator, and parental involvement in the review cycle. At the secondary level, teachers of HSA courses met in 2006 to review and share resources and develop common assessments for midterms and finals. Teachers in each content area met during the summer to develop scope and sequences aligned to the VSC/CLG. As a result, Somerset increased confidence with a scope and sequence for each HSA course and all pre-requisite high school courses that was appropriately aligned. The scope and sequences include VSC/CLG goals and indicators in the preferred sequence, the amount of time to be allotted to each, local resources to support the content, and spaces to document when the topics or skills are covered. In all cases, staff members backward mapped from the HSA goals and assessment limits to included pre-requisite courses so that students entering the tested course already have familiarity with tested content. Each high school core area teacher received a CD with the scope and sequences, copies of VSC and CLG, rubrics for BCR's and ECR'S, copies of release tests, and other related resources.

During the summer of 2007 teachers from all four core content areas met to continue their work with the curriculum, instruction, and in developing aligned assessments. In mathematics, a week long workshop was held to review and revise work done the previous year. As a result, all courses from 6<sup>th</sup> grade math to Algebra I have aligned scope and sequences, and aligned benchmark assessments. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum was revised to better integrate the Algebra I Core Learning Goals (CLG) as well as the 8<sup>th</sup> grade MSA indicators and standards.

The English/Language Arts courses from 6<sup>th</sup> grade to English II were also revised to reflect the assessment limits, the VSC and CLG. Grade 6 through 8 courses now have a literature and grammar scope and sequence along with two benchmarks based on the MSA format. English I and II have a scope and sequence for grammar and thematic elements along with two benchmarks and final exams for each course that use the English HSA format.

All Social Studies courses for grades 6 through 12 have tightly aligned scope and sequences, essential questions, and 2 benchmarks per year. High school courses also have common final exams that use the HSA format. The Contemporary Issues course was also revised to reflect the assessment limits, the VSC, and CLG. 2006 was a transition year of moving Government from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade. World history was taught in both 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade and will now

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

remain in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The History I (8<sup>th</sup> grade) and world History curriculum was revised to include concepts necessary to prepare students for Government and the HSA.

In Science, all four grades 6 through Biology have an updated scope and sequence, essential questions, and the first benchmark. Physical Science which precedes Biology, now has four common assessments; 2 benchmarks, the midterm, and the final exam. Biology has a midterm and a quarter one benchmark. A half time staff member has been added to central office to help coordinate all local assessments with the data warehouse, *Performance Matters*.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area were:

- 1.1.2 Implement the plan for curriculum review and revision in all content areas.
- 1.1.3 Complete annual review and revision of the PreK-12 curricula assuring alignment with the VSC and Core Learning Goals.
- 1.1.4 Revise and implement K-12 science curriculum ensuring alignment with state content standards and testing schedules.
- 1.1.5 Review and modify social studies curriculum to ensure alignment with state content standards and testing schedule.
- 1.1.44 Modify and revise math instruction based on student performance on math assessments.
- 1.1.55 Assess the impact of quarterly assessments on student achievement and make necessary curriculum and instruction revisions.
- 1.3.6 A data warehouse will be used to correlate quarterly assessments in reading and math to MSA and HSA performance.
- 3.4.2 School Improvement Teams will continue to develop and implement plans for individual teachers to track and report student achievement data in reading and math.
- 3.5.1 Continue to analyze and monitor quarterly reading and math assessment data and apply findings.
- 3.5.2 Correlate skill of teacher in analysis and monitoring of MSA, HSA, and readiness data with student achievement growth.
- 3.6.7 Continue to develop and/or revise end-of-course assessments for all courses in grades 6-12.

### **3. Identification of Students at Risk**

A combination of factors is used to identify students in danger of not passing the High School Assessments (HSA). These include benchmark assessment scores, earned course grades, and MSA test results. Students scoring below or just above the proficient level in math and reading on the MSA the previous year are identified using the *Performance Matters* data warehouse. Teachers are provided with individual overall scores as well as scores on each reported strand. Student grades in the previous course can be used to help identify those at risk in non MSA areas, such as Biology and Government. Both World History and Physical Science have been backward mapped to include foundational skills and knowledge that will help students succeed in the following HSA courses. Teachers use this data along with the benchmark assessment data to help guide instruction and intervention as the student

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

proceeds through the course. Teachers and facilitators will continue to be trained on *Performance Matters*. This year SCPS is in the process of securing the use of Baltimore County’s “Learning Preferences Inventory.” This will be used with students who are struggling to pass the HSA’s to enable teachers and students to become more familiar with their particular learning style and the means by which they might solidly acquire the knowledge and skill with the assessed contents.

**B. CHALLENGES IN ACCELERATING PERFORMANCE AND PROVIDING SPECIFIC INTERVENTION TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN PASSING THE HSA:**

**SCPS 2007 HSA Percent Passing Rate By Subgroups**

Content Area	All	SP ED	FARMS	ELL	AF AM	White	Hisp
Algebra	57.0	30.0	51.9	0.0	51.4	64.2	25.0
Biology	63.0	28.0	53.8	50.0	50.0	74.5	40.0
English 2	63.1	17.4	56.2	0.0	43.8	80.4	33.3
Government	42.2	21.1	38.3	50.0	34.0	56.0	60.0

**SCPS HSA Percent Passing Rate Comparison of 2006 to 2007**

Content Area	All		SP ED		FARMS		ELL*		AF AM		White		Hisp	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Algebra	68.8	57.0	26.7	30.0	64.3	51.9	100.0	0.0	64.5	51.4	71.9	64.2	66.7	25.0
Biology	52.9	63.0	38.9	28.0	49.5	53.8	50.0	50.0	43.0	50.0	62.0	74.5	0.0	40.0
English 2	43.6	63.1	13.3	17.4	39.6	56.2	50.0	0.0	29.5	43.8	54.4	80.4	0.0	33.3
Government	59.5	42.2	12.1	21.1	53.5	38.3	100.0	50.0	42.0	34.0	73.8	56.0	66.7	60.0

**1. Most subgroup performance falls below the aggregate in all content areas with the exception of the White subgroup.**

In 2007, all subgroups, except one, scored lower than the aggregate group in each of the four content areas. Less than 50% of the African American subgroup passed 3 of the 4 HSA’s. Only algebra exceeded the 50% level by 1.4%. The African American subgroup comprises 47% of the total population in Somerset County Public Schools. This is an extremely large population and struggles for proficiency long before high school. MSA data shows this subgroup begins to fall behind significantly in reading at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level and in math at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level. This trend continues and the gap widens as they move to middle and high school.

The Special Education subgroup had a passing rate of 30% or less in all four HSA areas. It is the lowest performing subgroup in each tested area, with the exception of ELL in Algebra and English. Performance in reading and mathematics begins to fall for this subgroup at the elementary level and continues to decline into middle and high school.

The percent passing for the FARMS subgroup was lower in all four HSA areas than the aggregate. FARMS performance in reading and mathematics begins to fall behind in reading at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level and math falls in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This trend continues into high school. In 2007, there were more test takers that were FARMS than Non-FARMS in all 4 areas.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The ELL and Hispanic subgroups represent a small portion of the high school population. In 2007, there were only 2 test takers in ELL and less than 10 for each content area for the Hispanic subgroup. Algebra was the lowest scoring content area for both the ELL (0%) and Hispanic (25%) subgroups. English was the next lowest with 0% of the ELL students' tested and 33% of the Hispanic students tested passing.

1. We are challenged to identify and use instructional strategies to meet the needs of all subgroups.
2. We are challenged to determine the appropriate HSA intervention strategy for each student.

**C. PROGRAMS, PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN PASSING THE HSA ALONG WITH ALLOCATED RESOURCES:**

**1. Somerset County Public Schools has three levels of intervention strategies in place for high school students.**

The three levels of intervention are described as:

- a. Level I: All regular HSA classes use strategies to help students prepare for the assessment. These include, but are not limited to, reviewing test taking strategies, reviewing the use of rubrics for scoring BCR's and ECR's, using the mini-assessments available on the MSDE website, stressing the use of the proper vocabulary, and using the *PLATO* Learning system for reading and math.
- b. Level II: Additional supportive interventions are made available to students who have been directed by their teachers or independently believe they would benefit from them. The following are examples; the computer lab is available before school for students wanting to use the mini-assessments on the website, Review packets are available for students to sign out and take home, and after school tutoring is available through the local universities and community organizations.
- c. Level III: Students at risk of failure and students who must retake the HSA are assigned to specific interventions based on previous HSA scores, MSA scores, course grades in pre-requisite courses, performance on benchmark assessments and teacher recommendations. A more detailed explanation follows.

**2. Students who have failed or are at risk of failure on one or more HSA test are placed in alternate HSA courses, pull-out review classes or full year courses.**

Intervention for students needing to retake the HSA assessment is determined by the student's grade on the previous HSA test. Students who fail an HSA test by less than 10 points, but earned a passing grade in the HSA course are not required to repeat the course. However, they must attend a 20 day review course. Students are pulled out of non-core classes to work through the review curriculum with an assigned teacher. Teachers then plan to use the sections of the curriculum targeted toward the student's areas of weakness.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Students who fail an HSA test by 11 or more points are required to repeat the HSA course. Students in these courses can re-test in January and beginning this year (2007) at the October testing.

Within the regular HSA classes, teachers can use software such as *PLATO*, quarterly benchmark assessments, the mini-assessments available on the MSDE website, and course grades to determine students at risk of failure and make interventions available. Tutoring is available both during the school day and after school, students can sign out the take home study packets, and *PLATO* is available for additional use before and after school.

Each student who has failed an HSA assessment is assigned to an advisor by the school counselor. The advisor meets with the student to discuss the options for intervention. The student and advisor develop an HSA Individual Plan for intervention; input is solicited from other stakeholders. The students are responsible for monitoring their own progress and reporting regularly to the advisor. This arrangement requires the student to take responsibility for monitoring his or her progress and builds confidence as the student becomes successful. However, the role of the advisor as a professional and personal advocate for the student is critical to this strategy's successful impact.

**3. Parents are kept informed of their student's status regarding HSA requirements for graduation.**

Each year, the individual student is notified of the HSA requirements for graduation, what is included on each assessment, his or her progress to date, and what, if any intervention is available as an opportunity and what intervention, if any, will be scheduled for that year. The better stakeholders understand the requirements for their student and their student's status, the more supportive and helpful they can become in moving the student toward proficiency. One site has opted to man an information table throughout all conference and parent evenings as a place where a parent can check his or her student's current status in regard to HSA and progress toward graduation.

**4. Strategies and practices of inclusion are utilized to increase the potential of students with special needs to meet proficiency on the HSA.**

In inclusion classes, the core area teacher collaborates with the special education teacher so that the content is presented in a modality or style that capitalizes on the strength of the special education student. A close collaboration between the two professionals is critical for the success of the students. As such, a variety of co-teaching models will be addressed through professional development opportunities and also made available for use in strengthening targeted interventions. The core teacher's strength lies in knowledge of content. The special education teacher's strength is in modalities and style selected for the delivery and assessment of that content. With the inclusion model, adequate staffing is difficult given the complex student scheduling required for small high schools. The emphasis for the 07-08 year will be a strong collaboration between the regular and special education staffs in the development of a schedule that will address both student disabilities and the HSA needs.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**5. Special Education students are anticipated to respond best to an individualized selection and delivery of HSA strategies.**

The special education department lists the following strategies for increasing the potential of special education students to reach proficiency on each HSA:

- Staffing special education teachers in all HSA courses that have special education students.
- Using small group or individual pull out to assist with a specific assignment, test, or quizzes.
- Teaching test taking strategies, using verbal prompts, questioning and clues strategies.
- Creating tests and worksheets that are similar to questions asked on HSA.
- Reminding students verbally to stay on task and complete each assignment.
- Using manipulatives for opportunities to encourage problem solving.
- Co-teaching and co-planning with the regular educator in regard to the whole class as well as the individual special education students.
- Collaborating with teachers regarding instruction, student needs and differentiated instruction.
- Conferencing with students regarding their progress.
- Holding parent conferences to discuss expectations for the HSA's and to give information about websites that have HSA examples.
- Implementing IEP/504 Plan accommodations: small group setting, extended time, reading tests and quizzes to students.
- Providing scribing accommodations
- Assuring Kurzweil accommodations
- Utilizing MSDE's on-line supplementary course for the students to get HSA practice, the on-line tutorial system for Algebra, and released HSA practice test items.
- Assigning Zero period tutoring with a special education teacher (CHS)
- Providing lunch time tutoring with a special education teacher (CHS)
- Providing before and after school tutoring with special and regular education teachers
- Assigning targeted students to regular education teachers for tutoring classes during the school day.
- Utilizing a grant funded tutor at one site to assist with targeted students

**6. The effectiveness of the interventions will be measured by student success on the HSA test.**

Effective intervention strategies impact a school's resources, staff, and schedule as well as the students who participate. It is important to ensure that the intervention is meeting the needs of the students and is not simply "more of the same."

In order to determine the effectiveness of the intervention program, staff will track which interventions are being used by each student and examine the end results. Students and the assigned intervention are being entered into a database. HSA scores are, by total scores and indicators, entered when they become available. Staff will review the percentage of students

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

passing the HSA test for each intervention and then proceed, using additional available and entered data, to determine the student profile most likely to respond successfully to each intervention.

The ultimate determination of whether or not the intervention worked for a student is a passing HSA score. However, schools must monitor a student’s progress, or lack of progress, throughout the intervention. Assignments must be aligned to the content standards in order for teachers to know whether the student has attained mastery before going on. Teachers must use benchmarks or milestones to monitor whether students are making progress. These milestones will inform the teacher when adjustments need to be made to the program being followed.

**D. RELATED RESOURCES**

<b>RELATED RESOURCES FOR HSA INTERVENTIONS</b>	
<b>Professional Development</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicate a portion of APD (After-hours Professional Development) to HSA instructional planning, analysis of results, and study of correlations between intervention practices and performance</li> <li>• Focus teams of teachers from each HSA on tighter alignment of scope &amp; sequences, continued development of benchmark assessments, and analysis HSA data.</li> <li>• Train all staff in <i>Performance Matters 2</i></li> <li>• Reinforce and extend training and guided practice in co-teaching model</li> <li>• Train Instructional Facilitators from each secondary school as site experts for <i>Performance Matters 2</i> applications by classroom teachers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$ 287,714  <b>Source:</b> Thornton  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008  <i>*Duplicated Reference</i></p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$ 30,660  <b>Source:</b> Thornton  <b>Timeline:</b> Summer 2007</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Time  <b>Timeline:</b> 1<sup>st</sup> semester 2007</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$14,000  <b>Source:</b> MHEC  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Time  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p>
<b>Core Program</b>	

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

<b>RELATED RESOURCES FOR HSA INTERVENTIONS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure high schools' partnership with the <i>Coalition of Essential Schools</i> keying on three main themes: Individualizing instruction, higher order thinking and fostering a tone of decency</li> <li>• Extend the Focused Mathematics program at the secondary level, including consultant monitoring, coaching and modeling.</li> <li>• Coordinate use of <i>Cognitive Tutor</i> and assure training of new staff</li> <li>• Schedule inclusion classes for all special education students in HSA courses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$24,000  <b>Source:</b> Thornton  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008  <i>* Duplicated Reference</i></p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$47,500  <b>Source:</b> GEAR-UP  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$8,000  <b>Source:</b> Local  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Counselor time  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire a .5 staff member to help implement the local benchmark assessment initiative.</li> <li>• Assign Special Education teachers to all HSA courses that have Special Education students enrolled</li> <li>• Utilize a UMES grant funded tutor at one site to assist with targeted students</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$ 53,819  <b>Source:</b> Thornton  <b>Timeline:</b> August 2007  <i>*Duplicated Reference</i></p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Time  <b>Timeline:</b> August, 2007-June 2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$3500  <b>Source:</b> UMES Grant  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p>
<b>Intervention</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract with <i>Performance Matters</i> as the data warehouse vendor to program fields for identifying student weaknesses</li> <li>• Pilot Baltimore County's <i>Learning Preferences Inventory</i> with HSA "re-takers" and monitor for results</li> <li>• Schedule pullout sessions for HSA tutoring during student specials classes.</li> <li>• Provide before and after school tutoring</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$ 25,000  <b>Source:</b> Local  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008  <i>*Duplicated Reference</i></p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$ 1,000  <b>Source:</b> Local  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007- 2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Time  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$ 4,400</p>

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

<b>RELATED RESOURCES FOR HSA INTERVENTIONS</b>	
<p>sessions for HSA assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement HSA Status Report and Student Individual Plan for parents and students in class of 2009 and forward. (Students not passing any one of the HSA's will be provided an intervention plan.)</li> <li>• Use small group or individual "pull out" for assistance with specific assignments, tests, or quizzes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Source:</b> <i>GEAR -UP</i>  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Time  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Time  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach Test Taking strategies using verbal prompts and other strategies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Planning  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize MSDE's online HSA Courses as appropriate</li> <li>• Continue to provide Special Education accommodations including the use of Kurzweil</li> <li>• Utilize Zero Period before or after school or when regular instruction begins for tutoring</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Assignment  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> No on-going cost  <b>Source:</b> Staff Time  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$0  <b>Source:</b> Staff Assignment  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p>
<b>Materials, Supplies, Equipment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase and implement new Government textbooks, supplemental materials, Pearson MacGruders "<i>American Government</i>"</li> <li>• Implement new English I and II text, teachers' editions and instructional materials Holt's "<i>Elements of Literature</i>"</li> <li>• Apply HSA prep materials-<i>Continental Press</i>-for English II, <i>American Book Co.</i>-English I, Algebra I, <i>Amsco School Publications</i>-Algebra I</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$20,625  <b>Source:</b> Thornton  <b>Timeline:</b> August 2007  <i>Duplicated Reference</i></p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$55,000  <b>Source:</b> Thornton  <b>Timeline:</b> August 2007  <i>Duplicated Reference</i></p> <p><b>Amount Budgeted:</b> \$35,000  <b>Source:</b> Thornton  <b>Timeline:</b> 2007-2008</p>

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**HSA CLARIFYING QUESTION RESPONSE**

**Given the significant gaps in performance from one high school to the other and among subgroups, what instructional strategies and interventions will be prescribed and required to address these gaps?**

Based on an analysis of the performance gaps between the two high schools, one key determiner seems to be teacher turnover and experience. Both high schools have experienced turnover in staff among the core area subjects, schedules indicate a split of 8 relatively new and 9 veteran teachers in the HSA tested areas. The 2007 HSA Algebra scores show the larger high school, where the key teachers were veterans, outperformed the smaller high school. However, the smaller high school outperformed the larger school in English II with a teaching staff of two veteran teachers. In each area, the underperforming school was staffed with relatively new teachers. To address the performance gaps between schools, five day workshops in all four core areas were held during the summer of 2007. At these workshops, teachers from both high schools worked together on better aligning the curriculum, developing common assessments, as well as sharing successful instructional practices. There are also four vertical teaming meetings planned during the school year for each content area.

In each area effective instructional strategies were shared during the workshops. These included: using spiral reviews to maintain and extend concepts and skills, using manipulatives, connecting with prior knowledge, differentiation, keying instruction on essential questions, using reading strategies across all curriculums as well as other more specialized strategies for specific areas. First time test takers in all HSA areas will take year long courses in a 70 minute block. This allows for more “hands on” and discovery type lessons as well as labs. Teachers in all areas will use local benchmark assessments modeling the HSA format as well as release items and mini tests to measure progress by all students as they proceed through each course.

Somerset County Public Schools initiated a weekly 75 minute Professional Development session during the 2006-07 school year, at the secondary level, to help improve instruction. As mentioned above, teachers from both schools in all HSA areas will meet four times during the year during this period to review benchmark data and make instructional decisions. Department collaboration also takes place during the after school PD period.

We have math consultants observing and meeting with our algebra teachers three times during the year. They began in the summer of 2006 with our secondary math department. A new math lesson format was introduced by these two and they come back periodically during the year to observe, coach teachers and model lessons. *Cognitive Tutor* algebra software is being used at both schools and training for all new algebra teachers will be provided during the first semester.

To address the differences among subgroups, several instructional initiatives were undertaken to improve learning for all students and to reduce the need for extensive remediation and re-testing of students. In an effort to maintain accurate information on the progress of students, our local benchmarks were revised in all core areas. Additional staff was hired in our local testing department to improve the turn around time on test data as well as conduct data analysis training for teachers. Improvement in instructional strategies using different approaches for multiple

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

intelligences, differentiation and improved student engagement is the focus of much of the weekly professional development. A major emphasis on collaborating and co planning with special education and regular education teachers will be targeted this year. We are in the second year of a MHEC grant to specifically improve instruction for special education students through co-teaching.

An outside consultant funded by the *Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant* is working with all three secondary schools on improving the achievement of African-American males. The *Coalition of Essential Schools* is providing professional development in the two *Coalition* principles that target subgroup performance specifically:

*Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible intent.*

*The tone of the school should stress expectation, trust, and decency.*

Without these two expectations, educators cannot adequately teach the diverse learners that comprise today's classrooms.

An individual HSA Intervention Plan is developed for each student who fails an HSA. This plan is collaboratively developed by the previous teachers who prepared the student for the HSA, present content teachers who are charged with facilitating a successful retake, the parent and the student. The following interventions are possibilities for inclusion into the plan.

Students failing an assessment by more than 10 points are rescheduled in the course. These students retake the assessment in October and again in January. When a student is successful in October, they are scheduled out of the course for second semester. Students identified as possibly failing the spring testing are directed into summer school as an alternative to retaking the following year. Students may take the assessment at the August administration.

Students failing an assessment by less than 10 points or those not scheduled back into the course have an option of intervention. Tutoring is offered before school, after school and during a pullout session twenty days before an administration of the assessment. The pullout is normally done during a student's elective or specials subjects and is taught by core area teachers. Students may also use a review packet developed for each of the HSA areas or utilize the MSDE online course.

Beginning this year, funds from two grants will allow the system to pay teachers for after school HSA tutoring. Teachers will be paid for up to five hours a week; one planning and four teaching. Funds from the State School Improvement Grant and the GEAR UP grant will be used.

The format of the remediation programs will be to target student weaknesses to guide instruction. Local benchmark testing as well as release tests and mini tests will provide teachers focused data on student weaknesses. Remediation will be guided toward specific weaknesses rather than a general "one size fits all" approach. Teacher made materials, released HSA items, and commercial test prep materials secured from Finish Line, the American Book Company and AMSCO will be used during the intervention. Teachers will also use the MSDE Online courses as resources with regular and intervention classes and participated in the two day workshops provided by MSDE in the fall of 2007.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**How will the school system facilitate student access to the required interventions?**

Beginning with the first nine weeks of 2007-08, all students in cohorts beginning with the graduation class of 2009 will receive a report card which also reports graduation progress. HSA scores will be reported on the regular report cards of these students, giving parents notice of progress at least 4 times a year. In addition both schools have sent letters home to parents indicating progress toward HSA completion for the two cohorts who have begun taking the HSA's. Parents are asked to come in and discuss student progress with guidance counselors. Many parents have taken advantage of Parent Teacher meetings to discuss the progress of their student with a guidance counselor, or principal.

As mentioned above, any student not passing one of the HSA's for any administration will be provided a written intervention plan. This plan will be developed by the school and approved by the parent. The plan includes the intervention methods selected to promote a successful retake for HSAs not completed. All students failing an HSA assessment will be placed in a form of intervention. Only parents may sign a student out of not participating in intervention.

As many of our students come from poverty, transportation to after school activities is an issue. In an effort to boost availability to the after school HSA tutoring, funds have been sought to provide transportation through grant sources. The after school transportation will also accommodate students participating in extracurricular activities and other upper elementary and intermediate level programs such as "Voyager," an after school tutorial program.

**SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**