



MILTON HIGH SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN SY 2016/17 – SY 2019/20

APPROVED SEPTEMBER 2016

SECTION I. Strategic Planning Background and Approach

In May 2012, the Georgia Board of Education voted to make Fulton County Schools a charter system, creating the largest charter system in the state. The charter model offers increased autonomy and flexibility, both at the school level and system-wide, to employ research-based methods to improve student achievement, even if such innovations require exemptions to current state laws and regulations.

Given this framework, individual schools within Fulton County have the ability to work in dramatically new ways. We are asking our communities to help drive change by redefining engagement in our schools. Our collective vision is that every Fulton County school will have a school leader and local School Governance Council (SGC) equipped to lead effectively in a charter system environment -- improving student achievement through innovation and flexibility. Schools will be empowered to consider the best uses of resources at the local level and design innovative practices that align with school needs.

Milton High School began the strategic planning process in the spring of 2016. In order to plan our strategic direction, we first engaged with our community to understand our specific strengths and challenges and then considered a path to address them collectively. The team involved in the strategic planning process included our 12-member SGC. In addition, Mr. Brian Jones, Milton High School principal sought input from the school's leadership team and various community leaders.

Our process included five distinct phases: (1) a needs assessment; (2) the identification of priority issues; (3) the establishment of long-term outcomes, focus areas, and short-term goals; (4) the formulation of strategic initiatives; and (5) the development of a monitoring plan. Developed over a period of several months and designed collaboratively with input and guidance from many stakeholders, the strategic plan represents our deliberate approach to shape and guide what **Milton High School** is, what we do, and why. Our students deserve the best educational experience we can provide, and this plan defines our vision and direction for making that happen.

SECTION II. Context for the Strategic Plan: The School's Needs Assessment

Milton High School began our strategic planning process by conducting a needs assessment. Through close analysis of the internal and external environments, we sought to identify stakeholders' perceptions of our school and enhance our understanding of the political, socio-economic, and demographic environment in which the school operates. By analyzing a comprehensive set of school data (academic and contextual data), the leaders of **Milton High School** reflected on progress toward 2012-2016 strategic plan long-term outcomes, clarified performance trends and identified the school's most critical areas for improvement.

Progress toward 2012-2016 Strategic Plan Long-Term Outcomes

Long-Term Outcome 1: Enhance student learning at all levels

Milton teachers have increased the use of effective instructional practices. The teachers continually engage every student in a meaningful, authentic, and rigorous manner. Milton has strived to meet this through a mix of innovation and proven strategies in the classroom to create a learning environment that motivates students to be self-directed and inquisitive learners.

Long-Term Outcome 2: Increase healthy connections for students

Milton High School worked with students and staff as individuals in order to offer more personalized connections to the curriculum and other school activities. The community-learning environment was supported through building relationships with students, staff, and the community.

Long-Term Outcome 3: Increase student use of technology for learning

Milton High School experienced some growth in relationship to technology. Teachers were provided professional development regarding multiple platforms to allow greater access to instructional technology. Milton also purchased several laptop carts and Google Chromebooks for student use. Milton was also added to the FCS Personalized Learning initiative cohort 3. This will enable students to receive their own devices in late 2016.

Needs Assessment – Process

Milton High School began the strategic planning process by conducting a needs assessment that included internal and external review. Our goal was to understand the internal and external environment that affects our school community. Our desired outcome was to involve all key stakeholders (students, parents, and teachers) in the development of the new strategic plan. By analyzing this comprehensive set of data, the leaders of Milton High School reflected on progress toward 2012-2016 strategic plan long-term outcomes, clarified performance trends and identified the school's most critical areas for improvement.

Our internal review included a community survey, listening sessions (nine separate sessions with students and two with parents), a review of data from the Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0, and academic data. We developed the community survey using the template provided by the FCS Governance and Flexibility team and adopted it to suit our local needs. Two hundred fifty-two students, teachers and parents responded to the survey. We added open-ended questions to allow key stakeholders to explain their answers or to bring up issues not asked by the survey questions. We summarized open-ended responses and feedback gathered through our student and parent listening sessions for key themes. We analyzed the most current GSHS 2.0 data focusing on student responses to questions concerning school climate, mental health and substance abuse. Finally, we examined our student achievement data (grades, SAT/ACT pass rates; AP enrollment and scores; and EOCT results).

Our external review included conversations by Mr. Jones with key community leaders and partners.

Needs Assessment – Prioritized Findings

Milton's SGC met on three separate occasions to review and prioritize our needs assessment findings and to develop this strategic plan.

Areas of strength

Results confirm that stakeholders appreciate Milton High School's long history of academic success. Parents, teachers and students want to see our culture of success continue and appreciate the high academic rigor. Students enjoy the varied extracurricular activities and the excellence of many of our sports, music, and arts activities. Students appreciate the opportunity to take many different types of classes. Parents and students recognize that we have many highly skilled teachers. According to the GSHS 2.0, most students reported there is an adult at school that they can turn to if they need help. Community survey respondents for the most part supported continuing the focus areas of the previous strategic plan and endorsed the continuation of early release days. Freshman Flight, a mentoring program, was helpful to some students. Some teachers are adopting the use of personalized learning and technology.

Milton offers an array of rigorous academic course designed to prepare our students for college and careers. Course options include 28 Advanced Placement courses, Georgia Tech Calculus, and 28 Honor courses in four core subjects. The special programs offered include: Cooperative Business Education, Computer Science, Pre-Engineering, Tutoring, Mentorship, SAT Preparation, Dual Enrollment Program, Inter-Related Resource (IRR), and Talented and Gifted (TAG).

Milton takes great pride in maintaining an excellent record of student achievement, and consistently ranks among the best high schools in the state of Georgia. Milton’s students outperform the district and state averages in graduation rates, ACT and SAT scores, and other standardized achievement measures (see Tables 1-4). The school’s academic record has garnered it multiple recognitions and awards at the state and national level.

Table 1. Average ACT Scores (2015)

	2015 Composite Score
Milton	25.5
Fulton County Schools	22.9
Georgia	21.0
National	21.0

Table 2. Average SAT Scores (2015)

	Reading	Math	Writing	Total
Milton	560	563	545	1668
Fulton County Schools	518	525	515	1558
Georgia	488	485	472	1445
National	497	513	487	1497

Table 3. Advanced Placement Summary: Percent of Exams Passed (2015)

	# of Exams Given	# Passed	% Passed
Milton	1,925	701	69.4%
Fulton County Schools	18,403	12,220	66.4%
Georgia	162,161	91,543	56.5%

Table 4. Four-year Cohort High School Graduation Rate

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Milton	96.4%	96.0%	91.2%	94.7%
Fulton County Schools	71.3%	75.5%	78.7%	85.3%
Georgia	69.7%	71.8%	72.5%	78.8%

Areas for improvement

However, data from the community needs assessment, 2015 GSHS 2.0 data, and listening sessions with students and parents suggest that our students are highly stressed. Some students are “getting lost” and need help finding their place. Some students have poor coping skills. For example, according to the 2015 GSHS 2.0 survey,

31.4% of seniors admitted to drinking in the past 30 days, higher than the state rate of 22.2%. Nearly 50 percent of juniors and seniors and about 40% of freshman and sophomores said they felt sad or withdrawn in the past 30 days. Nearly 1/4 of students reported feeling overwhelmed with fear in the past 30 days. Students feel pressure to take a heavy load of academic classes for which they are ill prepared or are disinterested. Parents are highly involved but need guidance in understanding how to support their students appropriately. Because of the nationwide emphasis on testing and the tie to teacher pay, along with negative feedback from parents and students, teacher morale is low. Teachers feel they need more help from parents regarding student discipline. The demographics of the school are changing and although students view Milton High School as welcoming, students need to appreciate diversity and teachers need professional development in working with a multicultural student population. Our College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) data revealed some achievement gaps in some sub-groups of students. Counselors need additional support as well. Parents and students made suggestions to improve the Freshman Flight program and we will revisit these changes in the coming months. There is some confusion on the part of parents and teachers with regard to personalized learning and “flipped classrooms.”

Milton High School began the needs assessment process in February 2016. The school’s administrative team, leadership team, teacher leadership team, and School Governance Council worked together to review school data and conduct an in-depth study of the strengths and areas of growth at Milton High School. Over the course of multiple sessions, and using a structured data protocol, the team examined the following data sources (see Appendix A for detailed data):

- Spring 2015 End-of-Course Milestones Results
- Graduation rates over the past 4 years
- Milton’s College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)
- Demographic data over the past 5 years
- Discipline data
- Course grade summaries (e.g., percentage of students making As, Bs, Cs, Fs in each course, per semester)
- Student counseling data
- STAR testing & literacy data

Over the course of several months, and through the engagement of a key group of leaders in comprehensive data analysis, Milton High School determined its priority issues—those issues are so significant to the overall success of the school that they require the full and immediate attention. Described in the following section, these prioritized findings are the foundation of Milton’s Strategic Plan for the next four school years.

SECTION III. Long-Term Outcomes

LONG-TERM OUTCOME 1: Increase students' social and emotional wellness.

Milton will provide students with opportunities for social emotional learning (SEL). SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

LONG-TERM OUTCOME 2: Maintain high academic standards and expectations while focusing on increasing the academic success of the lowest quartile students.

While Milton boasts high academic rankings when compared to the district, state, and nation, a closer look at student achievement data reveals that significant gaps exist in the performance of subgroups of students. Graduation rates vary among racial and ethnic groups; course pass rates vary by student demographics; and performance on End-of-Course tests differ by student subgroup. In order to support the academic needs of each unique student and ensure that all students at Milton have the resources and opportunities to meet high academic goals, our school must focus on better understanding the differentiated needs of each student and increasing the success of each student in the school.

Milton strives to instill excellence in our students while promoting a balanced learning environment. It is our goal to ensure that our students manage academic and extracurricular success in a healthy manner. As a high-achieving school, academic, extracurricular, and social pressures weigh heavily amongst our students. Our goal is to support students in discovering their optimal level of performance in this academic environment.

SECTION IV. Focus Areas, Short-Term Goals, and Strategic Initiatives

FOCUS AREA 1. Climate and Culture

Milton High School experienced a gradual change in student demographics. Focus groups revealed that some of our minority students feel alienated. Teachers need additional support in reaching those students. Our student health data and focus groups revealed some students experience high levels of sadness and anxiety. Teachers, faced with a national emphasis on testing and increasing demands from parents, need support as well.

To mark our progress within this focus area, we will strive to meet the following short-term goals:

- Create an environment where all students feel respected and included
- Decrease the percentage of students who report at risk behaviors on the GA student health survey
- Increase the awareness of mental health resources in the community
- Strengthen the collaborative relationship between all stakeholders
- Increase parental and student understanding of appropriate expectations for AP and Honors Courses

Summary of Strategic Initiatives:

1. Implement community outreach opportunities that promote a physically and emotionally safe environment. This will be done through:
 - a. Development of a Parent University
 - b. Outreach committee
 - c. Principal coffees – Milton and vertical coffees with Northwestern MS, Elkins Pointe MS and Crabapple ES
2. Implementation of school-wide Guidance and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks will allow Milton to identify specific needs of students and provide the appropriate support.

ASCA NATIONAL MODEL

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model is a framework for School Counseling Programs that outlines the components of a comprehensive school counseling program. A comprehensive school counseling program is an integral component of the school's academic mission. Comprehensive school counseling programs, driven by student data and based on standards in academic, career and personal/social development, promote and enhance the learning process for all students. The ASCA National Model:

- ensures equitable access to a rigorous education for all students
- identifies the knowledge and skills all students will acquire as a result of the K-12 comprehensive school counseling program
- is delivered to all students in a systematic fashion
- is based on data-driven decision making
- is provided by a state-credentialed school counselor

CASEL FRAMEWORK

Milton High School will look to utilize the *Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning* (CASEL) Social Emotional Learning (SEL) framework (including activities that address individual and cultural diversity) and integrate the five (5) core competencies into the daily student experience. CASEL has identified five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies. Learn more about the definitions of the five competency clusters for students. The five clusters are:

- a. **Self-awareness:** The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.
- b. **Self-management:** The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.
- c. **Social awareness:** The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
- d. **Relationship skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

- e. **Responsible decision-making:** The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.
3. Implement ongoing teacher appreciation and recognition initiatives with the support of PTSA.

FOCUS AREA 2: Teaching and Learning

Of utmost importance are the teaching and learning that occurs in the classrooms within Milton High School on a daily basis. While our school has been recognized regularly for its high academic standings, we must continue to improve our instructional practices and vary our teaching strategies in order to meet the academic needs of each unique student and to prepare all students for success in their lives beyond high school.

Student focus group participants reported that they feel a lot of pressure to take many Honors and AP classes, even when they have no interest in the courses or the courses are unrelated to their academic goals. Students need support to take ownership of their academic goals and progress at a pace that is right for them. Our personalized learning and use of personal devices should alleviate this pressure. Students report that students taking on-level classes are viewed more negatively than high-achieving students.

To mark our progress within this focus area, we will strive to meet the following short-term goals:

- Increase teachers' use of differentiated instructional strategies in the classroom
- Increase teachers' use of data to drive instruction
- Increase teacher's use of appropriate formative and summative assessment strategies
- Increase the percentage of 9th-11th grade students on track to graduate
- Increase the percentage of students who demonstrate grade-level appropriate literacy skills
- Increase the percentage of students who are passing all of their courses

Summary of Strategic Initiatives:

4. Implement "CORE Team" of instructional leaders.
 - a. The CORE Team will consist of the following Milton personnel:
 - i. Assistant Principals
 - ii. Student Support Team (SST)/504/Response to Intervention (Rtl) Coordinator
 - iii. Instructional Support Teacher (IST)
 - iv. School Social Worker
 - v. Department Chairs
 - b. The team will meet monthly to identify and review the status of the lowest performing quartile of students and check to see that proper interventions and supports are in place.
5. Implement Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with a focus on differentiation, data utilization, and assessment.
6. Implement professional development opportunities for teachers around differentiation, data utilization, and assessment.

- a. Specific PD surrounding Personalized Learning will be provided for all instructional staff
 - b. Milton will also begin to explore the addition of the following programs:
 - i. **Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)** - AVID trains educators to use proven practices in order to prepare students for success in high school, college, and a career, especially students traditionally underrepresented in higher education
 - ii. **SpringBoard** - SpringBoard is the College Board’s print and digital program for all students in grades 6–12. It provides a customizable pathway integrating rigorous instruction, performance-based assessment, and exemplary professional learning.
7. Implement “SOAR Time” Intervention & Enrichment Block
- a. SOAR is a class period that will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students have an opportunity to receive academic help, gain enrichment in an academic class, or expand their horizons in a class they find interesting. We have built this time into our school schedule to provide every student this academic opportunity. On Tuesdays and Thursdays students will be in SOAR from 2:48PM to 3:30PM.

SECTION V. Next Steps

The strategic plan is a living document and provides important opportunities for the school community to collaborate. The next step forward is for the plan to be shared with all stakeholders, including students, faculty, parents, and community members. The plan will be available in both hard copy and electronic copy for review. Two documents, an executive summary of the plan for adults and an executive summary version of the plan for students, will also be available. Continuous communication of the plan via the school website, staff meetings, parent nights, and student meetings will be the norm.

The principal will manage the Strategic Plan while various leadership team members will share in the collective accountability for the document and the implementation of the strategic initiatives. Key staff members in this process will include the administrative team, members of the leadership team, department chairs, student leaders, and key parent leaders. The administrative team will collect and communicate data. Updates will be provided to the School Governance Council each semester.

APPENDIX. Additional Data

Georgia EOC Milestone Data

BLACK				BLACK			
2015 Perf Target				2016 Perf Target			
SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE	SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE
9th LIT	61.5	47.7	47.692	9th LIT	64.7	52.1	79
11th LIT	59	44.3	32.609	11th LIT	62.4	48.9	72
ALG	56.4	38.5	45.082	ALG	60	43.6	66
GEOM	55.6	37.2	57.273	GEOM	59.3	42.4	65.5
Biology	56.6	37.1	56.618	Biology	60.2	42.3	74
PHYS SCI	50.1	30.9	52.564	PHYS SCI	54.3	36.7	52.5
US History	61.6	46.1	42.424	US History	64.8	50.6	52.5
ECON	58.3	43	27.5	ECON	61.8	47.8	70.5

HISPANIC				HISPANIC			
2015 Perf Target				2016 Perf Target			
SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE	SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE
9th LIT	61.5	54.2	48.529	9th LIT	64.7	58	60
11th LIT	59	53	38.889	11th LIT	62.4	56.9	58.5
ALG	56.4	47.9	50.714	ALG	60	52.2	61
GEOM	55.6	48.4	60	GEOM	59.3	42.4	62.5
Biology	56.6	47.5	60.656	Biology	60.2	51.9	63
PHYS SCI	50.1	45.1	45	PHYS SCI	54.3	49.7	51.5
US History	61.6	55.6	52.778	US History	64.8	59.3	51.5
ECON	58.3	49.7	54.545	ECON	61.8	53.9	76.7

SPED				SPED			
2015 Perf Target				2016 Perf Target			
SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE	SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE
9th LIT	61.5	22.1	34.906	9th LIT	64.7	28.6	44
11th LIT	59	27.4	28.788	11th LIT	62.4	33.5	42
ALG	56.4	21.2	58	ALG	60	27.8	28.5
GEOM	55.6	26.3	45.238	GEOM	59.3	32.4	50.5
Biology	56.6	27.2	55.357	Biology	60.2	33.3	44.5
PHYS SCI	50.1	21.3	41.026	PHYS SCI	54.3	27.9	44
US History	61.6	36.6	36.364	US History	64.8	41.9	59
ECON	58.3	24.8	12.963	ECON	61.8	31.1	58.1

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED				ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED			
2015 Perf Target				2016 Perf Target			
SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE	SUBJ	STATE	SUBGROUP	PROF RATE
9th LIT	61.5	49.6	45.513	9th LIT	64.7	53.8	
11th LIT	59	47.4	26.316	11th LIT	62.4	51.8	
ALG	56.4	42.5	43.75	ALG	60	47.3	
GEOM	55.6	41.7	52.419	GEOM	59.3	46.6	
Biology	56.6	42.4	50.725	Biology	60.2	47.2	
PHYS SCI	50.1	38.4	41.818	PHYS SCI	54.3	43.5	
US History	61.6	49.4	29.167	US History	64.8	53.6	
ECON	58.3	46.5	33.333	ECON	61.8	51	