

Accelerated Preparation of Leaders for Underserved Schools (A-PLUS): Building Instructional Capacity to Impact Diverse Learners

Accelerated Preparation of Leaders for Underserved Schools (A-PLUS): Building Instructional Capacity to Impact Diverse Learners is a SEED grant that addresses Absolute Priority 2: Supporting *Effective Principals or Other School Leaders*. Specifically, A-PLUS will serve 2,320 school leaders, who serve on campuses with diverse learners across Texas, particularly those who are English learners (EL) and low-income students¹ (LIS), over a 3-year period. (For a list of partner school districts, see Appendix A, and Appendix B has a list of the acronyms used in A-PLUS.) Appendix C includes the 5 components covered of A-PLUS with the numbers of participants, the type of services and innovations, and the evaluative design overview to be provided. School leaders will be offered numerous professional development (PD) sessions, including, but not limited to: (a) improving instruction for ELs and low-income students, (b) literacy-infused curriculum-STEM, (c) instructional leadership, (d) critical dialogues, (e) climate issues, (f) data analysis and school improvement interventions, (g) instructional improvement, (h) strategic planning, (i), culturally responsive pedagogy and leadership, (j) how to capitalize on professional learning and leading communities (PLCs), (k) how to improve leadership using coaches, (l) inclusive schools, (m) bullying prevention, (n) synergistic leadership, and (o) how to improve the capacity of instructional skills specialists on campuses. The PLCs will become grounds of innovation as leaders work together to find problems and determine creative and workable solutions. **Absolute Priority 2: Supporting**

¹ This does not preclude a focus on students with disabilities, gender issues, and other diverse categories of students. A-PLUS will be focused on social justice and will address leadership related to each of the diversity areas. Campuses that are high need with ELs and LIS are the focus where candidates will be selected for A-PLUS.

Effective Principals or Other School Leaders: A-PLUS will address this priority by (a) increasing the number of highly effective principals or other school leaders in schools with high concentrations of high-need students (Component 1-5), (b) providing and using strategies that are supported by promising evidence (Components 1, 3, 4, & 5) and moderate evidence (Component 2), (c) recruiting and preparing leaders (Components 1-5), (d) providing professional development activities to current leaders (Components 1-5), and (e) providing professional enhancement activities to leaders (Components 2, 3, 4, & 5). The 5 components presented are independent; we have a sufficiently large enough pool to implement these on separate campuses, and should there need to be more campuses, we can move beyond our current 36 partner districts and one educational service center (with 39 additional school districts included) to obtain more partners. With these partners, alone, we have 741 elementary school campuses. **Competitive Preference Priority 1: Promoting Diversity in the Educator**

Workforce: The educator workforce in Texas, in general, includes 10% African American, 26% Hispanic, 60.8% White, .4% American Indian, 1.5% Asian, .2% Pacific Islander, and 1.1% two or more races (TEA, 2016). In terms of master's level degree credentials, 23.6% (82,029) of the teachers in Texas hold master's degrees (TEA, 2016). This is an important fact since principals emerge from within the teacher ranks. According to TEA (2015), principals are majority female (62.5%). Also, principals are primarily White (62.93%), with 12.02% African American and 23.02% Hispanic/Latino (other ethnic groups total 2.03%). Furthermore, Franklin, Slate, and Joyner (2013) found that in Texas during the academic year 2011, White students were awarded 47% of master's degrees, Hispanics 15%, and African American students 9%. Students from other ethnic groupings combined (i.e., Asian, Multi-racial, International, and Other) received

29% of the master's degrees. Based on all of these data, Project A-PLUS will promote diversity in the educator workforce by recruiting among male and female teacher ranks, particularly targeting 51% of participants from among those who identify as African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian, Multi-racial, and Other.

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Support for Personalized Learning Environments:

In the evaluation, we will assess the (a) type of standards-based personalized learning environment, or student-centered education, that the leaders in A-PLUS can support through a practicum in leadership on high-needs campuses with large numbers of ELs and LIS, (b) virtual mentoring and coaching (VMC) offers support of the leaders in their development of learning environments for improved culturally responsive instruction, (c) improved diversity understanding with family/parent/ community involvement/engagement strategic planning and implementation with training and broader impact with families, and (d) campus and classroom strategic planning, programming, and implementation based on data. **Promising Practices and**

Moderate Evidence for Absolute Priority 2: In meeting promising practices as indicated in Absolute Priority 2, A-PLUS includes PD based on RCTs with moderate levels of evidence, conducted by the PI and Co-Investigators related to ongoing virtual PD (VPD) and observation feedback and student improvement. The information learned from these prior projects will be included in the SEED and will be the basis for successful literacy-infused curriculum for ELs and LIS to be used in the residency with the tutors and to be shared in VPD. There are, from two of our longitudinal RCT studies—Projects ELLA and MSSELL— sponsored by IES (R305P0332) and NSF (DRL-0822343), respectively, *moderate levels of evidence* that are recognized in the WWC (one without reservations: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

study/81604 and one with reservations: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/81605>). The first WWC without reservations study (Tong, Irby, Lara-Alecio, Guerrero, Fan, & Huerta, 2014), derived from the larger Project MSSELL, presented the findings from an RCT of reading/literacy-integrated science inquiry intervention on fifth-grade LIS African-American and Hispanic (EL) students' achievement in science and English reading (published paper included in this submission). Multilevel logistic analysis suggested that there was a significantly positive treatment effect as reflected in students' higher performance in district-wide curriculum-based tests of science and reading, and standardized tests of science, reading, and English reading fluency ($ps < .05$; odds ratios between 1.93 and 10.28). Our study *confirmed that even a modest amount of literacy integration in inquiry-based science instruction can promote students' science and reading achievement*. In the other RCT study, ELLA (Tong, Irby, Lara-Alecio, Yoon, & Mathes, 2010), used a multilevel modeling approach to address the clustering effect of repeated measures for students within classrooms and classroom within schools after 3 years of longitudinal intervention in English immersion classrooms within 8 treatment (T) and 10 control (C) schools. Results revealed that students receiving treatment exhibited a steeper growth and outperformed their control peers by the end of Grade 2, reflecting a range of phonological awareness, oral language skills, and decoding and reading proficiency ($ps < .05$). This advantage in the intervention group can be explained by greater emphasis on phonics, phoneme discrimination, segmentation, and blending through direct instruction and structured standards-aligned lessons. Consequently, the intervention appears to have filled a critical gap for well-planned, implemented, direct, and monitored curricular and instructional practices that can benefit. In terms of *promising evidence*, we have also studied VPD with third grade bilingual

teachers (Tong, Irby, & Lara-Alecio, 2015) and have published on Massive Open Online Professional Independent Individualized Learning (MOOPIL; Irby, Sutton-Jones, Lara-Alecio, & Tong, 2017). (Appendix D contains tables of moderate and promising evidence from our published articles in refereed journals.) In one of our studies, not yet published, but from our ELLA-V RCT grant (i3, U411B120047), we found that the participating principals on campuses for ELs and LIS indicated that the three most common characteristics needed for their successful leadership are knowledge of language acquisition, knowledge of school culture and climate (stakeholders), and the importance of hiring teachers who are multilingual. Additionally, principals participating in ELLA-V exhibited leadership behaviors consistent with Synergistic Leadership Theory (Irby, Brown, & Yang, 2013; to be used in A-PLUS, along with the accompanying Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory) in the following ways: (a) attitudes, beliefs, and values-towards the support of bilingual education and professional development; (b) autocratic to nurturer leadership behavior; (c) leadership roles in school accountability, cultural and political climate; and (d) organizational structure-exhibiting bureaucratic competence and promotion of community and cooperation. Other published papers (Appendix D) showing promising evidence are the technology components that are demonstrated through VPD (bi-weekly that this targets and also via the MOOPILs), virtual observations, and VMC. These studies and others provide much of the content of A-PLUS as the interventions have provided the school leaders innovations in improving learning for EL and LIS. All components of our research will be incorporated into our coursework and course modules. A-PLUS will engage school leaders *who will be trained in the development of personalized learning environments as systemic instructional leaders of ELs and LIS and who will be able to*

analyze and develop inclusive environments on their campuses. In particular, there is a paucity of evidence on the effectiveness of principal professional development programs and their ability to improve principals' leadership skills and school quality. **Invitational Priority: Support for the Use of Micro-Credentials:** We will address the *Invitational Priority* as follows with micro-credentials (local TAMU certificates and state approved certificates) with the advanced credentials (M.Ed. degree and principal certification). It will provide professional learning certificates and PD coursework. See Appendix E for a table of certificates.

A. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

A.1. *Extent to which proposed project represents an exceptional approach;* **A.2.** *Extent to which the training/PD services provided are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration*

A-PLUS's *outcome* is that 2,320 school leaders receive intensive PD preparation over 3 years. The five components (Figure 1) show intervention components in A-PLUS that target and assess intensive PD for school leaders. We have an initial 36 LEAs and one Education Service Center (ESC 18 – Midland with 39 additional districts), which represent non-rural (urban/suburban) and rural school districts, and one charter school (see Appendix A and Letters of Support).

GOAL 1: Goal 1 of A-PLUS is to prepare 100 in-service school leader candidates for leading at the campus level in the education of ELs and LIS.

COMPONENT 1 (C1) 100 school leaders over the 3 years will receive an M.Ed. and Texas principal certification prepared to lead campuses and influence policy in districts that serve diverse learners, particularly those with ELs and LIS. The M.Ed. in Educational Administration includes 9 hours of specialization (also offered as a sub-local certificate) in Bilingual/ESL education. The 100 school leaders who are seeking the M.Ed. and the principal certification will be ready to build instructional capacity within an intensive PD during the 3 years as they will

have a deeper understanding of high professional standards and as a certified campus leader. 50 members of the cohort group will be randomly assigned to the treatment (T) group of VMC and summer instructional leadership residency program with a strategic planning and implementation of a community engagement model for a summer program for K-2 students (with engaging college and high school students for a 3-1 ratio with students in a summer bridge/enrichment school). The T group will be in charge of all management, set-up, leadership, carrying out of research-based literacy-infused STEM of the summer school bridge program. 50 will be randomly assigned M.Ed. candidates will be the control (C) group who will participate in a traditional leadership practicum, without specific VMC for traditional practicum activities and without the summer leadership residency experience, but with a typical practice internship. The summer residency program is a collaborative enterprise with iEducate, a 501(c)(3) organization that identifies and brings together motivated undergraduates to assist elementary school students in underserved and underperforming schools to strengthen their math and science concepts and to nurture, educate and inspire future generations of doctors, engineers, scientists, and artists. The organizational model will be implemented for our candidates as administrators who develop with iEducate a summer bridge program with four K-2 classrooms. The leadership candidates will train the tutors/teachers (the college and high school students) and will manage all components of the program—giving feedback, training on the curriculum in literacy, STEM, (the literacy and STEM curriculum is based on the two RCTs mentioned above) and enrichment time. They will carry out all logistics of summer school working with the school campus principal and parents. ***Objective 1:*** To recruit, identify, and certify 100 in-service school leaders, who are from diverse ethnic groups, from who desire to be certified campus principals from the LEAs

(Appendix A). The cohort will begin Spring, 2018. They will obtain an M.Ed. in educational administration with a Texas principals certification, a local certificate with an emphasis in bilingual/ESL who is ready to lead instructional improvement and develop programs on their campuses. We will also use a disposition scale related to ethical and social justice leadership also for analysis between groups (See Appendix F). **OUTCOME:** 100 recruited school leaders who obtain an advanced credential with an M.Ed. (online) with an emphasis in instructional leadership, in particular, to lead and impact campuses with high concentration. of ELs and LIS.

RECRUITMENT FOR CI: Notices of the potential program will be sent in August-September (if funded), 2017 to all Bilingual/ESL education directors, superintendents, and assistant superintendents over bilingual/ESL and curriculum and instruction in participating school districts with high-needs campuses. First, highly-qualified teachers, particularly those of *diverse backgrounds* from among African Americans, Hispanic/Latinos and other underrepresented ethnic groups who wish to learn to obtain principal certification and a local certificate in bilingual/ESL education, will be recruited through A-PLUS fliers emailed; we are particularly interested in those candidates the district and campus administrators identify as having potential to lead. The candidates who move to round two must submit a transcript with a 3.0 undergraduate GPA, three letters of reference, a graduate application, a teaching service record, a writing sample that indicates their motivation, commitment, and qualifications to be in A-PLUS to improve instruction for ELs and LIS, and the participation in an on-campus or virtual (TAMU) interview by a committee of 3 TAMU faculty from bilingual/ESL education and educational leadership. A rubric (Appendix G) has been established by the faculty that reviews all the basic requirements, the interview score, potential for leadership, and a writing, problem-solving in-

basket writing and then discussion related to culturally-linguistically relevant leadership. The basic measure of success will be the number of students (% of diverse students) admitted and the number to graduate with the cohort within 3 years and ultimately, the number of students to obtain positions of leadership in schools that serve high numbers of ELs and LIS in 2 semesters.

REPLICABLE ACTIVITY: A-PLUS is about providing PD for developing leaders for high - needs campuses serving diverse learners. Campus leaders do not always emerge from graduate programs fully prepared to lead efforts in a school (Gray, Fry, Bottoms, & O’Neill, 2007); however, we plan to have candidates exit the program with a campus-level leadership position in hand serving campuses with ELs for instructional improvement (such positions may be— assistant principal, chair of curriculum committee, chair of Language Proficiency Assessment Committee [LPAC], chair of the grade level, or instructional coach). **Objective 2:** To build (with the university faculty and successful practicing teacher leaders on campuses serving ELs and LIS), a replicable (as determined effective a RCT) standards-aligned and competency-based M.Ed./Advanced Principal Certification program, testing campus-level practicum intern residency, mentoring/coaching for the aspiring instructional leaders. **OUTCOME:** A replicable standards-aligned leadership preparation program. (Standards are based on the Texas principal and bilingual/ESL competencies and standards). **REPLICABLE ACTIVITY:** An M.Ed. leadership PD curriculum that is targeted for leadership on high-needs campuses serving ELs and LIS that can be replicated. The curriculum will be shared via the Education Leadership Research Center (ELRC) website, accessible nationwide. Following are the principal campus leadership standard domains covered from Principal TExES Exam #068: Instructional Leadership, Human Capital, Executive Leadership, School Culture, and Strategic Operations. Following are the

applicable Texas bilingual and ESL standards from the Texas Administrative Code §149.2001 to which the coursework will be aligned: Knowledge of the foundations of bilingual education and

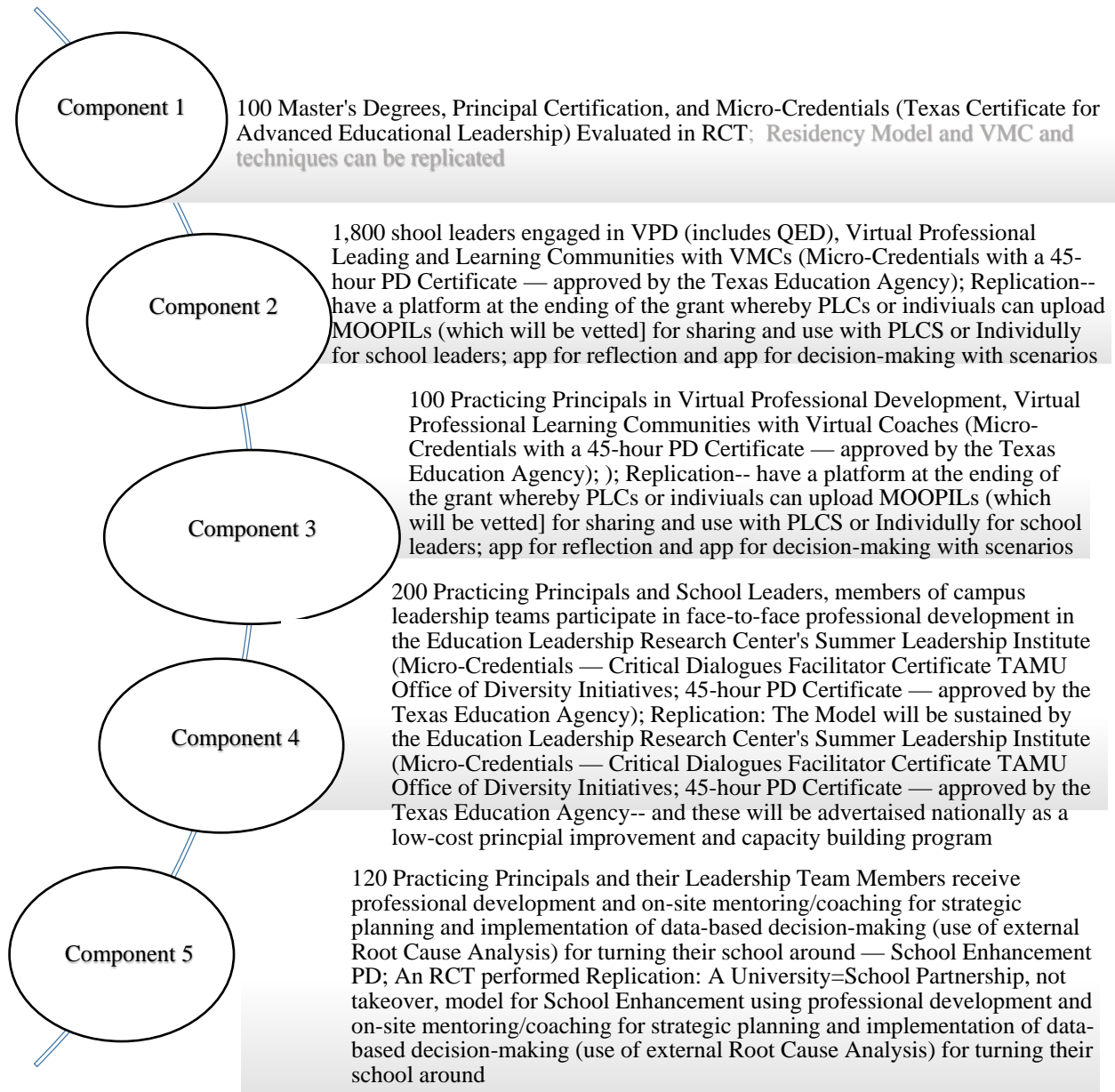


Figure 1. Five components of exceptional approach and duration and replication of A-PLUS.

the concepts of bilingualism and biculturalism; Process of first- and second-language acquisition

and development; Comprehensive knowledge of the development and assessment of literacy in the primary language, of biliteracy, and of content-area instruction in L1 and L2; Fundamental language concepts and knows the structure and conventions of the English language; Knowledge of the foundations of ESL education and factors that contribute to an effective multicultural and multilingual learning environment, ESL teaching methods and uses this knowledge to plan and implement effective, developmentally appropriate ESL instruction, Knowledge of the factors that affect ESL students' learning of academic content, language, and culture; Formal and informal assessment procedures and instruments (language proficiency and academic achievement) used in ESL programs and uses assessment results to plan and adapt instruction, and How to serve as an advocate for ESL students and facilitate family and community involvement in their education. Appendix H is example of such integration of these three levels of standards; also course titles are noted in Appendix H. **Objective 3:** To determine, via an RCT, the effectiveness of a standards-aligned and competency-based M.Ed./certification program that is inclusive of a focus on bilingual/ESL education with a high-needs campus practicum residency and mentoring/coaching for aspiring leaders who will lead classroom and campus instructional improvement that serves ELs (compared to an M.Ed./certification program that is inclusive of a focus on bilingual/ESL education without residency with a traditional practicum on a bilingual campus, and mentoring/coaching for aspiring teacher leaders who will lead on high-needs, diverse campuses). **What is A-PLUS residency?** Residency, for the Tgroup, includes an intensive 150 hours of required active engagement in an instructional, administrative, and organizational leadership practicum in the summer. The intern will be in charge of four classrooms for a summer bridge program that will be on a high-needs campus. As noted, we will

partner with iEducate and their subpartner, Schlumberger. For the curriculum component for the ELs and LIS, we will base the literacy-infused STEM curriculum (See Appendix I for lesson samples) on what we have developed and tested in the RCTs (mentioned earlier in the WWC). We will train the interns in the curriculum via VPD, as they will be across Texas, and will provide all materials to the schools. iEducate will train the interns in how to work with the college students and train them, along with the high school students; they will train them on the math and engineering activities and enrichment and meaningful activities they use and how to engage the community in supporting the summer school. The summer residency will actually begin with a face-to-face meeting in the Fall, 2018; then again in Spring, 2018; afterward, all meetings with iEducate will be virtual with GoToMeeting. The interns will coordinate all curriculum-based assessments (CBA) of the students' achievement over the 4-weeks of instruction, will coordinate all aspects of the summer school program, and will be responsible for the four-week program and one week before (training college students and high school students and setting up) and one week afterward (recognition ceremony and completion reports). These interns will receive VMC with a bug-in-the-ear – for real-time coaching during the summer residency. We will use the Advanced Pedagogical Extra Imaging System (APEXIS) hardware, that we have developed in ELLA-V project for virtual applications. The other practicum for C group will include projects they develop aligned with principal standards as in the regular program. **OUTCOME:** A rigorous RCT evaluation study will be conducted and reported by each year and over the entire program. Based on a review of literature, there were no RCTs assessing the impact of principal preparation related to the impact of principals on student achievement and related teachers' instructional capacity, particularly for ELs and LIS. Fuller,

Young, and Baker (2011) stated, “Little research has specifically examined the linkage between the characteristics of PPPs [PPP] and teacher quality, and we could not identify any studies that examined the relationship between PPPs and teacher-team qualifications and student achievement” (p. 175). Indeed, in Fuller’s et al. review, the studies mainly included practicing principals and not principals in preparation; they indicated that even so, those few that have included principal preparation, have “focused on program content and processes without linking these to any type of important program outcomes” (p. 180). They also stated, “Although the literature focused on quality preparation is in its infancy, studies increasingly are building a case that certain program attributes are associated with quality preparation as measured by actual outcomes, such as the behavior of principals (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen; 2007; Young, 2008; Young, Fuller, Brewer, Carpenter, & Mansfield, 2007; Young & Grogan, 2008)” (p. 180). Furthering this notion of reviews related to principal preparation, Irby (2017) reported on a review of dissertation studies and indicated that only 55 studies since 2000 were related to principal preparation, and none were experimental in nature. This point makes our RCT meaningful. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITY:** The RCT will help to determine if the PPP that is inclusive of a summer campus leadership practicum residency without a VMC that has real-time feedback is a generalizable effective model as compared to a traditional practicum internship as applied on campuses serving ELs and LIS. **Objective 4:** To assess the competency of the principal candidates to observe a teachers’ instruction based on a low-inference teacher observation scale and to determine the quality level of outcome-based instructional feedback for the observed teachers via differences between T (who have had mentors/coaches the summer before this activity is implemented) and C candidates (without VMC). **OUTCOME:** Trained A-

PLUS candidates on the ability to observe classrooms and provide feedback to improve instruction/build capacity of teacher of ELs and LIS. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITY:** This activity will be assessed and shared as the low inference observation scale that can assist in providing specific feedback to teachers as it relates to the pedagogy in classrooms for ELs and LIS. In such classrooms, there “continues to be a lack of research on the knowledge base and empirical studies on teachers’ pedagogical delivery, as well as the documented quality of teaching as shaped by instructional intervention” (Lara-Alecio et al., 2013, p. 1130). In the past few years, there have been newly developed studies (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2012; Foorman, Goldenberg, Carlson, Saunders & Pollard-Durodola, 2004; Freedson, et al., 2009; Halle, Whittaker, & Anderson, 2010; Hamre, et. al, 2012; Holland-Coviello, 2005; Lara-Alecio, Tong, Irby, & Mathes, 2009; Pianta, La Paro, Hamre, 2009; Rivera & Tharp, 2004; Rivera, Waxman, & Powers, 2012; W Tong, Luo, Irby, Lara-Alecio, & Rivera, 2017; Waxman & Padron, 2004) that reiterate the importance of effective classroom observation instruments as they evaluate classroom activities, quality of instruction, language and literacy, as well as social, behavioral, cognitive and linguistic development of students. We will use the TBOP (T-Bilingual/ESL Pedagogical Observation Protocol; See Appendix J), which was developed and validated from the *four-dimensional bilingual pedagogical classroom theory* (Lara-Alecio & Parker 1994; Appendix J) to encompass major instructional domains employed by the candidates. It has had numerous validation studies since that time and has been tested in a variety of EL/LIS settings, such as dual language, developmental classrooms, and ESL classrooms. Additionally, it has been suggested as yielding outcomes for teachers of ELs and ELs’ achievement (Garza, 2012; Goldenberg, 2013; Montalvo, Combes, & Kea, 2014; Murphy, 2015). There are four domains:

Language of Instruction and Language of Response, Language Content, Communication Mode, and Activity Structures. Physical grouping is also observed, along with ESL strategies. To ensure replication fidelity on the campuses with the instructional leaders, TBOP-experienced and trained researchers from Center for Research and Development for Dual Language and Literacy Acquisition (CRDLLA) will also rate that observation, and an inter-rater will be calculated so as to determine aspiring school leaders' full mastery of the instrument. **Objective 5:** To identify and train VMCs, through a web-based workshop to mentor the T group during the summer residency program and for VMCs to provide data to determine, qualitatively, differences in residency and internship experiences between the T group with a VMC and the C group without a VMC.

OUTCOME: A mentoring and coaching program for 50 principal candidates in T in residency-ready activities and the summer residency program, and a qualitative report on the differences between the T and C group related to experiences in the residency or internship programs.

REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES: A VMC manual will be posted in the third year of A-PLUS on the ELRC website at TAMU that will give guidance for assisting school leader candidates in residency-ready activities that are aligned to bilingual, ESL, and leadership standards for a summer residency program, all for serving as a leader on a high needs campus that serves ELs.

Objective 6: To determine to what extent differences exist between the 50 T and 50 C groups including: (a) parent and family engagement systematic plans during the residency-ready annual activities or the summer residency program and (b) community engagement plans developed and implemented in the semester of the developing school-community partnerships as measured by a developed rubric for a and b above (to be developed). T students will work with iEducate during that semester; they will also assist with how to incorporate the community. **OUTCOME:** 100

parent and family and community systematic engagement plans that are developed, implemented, and evaluated based on a developed quantitative rubric while working collaboratively with iEducate, and posted on the Education Leadership Research Center (ELRC) website. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** 100 parent/family and community engagement plans that have been implemented and assessed will be posted on the ELRC website. These plans can will be posted be used by other leaders. **Objective 7:** To determine differences between the 50 T and 50 C teachers on their *DL models* that they develop and determine feasibility (in conjunction with their practicing principals and campus teams) as analyzed by candidates' action research projects (in the research course in bilingual/ESL education) via qualitative data from teachers and practicing principals and by quantitative data from students' test scores on state exams.

OUTCOME: 100 DL models on campuses that serve EL students and 100 action research projects written and posted to the ELRC website and analyzed for differences (qualitative differences are noted from the action research projects). **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** 100 action research project reports on EL models the candidates develop and evaluate will be posted on the ELRC website to be used by other such campuses. Findings from the analyses will also be posted on the websites for furthering implications for practice. **Objective 8:** To disseminate the results of A-PLUS, via faculty in the program, through at least 4 state and 4 national or regional conferences during the life of the project, through 8 professional media sources, and through a website for A-PLUS, and via the leader candidates' selected presentations on ELRC.

OUTCOME: 8 faculty presentations, 8 professional media sources, a website for A-PLUS (hits) via ELRC website; 100 principal candidates can articulate their schools' policies on ELs and present to local teachers and board members (in presentations of their work on the campuses);

selected candidate reports will be peer-reviewed for publication in *the Dual Language Research and Practice Journal*. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** Other PPPs can replicate A-PLUS findings and disseminate them via presentations and other media outlets.

GOAL 2: Goal 2 of A-PLUS is to prepare 1,800 in-service school leaders for building instructional capacity at the campus level in the education of ELs and LIS.

COMPONENT 2 (C2). 1,800 school leaders over a 3-year time period will received VPD and will work in PLCs with VMC. Recruit the school leaders via flier to the superintendent and campus principals and put up video link invitations related to Component 2 outlining the benefits professionally and compensation allowances. **Objective 1:** To recruit and train 1,800 school leaders via 45 hours of Massive Open Online Professional Independent Individual Learning (MOOPILs) to improve instruction (see Appendix K for a list of MOOPILs for Component 2).

RECRUITMENT FOR C2: Notices of the potential program will be sent in August-September (if funded) 2017 (Year 1) and in April-May of Years 2 and 3 to all bilingual directors, superintendents, and assistant superintendents in participating school districts with high-needs campuses first, then other Districts across Texas will be invited to participate and partner. School leaders, such as grade level chairs, coordinators, committee chairs, instructional skills specialists, and assistant principals will be recruited through our A-PLUS fliers sent through the district office administration. District offices will be called as well. **OUTCOME:** 1,800 school leaders have completed 45 hours each of VPD and with one course paid and applied toward an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** The developed MOOPILS will be able to be used statewide and nationally for PD hours for leaders. **Objective 2:** To randomly select 35 participants annually for T and 35 for C groups (matched on specific variables) to participate in

Virtual PLCs and determine how much the school leaders grow in T VMC provided to the PLCs in T only. Both PLCs will practice rotational leadership (each participant will practice 5 times) of the PLC group- T will lead the PLC virtual sessions with VMC feedback; C will have no VMC.

OUTCOME: An quasi-experimental study outcome on VPD with VMC—determining the difference between typical VPD with PLCs and VPD with PLCs using VMCs. Also, the outcome is VPD MOOPILs used with PLCs and how to conduct those effectively. **REPLICABLE**

ACTIVITIES: Districts will use VMCs to enhance PLCs and can use them virtually (if the outcome proves positive). **Objective 3:** 33% of the participants will produce a MOOPIL related to improving instruction on high-needs campuses with diverse learners. **OUTCOME:** 600 MOOPILS from the participants will be produced from the field (from the school leaders) on topics of instructional leadership and personalized learning, or student-centered learning, and other topics deemed important from research. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** 600 MOOPILs will be screened for usability and placed on the ELRC website under A-PLUS-Varsity.

GOAL 3: Goal 3 of A-PLUS is to prepare 100 practicing principals for building instructional capacity at the campus level in the education of ELs and LIS.

COMPONENT 3 (C3). 100 principals over a 3-year time period will receive VPD and will work in PLC with VMCs. **Objective 1:** To recruit and train 100 practicing principals at the elementary school level via 45 hours of MOOPILs to improve instruction (see Appendix K for a list of MOOPILs for Component 3). **RECRUITMENT FOR C3:** Notices of the potential program will be sent in August-September, 2017 (Year 1) and in April-May of Years 2 and 3 to all superintendents, assistant superintendents, and elementary principals in participating school districts with high-needs campuses first, then other districts across Texas will be invited to

participate and partner. District offices will be called as well to aid in recruitment. **OUTCOME:**

100 practicing principals will have completed 45 hours each of VPD with VMC and work in

innovations to find and solve problems related to the topics of the MOOPILs. **REPLICABLE**

ACTIVITIES: MOOPILS will be used statewide and nationally for PD hours for principals

which ELRC could offer. **Objective 2:** To have the 100 practicing principals to participate in

Virtual PLCs (VPLC) and determine the how much the principals grow with the PLCs receiving

VMC. **OUTCOME:** The determination of how well VPD and VPLCs aid principals in growing

understanding of how to improve practice. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** Districts can use

VMCs to enhance PLCs with their principals and can use them. **Objective 3:** To determine how

well the VPD translates to practice. The principals will test specific principles/practices learned

in the VPD in the school and will report the outcome in a reflection journal app. **OUTCOME:**

The perceived impact of the learning on practice from the principals' perspectives.

REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES: Principal learnings can be posted as to the best practices and the

challenges in terms of instructional improvement so that other principals not in the project can

have access to replicate. **Objective 4:** To determine the impact VPD has on student achievement

on the campus where the principal serves. This will be based on pre-post STAAR & TELPAS

data from the campus. **OUTCOME:** Outcome data of student achievement related to the VPD

will be analyzed and reported back to the principals. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** If

successful, such VPD may be correlated to improved student achievement and, thus, the

MOOPILs can be used across Texas/U.S. to implement strategies for improved instruction.

GOAL 4: Goal 4 of A-PLUS is to prepare 200 practicing principals and school leaders (campus leadership teams) for building instructional capacity at the campus level in the education of ELs and LIS via a Summer Leadership Institute over two summers (a cohort

of 100 each summer- different cohorts.

COMPONENT 4 (C4). 200 practicing principals and school leaders (campus leadership teams) for building instructional capacity at the campus level in the education of ELs and LIS via a Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) with a cohort of 100 each over 2 summers. **RECRUITMENT FOR C4:** Notices of the potential program will be sent in August-September, 2017 (Year 1) and in August-September of Year 2 to all superintendents, assistant superintendents, and elementary principals in participating school districts with high-needs campuses first, then other districts across Texas will be invited to participate and partner to determine leadership teams to participate in the SLI. School leadership teams will be recruited through our A-PLUS, SLI fliers sent through the district office administration and to them directly. District offices will be called as well to aid in recruitment. **Objective 1:** To provide a four-day SLI to 200 school leaders in 40 leadership teams from the same high needs campuses over 2 years. **OUTCOME:** 200 school leaders (practicing principals and other school leaders) receive an intensive 45-hour training and are certified upon completion on-site at TAMU in critical dialogues, climate, culturally responsive pedagogy, inclusive schools (with training on the Kellogg Inclusive School Scale, Madsen & Torres, 2017) bullying prevention, strategic planning with data, parental/community engagement. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** SLI has been held in various formats out of the ELRC. We have had 4.8 of 5.0 overall score in evaluations on this activity. We have certified trainers in to teach the PD. SLI can be replicated with other similar campus leadership teams invited from across the state. **Objective 2:** To review and compare Campus Improvement Plans (CIP) (pre SLI and post SLI)—the strategic planning process will be taught—current CIPs will be reviewed and new ones will be initiated. In the Fall, the participant groups will submit their

CIPs and then again in the Spring—for follow through to review differences. **OUTCOME:** A processed CIP with a strategic plan for completing and following through on it and monitoring it. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** CIP process is posted and sample plans with follow through are posted for other leadership teams to access. **Objective 3:** To determine the impact the SLI has on student achievement on the campus where the principal and leadership team serve. This will be based on pre-post STAAR data from the campus. **OUTCOME:** Outcome data of student achievement related to the SLI will be analyzed and reported back to the teams as it related to their CIPs in the following state-mandated areas: Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gap, and Postsecondary Readiness. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** Such model as SLI, PD for leadership teams may be correlated to improved student achievement

GOAL 5: Goal 5 of A-PLUS is to prepare 120 practicing principals and school leaders (campus leadership teams- 15 per campus) for building instructional capacity at the campus level in the education of ELs and LIS via a RCT with a School Enhancement/Turnaround Intervention over three years.

COMPONENT 5 (C5). 120 practicing principals and school leaders (campus leadership teams- 15 per campus) for building instructional capacity at the campus level in the education of ELs and LIS via a RCT with a School Enhancement Program/Turnaround Intervention (SEP) over 3 years. The definition of *turnaround schools* typically has been used in reference to general reform efforts for low-performing school personnel to significantly improve student achievement. Rhim, Kowal, Hassel, and Hassel (2007) defined it as “a documented, quick, dramatic, and sustained change in the performance of an organization” (p. 4). More importantly, Leithwood, Harris, and Strauss (2010) indicated that turnaround is not simply school improvement; rather, turnaround is targeted to most consistently underperforming schools with

actions conducted in a short amount of time with dramatic changes and consequences for failure. Researchers have not yet provided sufficient information to have characteristics of a leader of turnaround schools (Kowal & Hassel, 2005); however, it is known that such leaders have characteristics similar to entrepreneurial, as well as traditional leaders (Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Rhim et al., 2007; Walberg, 2007). Stephens (2010) indicated how critical instruction is in turning around a school. The teacher is the “single most important in-school predictor of student achievement” (Miles & Baroody, 2012, p. 5); therefore, Winters and Herman (2011) suggested that teachers’ instruction must be a main focus of turnaround efforts. Turning around schools requires the collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data to improve instruction with the use of benchmarks (Klinger & Wade-Woolley, 2012; Miles & Baroody, 2012). Increased focused time on task is critical to improving achievement (Kutash et al., 2010). What schools typically do with their time with low-performing students is not adequate (Tong, Lara-Alecio, Irby, Mathes, & Kwok, 2008). Given that time was a finite resource for students each day, what matters the most, from an instructional perspective, is how to most efficiently utilize these instructional minutes and ensure that the instruction is delivered more carefully and purposefully so as to best address students’ academic and language needs and, ultimately, to promote school performance (Tong, Irby, Lara-Alecio, Yoon, & Mathes, 2010; Tong, Luo, Irby, Lara-Alecio, & Rivera, 2017). Therefore, leadership for such is critical. **RECRUITMENT FOR C5:** Notices of the potential program will be sent in August-September, 2017 (Year 1) to all superintendents, assistant superintendents, and elementary principals in participating school districts with high-needs campuses that are low-performing schools first, then other like campuses in districts across Texas will be invited to participate and partner. Schools will first be identified via the Texas

school rating system. Those schools that are not State Improvement Required, but that are within 2 points of becoming improvement required (IR) will be recruited through A-PLUS fliers. District offices will be called as well to aid in recruitment. **Objective 1:** To evaluate the effectiveness of Component 5 PD, a clustered randomized control trial (RCT) design will be employed with 8 eligible elementary schools from the participating school district in Texas randomly assigned to T or C conditions (i.e., business-as-usual/typical practice). Over the 3 years, the same teachers (2 randomly selected teachers per grade level K-4 with three time points) will be specifically monitored and participate at the appropriate grade level. **OUTCOME:** A SEP, RCT with a university/school partnership that provides support and training to the leadership teams so that they turn the school around—we will provide the tools to them via – (a) a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) conducted on all 8 schools—with a report for each school; (b) a SLI after the RCA conducted (described above- with all parts of the SLI for this group as well- plus the control schools would get the SLI for 3 days, but will not be provided the fourth day related to strategic planning); (c) On-going training and implementation for the T leadership team on VMC real-time so that they can calibrate their observations- using a an instrument appropriate for the campuses- and provide uniform feedback—Use the TAMU VMC Model for Building Instructional Capacity that has been developed collaboratively with four high needs schools—including, supervisory functions, instructional capacity, and instructional transformation; (c) an on-site coach for 10 hours per week per treatment campus. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** If successful, such a SEP, PD Preparation model for leadership teams on high-needs campuses may be correlated to improved student achievement. Most models include school takeovers by the state or other entities, but this is a *collaborative model* dealing with providing tools and support.

The process and VMC model will be posted on the ELRC website. **Objective 2:** To determine difference between the T and C campus leadership teams as measured by the Organizational Leadership and Effectiveness Inventory (OLEI; Irby, Brown, & Duffy, 2000- based on the Synergistic Leadership Theory) and by the Kellogg School Inclusion Scale (Madsen & Torres, 2017). **OUTCOME:** There will be the outcome of difference between the leadership effectiveness and on inclusion practices based on the on-site coaches on T campuses and the training on the T campuses. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** If successful, such a SEP, PD Preparation model for leadership teams on high-needs campuses may be correlated to the leadership. **Objective 3:** To review and compare CIPs (pre SLI and post SLI; and use of RCA)—the strategic planning process will be taught—current CIPs will be reviewed and new ones will be initiated. In the Fall, the participant groups will submit their CIPs and then again in the Spring—for follow through to review differences. **OUTCOME:** A processed CIP with a strategic plan for completing and following through on it and monitoring it. **REPLICABLE ACTIVITIES:** CIP process is posted with follow through are posted for other teams to access.

A.3. *The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.*

A-PLUS will involve 36 school districts and one ESC (ESC 18 – Midland, inclusive of 39 other districts), inclusive of 1 charter school from across Texas. These districts are located throughout the state in urban, suburban, and rural settings; and all districts contain high-needs Title I schools. These districts represent a total of 835,723 students, including 210,162 ELs and 566,222 LIS. The districts have 52,389 teachers and 741 elementary schools. Additionally, A-PLUS will recruit university faculty and district representatives across the districts to serve on a project

Advisory Board (AB). The AB will guide and advise the project on an ongoing basis (see the Quality of the Management Plan section for more on the AB and its function).

[A.4.](#) *The extent to which the services to be provided are focused on those with greatest need, and*
[A.5.](#) *The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.*

A-PLUS is focused on 2,320 leaders who serve on high-needs campuses with diverse learners, particularly those that serve ELs and LIS. Needs have been identified by the districts by way of discussions with the superintendents and/or bilingual directors in surveying their needs and desire to participate. The needs continue to be from 100% of the interviewees: (a) culturally responsive pedagogy and leadership, (b) instructional leadership, (c) critical dialogues, (d) climate issues, (e) developing professional, personalized learning communities, (f) data analysis and school improvement interventions, (g) instructional improvement, (h) strategic planning, (i) improving instructional for ELs and low-income students, (j) how to capitalize on VPLCs, (k) how to improve leadership using coaches or VMCs, and (l) how to improve the capacity of instructional skills specialists on campuses. Additionally, the principals in our current project, ELLA-V, that serve on similar campuses as in A-PLUS, also indicate the same needs.

B. SIGNIFICANCE

Even though the principal's role has evolved from being a school manager to that of being an instructional leader (Lynch, 2012), we have found that *it is difficult for the principal* to be in classrooms every day and support the teachers; therefore, the entire leadership team becomes even more critical for building instructional capacity. The role of *instructional leaders* is to demonstrate a knowledge of complexities in teaching diverse learners and learning as they build instructional capacity of teachers. To that end, *school leaders of all types* influence student

learning by shaping the classroom conditions and aiding in and building quality teachers.

According to the Council of Chief State School Officers (2012), we should ensure that the leader we produce is:

... ready on day one ... to transform school learning environments ... they craft the school's vision, mission, and strategic goals to focus on and support high levels of learning for all students and high expectations for all members of the school community... transform schools... lead others in using performance outcomes and other data to strategically align people, time, funding, and school processes... continually improve student achievement and growth, and to nurture and sustain a positive climate and safe school environment... work with others to develop, implement, and refine processes to select, induct, support, evaluate, and retain quality personnel to serve in instructional and support roles... nurture and support professional growth in others and appropriately share leadership responsibilities...lead and support outreach to students' families and the wider community to respond to community needs and interests and to integrate community resources into the school. (p. iv)

B.1 *The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvement in teaching and student achievement.*

A-PLUS engages the principal and bilingual and ESL teacher and frameworks from Texas, along with conceptual bases from the Administrator's [Leader's] Roles in Programs for Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students, by Education Northwest (2010) and the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (Grady & O'Dwyer, 2014). We argue A-PLUS candidates will serve on such campuses should be provided PD with appropriate leadership behaviors. In reviewing the educational reform literature, there were relatively few studies that included bilingual/ESL programs as part of the reform movements in school systems in recent

years, and there were no RCT studies with PPPs and few with other school leaders, in general. We plan in A-PLUS to assist these instructional school leaders in our project in becoming collaborators and implementers and leaders of programs for ELs and LIS as they build instructional capacity. Barriers to second language learner program implementation were expressed by Lara-Alecio, Tong, Irby, and Mathes (2009) who suggested the inconsistency in starting bilingual/ESL programs and in defining the specific type of bilingual program have traditionally held back the advancement of the field and students' achievement. Therefore, our blending of leadership and bilingual/ESL education information and practice for our participants makes sense in producing those who can transform lives. ***Teacher support.*** Villareal (2001) emphasized that campus leaders should know how to improve the climate for ELs by setting high expectations and validating diverse language and cultures, establish and nurture human relationships, provide opportunities for collaborative planning and designing of curriculum or ELs, provide staff development on effective teaching strategies with topics evolve around highly interactive classrooms, program-solving, and discovery (also noted by Collier & Thomas, 2014; and Tong, Irby, Lara-Alecio, and Koch, 2014), recruit teachers who are culturally responsive, provide guidance to new teachers, map assets represented by the community, organize instruction with flexibility in instructional design, align curriculum both horizontally and vertically, establish a program that capitalizes on the linguistic strengths of students and families and the community, ensure and deliver grade-level content, and promote instructional approaches that foster biliteracy development and content acquisition. One of the major contributions that we will provide is the information on instructional strategies and *how A-PLUS in-service school leaders can aid teachers* to better serve and teach ELs and LIS. This is critical

in that there are large numbers of ELs in schools and not all of them are faring well in academics. In 2015-2016 per TEA (2016), 69% of third grade ELs passed the STAAR reading (this was the lowest passing rate alongside those served in Special Education--51%). **Leaders' influence.** A teacher's classroom instruction is the most influential factor in student achievement (Hattie, 2009; Skourdombis, 2014; Stronge, Ward, & Grant, 2011; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003), but several researchers have indicated that *the campus leader is also a critical influence in improving student achievement* (Branch et al., 2013; Hattie, 2009; Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). It is critical that the in-service teachers be supported by school leaders in A-PLUS get instructional and leadership training via the PD—instructional leadership is not just about the principal only; we advocate it is all leaders on the campus. Hattie (2009) also concluded in his meta-synthesis of a meta-analysis of 1000 studies on student achievement that the instructional leadership role has the most influence on student outcomes by “promoting and participating in teacher learning and development, planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum, strategic resourcing, establishing goals and expectations, and insuring an orderly and supportive environment both inside and outside the classroom” (pp. 83-84). Researchers have highlighted that there is a definitive and impactful relationship between the *instructional leader and student achievement*. This means theoretically if A-PLUS can build strong instructional leaders for ELs and LIS and other diverse learners as well, then there will be impact in student achievement. The **Logic Model** is presented in Appendix L.

B.2. *The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.*

At the end of A-PLUS, we will have served 2,320 school leaders from campuses with diverse learners, particularly those who are EL and LIS. Approximately 53% of the total federal funds

budget will go directly towards participant support costs to serve the participant school leaders, with the remainder pointed toward the summer residency costs, personnel support, data collection/analysis, and evaluation of A-PLUS goals (Components 1-5). The components of A-PLUS will be able to be replicated for districts, schools, and leadership teams across the country. Looking specifically at the direct benefit to the participants through participant support costs, the cost per school leader served over the three-year project period is \$3,138.78 ($\$7,281,965 / 2,320$ school leaders). This is the proximal cost; the distal cost factoring in the number of teachers under each school leaders' supervision as well as the students served by teachers would make the cost per participant significantly lower. Since the number of teachers and students on a campus can vary depending on many factors, a distal cost per participant cannot be quantified as there will be extensive multiplier effects into the 1000's. The MOOPILs, via A-PLUS-Viriversity, have the potential to reach approximately 7,900 principals across the state of Texas, according to numbers reported in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2016-2017 PEIMS reports, and 118,000 principals nationally, according to numbers reported in the NCES 2011 report. With the replicable activities of A-PLUS focusing on state and national dissemination, we can consider these numbers for potential impact. Total costs of the project (federal + non-federal) total $\$19,803,903 / 118,000$ principals nationwide--approximately \$167 each. The proposed budget is reasonable in relation to the direct number of school leaders to be served as well as the potential nationwide scale according to the anticipated results and benefits of the A-PLUS project.

B.3. *The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.*

Sustainability, replication, and benefits by Component are shared in Figure 1 and Appendix C;

replicable activities are shared in Section A1. and A.2. The sustainability and incorporation of the activities and benefits are proposed in anticipation of positive results from rigorous research including two RCT students, one QED, and numerous qualitative studies herein.

B.4. *The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.*

A-PLUS results will be disseminated in print, presentations, and online to a range of audiences. Research results will be published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals and at academic conferences in presentations. MOOPILs will be freely and publically available to school leaders on the ELRC websites (<http://elrc.tamu.edu/>). The ELRC website will present step-by-step guidelines for school practitioners in implementing the SEP model, the SLI model, and the summer camp practicum residency model—all developed or enhanced and evaluated over the course of the project. Other products to be on the ELRC website include *VMC Best Practices and Challenges Report*. Social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, will be used to highlight ongoing project achievements and share project resources and products nationally.

C. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

C.1. *The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measureable, and* **C.2.** *The adequacy of the management plan.*

Overall program management (PM) will be the responsibility of the Principal Investigator (PI). PM will focus on four classes of activities: (a) Overall Project, (b) A-PLUS PD Program, (c) School, District, and University Relations, and (d) Other External Relations. The major activities will be tracked through a grant milestone chart by the PI. ***An Advisory Board*** (AB) for will meet once at the initiation of the grant to review purposes and objectives of the project, then, the AB will meet virtually annually at the end of the year to review progress of the project goals and objectives. One evaluation report per year will be submitted to each member in advance of the

year-end meeting. The AB may be called during the year for advisement should an unexpected event occur and will consist of the following representatives: 2 high needs campus principals, 2 bilingual/ESL teachers, 2 district administrators, and 2 professors; iEducate will serve ex-officio. The AB will also monitor the non-discrimination aspects of the grant. The broad management plan is presented in Table 2: √ is initiate; **√ is a milestone**; • is continuation; x is check point.

Table 2. Broad Management Plan

Major Program Activities (per cycle) √ = Milestone					
Program Management (Responsible person listed)	Aug/Sept	Oct Dec	Jan-May	Jun -	Jul-
1. Recruit participants in each partner district following recruitment plan indicated earlier in the proposal while IRB is finalized/approved. (PI)	√		•		√
2. Establish accounting/purchasing/payroll procedures. (Sept/Yr1) PI	√	•	•	X	•
3. Acquire PD materials & office materials. (All Yrs) PI	√	X•	•	X	•
4. Maintain high morale/collaborative spirit within program. (all Yrs) PI	√	•	X•	√	•
5. Set Monthly goals/Assess both program-wide/student-specifics PI	√	√	X	√	√
6. Obtain materials for curriculum development. (As needed) PI	√	•	•	•	•
7. Develop VM manual. (Yr1)PI	√	√	X•	•	X•
8. Prepare Mid-year/End-year report for AV and USDOE (Yrly) PI & E				√	X
9. Develop program coordinators for each of the Components and the overall Program Coordinator and put the 5 components in action. PI	X				
Academic/PD Program					
1. Cohort students maintain high academic achievement (Yrly) Coordinator (PC) & Faculty (F)	√	•	√	•	√
2. Cohort students are supported by Univ. supervisors, and lecturers and Mentors (treatment). (Yrly) PC	√	•	√	•	X
3. Cohort participants apply knowledge through field-based coursework.(Yrly) PI/ F	•	•	•	√	√
4. Cohort participants apply all areas applicable to bilingual/ESL leaders (in campus residency or traditional internship) through coursework that has been standards aligned (Yrly) F		•	√	√	√
5. Cohort participants create parent involvement; community engagement plans and implement on campus site, DL plans action research plans. (By appropriate semester) PIs		•	√	√	√
6. Cohort participants display ease and sensitivity in relating with mentoring relationships. (Yrly) PI	√		√	•	x
7. Cohort, professors, mentors collaboratively prepare conference presentations/publications based on fieldwork from the grant (Yrly)PI; F	√		X	•	•
8. Cohort members pass (90%) the TExES principal exam.(By cohort) PI	√	•	•	√	√

9. All component participants participate up to 95% in all activities. PI	√				X
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School & District Relations					
Program Management (Responsible person listed)	Aug.	Sep.	Oct. Dec.	Jan May	Jun-Jul
1. Establish communication links, schedules, & contact persons (for district office, schools, parents, and university). (Yr1) PI	√	√	•	X	•
2. Orient students and district personnel to A-PLUS. (Yrly) PI	√	√	•	X	•
3. Inform school administrators of course of study by Components and collaborate on various needed field projects. PI & F	√	√	•	X	•
4. With assistance of university personnel, cohort members develop working relationships with beginning and other bilingual and regular school leaders. PI	√	√	•	X	√
External Relations					
1. Publicize existence of A-PLUS and availability of PD programs to other school leaders in initial LEAs and beyond. (Yrly) PI, PC	√	√	•	X	•
2. Publicize A-PLUS design and accomplishments to leaders in Texas' and other university programs. (Yr 3) PI, PC	√	•	•	√	x
3. Publicize A-PLUS design and accomplishments to school leaders at national, state and regional conferences. (Yr 2,3) PI, PC	√	√	√	√	x
4. Publicize action-research at TABE, NABE, TEPSA, TASSP, AERA and/or regional conferences, publications, etc. PI	x	•	√	•	√
5. Meet with Texas Education Agency, present full report on A-PLUS and results, for dissemination by state authorities. (Yr 3) PIs, PC					√
6. Prepare for internal audits and provide data for a comprehensive evaluation of the project (formative and summative). (Yrly) Evaluator	√	•	•	•	x

C.3. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

A-PLUS PI and Co-Investigators have strong experience running large research grants, as well as training projects at the federal and state levels. Continuous improvement will be in the form of communication with district superintendents, curriculum directors, principals, teachers, the evaluation team, and the local project team. The project staff will seek semi-annual feedback from project participants, their supervisors, and the AB. Members of the AB will be compensated for their time when they meet annually. The A-PLUS team will meet monthly to discuss updates and improve the project; a Milestone and Management Chart will be kept in the PI's office. We understand the importance of continuous improvement for such a project in order

to improve processes and products. There will be formative assessment throughout the project with the milestones and also the project team will meet weekly.

D. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION

CRDLLA at TAMU will have overall responsibility for evaluation and running of the RCT. In addition to analyzing the A-PLUS with the RCT, quasi-experimental design (QED), one-group pre-post design, and qualitatively, CRDLLA will also conduct scientifically-based research, and assess overall the *objectives-based and management-oriented* evaluation plan which, like the management plan, is presented under four main categories: (a) Program Management, (b) Academic Program, (c) School & District Relations, (d) Project Director (*is the PI*). The plan is a series of overall evaluation questions, with five elaborations for each question: (a) What evaluative criterion will be used?; (b) Who has direct responsibility for answering the question? (ES=evaluator; PD=project director/principal investigator; M=mentors; P=professors; PC=program coordinators; SL=school leadership students); (c) What measurement method will be used? (IQ=interview/questions; D=documentation; QC=Quality check; LR=log record of events; DO=Direct Observation; S=standardized measure); (d) What main purpose will be served by the evaluation? (I=improve; V=verify; D=document; P=planning; Dis=dissemination); (e) On what schedule the evaluation will take place (C=continuous; Pre=prior to project; Post=end of project; M=monthly; W=weekly; S=semester; 2y=two times per year)? After each question, there are answers to the questions above abbreviated as indicated above with “/” separating questions b, c, d, and e. *Program Management.* 1. Are school leaders successfully recruited in a fair and unbiased manner and are they recruited with respect for traditionally under-represented students to join in A-PLUS? (PD;PC/D/D/Pre;S) 2. Are individual campuses utilized for field-

based research and are the projects efficiently conducted and maintained? (PD;P;PC/QC/D;I/S)

3. Are Mentor/Coaches successfully oriented to program? (PD;PC;P/DO/I/Pre) 4. Are effective accounting/purchasing/payroll procedures established in a timely manner? (PD/D/D/Pre) 5. Is high morale and collaborative spirit maintained in A- PLUS? (PD;PC/DO/I/C) 6. Are reasonable Monthly program goals set by PI (Program Director), and is goal progress assayed, monitored and publicized? (PD;PC/D/I;P/M) Academic Program. 1. Do participants maintain high academic achievement in program courses? (PD;PC;P;SL/D/D/C) 2. Do participants demonstrate skills in key program content objectives: transfer of effective theory and practice into field-based experiences, classroom-based and language application, study skills /learning/leadership/ instructional feedback strategies for developing PLCs? (PD;PC; P;SL;M/S/ DO;D) 3. Do participants demonstrate skills in collaboration/consultation with teachers, students, and parents? (PD;PC;M/D;DO;QC/D/S) 4. Do participants demonstrate skills in leadership? (P, SL/DO/D; DIS/S) 5. Do project leadership candidates demonstrate sensitivity to the participants? (PD; PC;SL M/I;DO/I;V/C) 6. Do the leaders in training on campuses demonstrate peer-supervision or coaching skills? (PD; PC; M/ I; DO/I; V/C). 7. Do graduates have an impact on the student achievement scores and on parent/family/ community involvement on the campus through efforts they made in leadership? (PD; PC; SL,M/ I;DO/I;V/C) 8. To what extent do participants pass the state certification exams and how quickly are they placed into leadership positions within one year from graduation? (ES PC;SL,M/I; DO/I;V/C). 9. Is all PD aligned to state standards? (PD; PC; M/ I; DO/I; V/C) School & District Relations. 1. Does A-PLUS respect and follow school and district procedures? (PD;PC;P/D; LR/D/S) 2. Does A-PLUS help support school and district program goals? (PD;PC;P/D;LR/D/S)

3. Is effective and timely communication established and maintained with school principal, mentors, project participants, and faculty ? (PD;PC;P;M/D;LR/D/S) 4. Do school programs benefit from collaboration with University on-site training/ mentoring as part of the campus residency program? (PD;PC;P/D;LR/D;P/S) 5. Are all campus curricula aligned with the state standards on which the A-PLUS student works and did the A-PLUS students work in that alignment to improve education for the EL and LIS students? (ES;PC;P/D;LR/D;P/S) **Project**

Director. 1. Are program existence, design, and accomplishments effectively publicized throughout Texas? (ES/D/V;DIS/2Y) 2. Is A-PLUS existence, design, and accomplishments effectively publicized throughout region and nation? (ES/D/V;DIS/2Y) 3. Do participants become more successful and influential EL& LIS leaders and advocates for the these children? (ES;PD;PC/IQ;D/V;DIS/S) 4. Is each objective accomplished in the grant? (ES;PD;PC/IQ;D;DO;LR/V;D;DIS/Post—after each objectives timeline).

D.1. *Extent to which methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback & permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes;*

The focus of the evaluation for this project will be the formative and summative evaluation by collecting internal, external, and contextual information pertaining to the participants and training. The formative evaluation procedures will include observations, interviews, open-ended surveys, and written and verbal reports to describe the process of the project activities, such as MOOPIL sessions, field practicum residency, and online courses. Summative evaluation will include data from Texas Principal Exam (campus leadership), student or campus-level data on state assessment, course GPA, and disposition scale. Elaborations on the evaluation plan (including research questions and analytic procedure) is provided below by each Component.

(Appendix M contains a table of the objectives aligned with research questions and measures.) C

EVALUATION: To evaluate *Component 1 Objective 1*, the number of in-service school leaders, program completers/graduation rate will be documented by year 1 and year 3, respectively. A comparison will be conducted to identify any difference in the number of completers/graduation rate between T and C. To evaluate *Objective 2*, the standards-aligned and competency-based masters/certification program will be evaluated qualitatively via document analysis regarding the content validity. To evaluate *Objectives 3 & 7* and test the effectiveness of the program that is inclusive of a focus on EL and LIS with a high needs campus practicum residency and VMC, a comparison will be conducted between T and C groups based on (a) course GPA, (b) their performance on the sample test of state exam on principalship at the beginning and end of the program, (c) their performance on the state TExES Principal Exam, (d) scores on disposition scale and other researcher-developed instruments, (e) number of graduates assume principal position after 2 semesters of graduation, (f) their bilingual/ESL students' English proficiency as measured by state assessment, and (g) the campus English proficiency rating (taken due to the potential impact of the leader in training). For *Objective 4*, the principal candidates' observation report will be evaluated through a rubric by an observation specialist who has extensive experiences on using TBOP, and an inter-rater agreement will be established with the specialist. T and C groups will be compared on the inter-rater agreement and the quality of report in observing and provide feedback. To evaluate *Objectives 5 & 6*, T and C groups will be compared on the perceived effectiveness of summer residency program and the quality of parent and family and community systematic engagement plans. To evaluate *Objective 8*, number of presentations, professional media sources, website hits and other types of

dissemination will be documented. **Exploratory Question (EQ) 1 (Objective 1).** What is the total number of certified graduates in A-PLUS?; **EQ 2. (Objective 2).** Based on a document analysis of the curriculum, is it developed as an integrated standards-aligned and competency-based curriculum?; **EQ 3. (Objective 4)** Do T and C principal candidates differ on their observation reports, and rating agreement with an observation specialist using TBOP to provide feedback to other teachers for building instructional capacity? **EQ 4. (Objective 5)** Is there a difference on the perceived effectiveness of the summer residency program between T principal candidates with a VMC and the C principal candidates without a mentor/coach? **EQ 5. (Objective 6)** Is there a difference on the quality of parent and family and community systematic engagement plans between T and C principal candidates? **EQ 6. (Objective 7)** To what extent do T and C principal candidates' DL models differ?; **EQ 7. (Objective 8)** What is the number of presentations, professional media sources, website hits for A-PLUS, and other types of dissemination?

Confirmatory Questions (CQ) 1 (Objectives 3&7). **1. a.** Do principal candidates' performance between T and C condition differ as measured by their performance on the sample test developed from the state exam by the end of year 3, controlling for initial score prior to the start of A-PLUS?; **1.b.** Do principal candidates' performance between T and C conditions differ as measured by their course GPA by the end of year 3?; **1.c.** Do principal candidates' performance between T and C conditions differ as measured by state TExES Principal Exam?; **1.d.** Do principal candidates' performance between T and C condition differ as measured by scores on disposition scale and other researcher-developed instruments?; **1.e.** Do principal candidates' performance between T and C conditions differ as measured by campus English proficiency rating by the end of year 3?; **1.f.** Do principal candidates' performance between T and C

condition differ as measured by their bilingual/ESL students' state-administered English proficiency?; **I.g.** Is there a difference on the percent of graduates assuming principal position after 2 semesters of graduation between T and C conditions? **Data collection and analysis.** EQ1, 2 and 7 will be answered qualitatively or via descriptive statistics. These data will be collected and will be analyzed using constant comparative method and will be coded according to themes for identifying trends or patterns. Data, researcher, and method triangulation and low inference descriptors will address credibility (internal validity) and reliability of the data. EQ 3-6 will be analyzed using independent-sample t-test to detect difference between T and C groups. To answer **CQ 1.a-1.e**, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) will be conducted to examine the difference on the outcome between T and C groups, with their pre-test score as a covariate. For example, **CQ 1.b** will be analyzed with GPA at the end of year 3 as outcome variable, and scores from the sample test developed from the state exam administered at the beginning of A-PLUS will be used to control for potential initial difference. For **CQ 1.e**, campus English proficiency rating in year 1 (spring 2018) will be collected as baseline/covariate, and will be collected in the spring of 2020 again as the outcome. To answer **CQ 1.f**, two-level mixed model analysis (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) will be performed with condition as level-2 predictor, and principal candidates' individual student score from state assessment TELPAS as level-1 outcome variable. Unlike the analyses to address other **CQ** that will be conducted in year 3, the two-level model analysis will be conducted in years 2 and 3, with bilingual/ESL students' TELPAS score from the previous academic year as level-one predictor. **CQ 1.g** will be analyzed using chi-square test of proportion of distribution to identify the difference on percent assuming principal position between T and C groups. **C2 EVALUATION:** To evaluate *Component 2 Objective 1*, the

number of MOOPILs sessions and VPD hours will be documented. To evaluate *Objective 2*, teachers' perceived effectiveness of the MOOPILs will be measured via a survey distributed at the end of the program each year, 35 participants will be randomly selected annually for T and 35 for C groups (matched on specific variables of length of time teaching, gender, and grade level) to participate in VPLCs and determine the how much the school leaders grow in T VMC provided to the PLCs in T only. T teachers' perception on VMC will be evaluated in a pre and post assessment of the VPD/PLCs (recorded PLC meetings personal growth will also be evaluated via an observation rubric-observed by trained observers). To evaluate *Objective 3*, percent of the participants who will produce a MOOPIL will be documented, and such number will be compared between T and C groups. ***Exploratory Question (EQ) 1 (Objective 1)***. What is the total number of MOOPILs sessions developed and the VPD hours provided to participants?; ***EQ 2. (Objective 2)***. What is leaders' perceived effectiveness of the VPD?; ***EQ 3. (Objective 2)*** What is T leaders' perceived effectiveness of the VMC? ***EQ 4. (Objective 3)*** What is the total number of MOOPILs sessions developed? ***CQ 1. (Objective 2)*** Does the PLC with VMC make a difference on students' outcomes on the respective campuses where the school leaders serve?

Data collection and analysis. These exploratory questions will be answered qualitatively or via descriptive statistics. A survey will be developed rating the effectiveness of the program in increasing participants' knowledge and skills related to serving and leading high-need, diverse campuses (EQs 2&3). To analyze ***CQ1***, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) will be used with campus-level data collected from accountability measures including STAAR passing and TELPAS as outcome, and the data from previous school year as covariate to detect the change and the difference on such change between T and C conditions? **C 3 EVALUATION:** To

evaluate *Component 3 Objective 1*, the number of VPD hours will be documented. To evaluate *Objective 2*, practicing principals' growth will be evaluated qualitatively via reflective journal app, and fieldnotes videos of PLCs. To evaluate *Objective 3*, practicing principals' perceived effectiveness of the VPD will be examined. To evaluate *Objective 4*, campus level data on state assessment of STAAR and TELPAS will be used to examine as an indicator of the growth of participating principals. **Exploratory Question (EQ) 1 (Objective 1)**. What is the total number of VPD hours provided to principal participants?; **EQ 2. (Objective 2)**. How do principals grow with the PLCs receiving VMC?; **EQ 3. (Objective 3)** What is principals perceived effectiveness of the VPD?; **EQ 4. (Objective 4)** Is there a change on campus passing rate and English proficiency rating among these practicing principals? **Data collection and analysis**. Exploratory questions 1-3 will be answered qualitatively, as or via descriptive statistics. For **EQ 4**, disaggregated campus level accountability data will be collected from the statement assessment as the outcome variable, including STAAR (passing rate) and TELPAS (proficiency rating), focusing on English learners (STAAR and TELPAS) and low-income students (STAAR). The analysis will be conducted in year 3 via dependent-sample t-test. Outcome variables are STAAR and TELPAS data collected in the previous and current school year for each participating principal. **C4 EVALUATION:** To evaluate *Component 4 Objective 1*, the number of principals and campus leaders receiving Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) will be documented. Further, participants' perceived effectiveness of SLI will be studied through interviews. To evaluate *Objective 2*, Campus Improvement Plans will be evaluated before and after SLI to identify the improvement. A rubric will be developed to review these plans. Further, a knowledge and skill survey will be developed and administered before and after SLI to evaluate the growth on the

following topics to be covered during SLI: critical dialogues, culturally responsive leadership, strategic planning—leadership issues with diverse learners, and building instructional capacity. To evaluate *Objective 3*, campus level data on statement assessment of STAAR, TELPAS, and other accountability measures will be used to examine the impact the SLI has on student achievement on the campus where the principal and leadership team serves. ***Exploratory Question (EQ) 1 (Objective 1)***. What is the total number of participants receiving SLI?; ***EQ 2. (Objective 1)***. What is the participants’ perceived effectiveness of SLI?; ***EQ 3. (Objective 2)*** What is the difference on CIP before and after SLI?; ***EQ 4. (Objective 3)*** What is the impact the SLI on student achievement on the campus where the principal and leadership team serves? ***Data collection and analysis***. Exploratory questions 1-3 will be answered qualitatively (document analysis) or via descriptive statistics. For EQ 4, disaggregated campus level accountability data will be collected from the statement assessment as the outcome variable, including STAAR (passing rate) and TELPAS (proficiency rating), focusing on ELs (STAAR and TELPAS) and low-income students (STAAR). The analysis will be conducted in years 2 and 3 for each cohort via dependent-sample t-test. Outcome variables are STAAR and TELPAS data collected in the previous and current school year for each participating principal and leader. **C5 EVALUATION:** To evaluate *Component 5 Objective 1*, teachers’ instructional practices will be observed and data will be collected 3 times a year. Comparison will also be made between T and C campuses. Further, student level data on statement assessment of STAAR, TELPAS, and other accountability measures will be collected to identify difference between T and C classroom. To evaluate *Objectives 2&3*, T and C groups will be compared on leadership effectiveness and on inclusion practices, as well as on CIP. ***Confirmatory Questions (CQ) 1. a.*** Do teachers in the T

schools differ in their instructional practices as compared to their peers in the control campuses? **1.b.** Do T and C campuses differ on accountability measures on STAAR passing and TELPAS rating? **CQ2** Do leaders in the T schools differ from their peers in the control schools on leadership effectiveness and inclusion practices as measured by OLEI and by the Kellogg Inclusion Inventory? **EQ 1.** Is there a difference between T and C campuses on the CIP? **Data collection and analysis.** Chi-square test of independence on TBOP (TBOP is a frequency count low-inference observation instrument) will be performed to identify treatment effect. Further, two-level mixed model analysis (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002) will be performed with condition as level-2 predictor, and individual student score from state assessment as level-1 outcome variable, their scores from the previous school year will be used as level-1 predictor. To analyze **CQ 2**, two level mixed model will be established with data from OLEI and Inclusion Inventory as level-1 outcome, and condition as level-2 (school-level) predictor. EQ 1 will be analyzed qualitatively via document analysis.

D.2. Extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid & reliable performance data

As outlined above, the evaluation combines both qualitative approaches (hermeneutics, case study, and phenomenology) and quantitative methodologies. The qualitative data will be gathered through the use of survey, fieldnotes by the mentors/coaches on VMC, and the university supervisor, and open-ended survey. The quantitative data will be collected from: (a) state Principalship certification exams; results are reported as a score in the range of 100-300, with a total test scaled score of 240 as the minimum passing score. Minimum passing standards for the tests were established by SBEC with input from committees of Texas educators; (b) state English proficiency test, i.e, Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System

(TELPAS), (c) number of program completers (graduation rate) and certified principals (certification passing rate), (d) ratings of campus by the state, (e) campus passing rate on state assessment State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), (f) number of hits on the website, and (g) disposition scale and other researcher-developed instruments. TELPAS is a state-wide teacher rating scale aligned with state standards and English language proficiency standards (ELPS) to measure ELs' language skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. A composite rating is also designated in each of these four areas, as well as all these four areas for each individual EL and each campus. Internal consistency was reported to range above .90 (TEA, 2002) and the reliability estimates for the composite scores ranged between .91 to .94 (TEA, 2016), supporting reliable interpretation of the performance measure. In this project, we will use the school-level TELPAS rating as one outcome measure. STAAR is a state standardized assessment aligned with TEKS to measure students' mastery of the subject. There is a strong and positive relationship between TELAPS reading and STAAR reading (Badgett, Harrell, Carman, & Lyles, 2012). Finally, a recent evaluation on the psychometrics of STAAR indicated evidence of content validity that is aligned with state standards on each subject, and an acceptable level of internal consistency with at least .89 reliability estimates (Human Resources Research Organization, 2016). The observation instrument to be used in the project is the TBOP (Appendix J) (Lara-Alecio & Parker, 1994) to assess principals' abilities to gauge pedagogical components as a framework for effective EL instruction. Other researcher-developed measures in A-PLUS will also be examined for internal structure so as to provide valid and reliable performance data on the outcome.

D.3. Extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about

the project's effectiveness that would meet the WWC Evidence Standards with reservations.

A –PLUS will be evaluated based on the 5 components, respectively. Components 1 and 5 will be evaluated with an experimental design (i.e., RCT) implemented in the following steps. First, for *C1*, a power analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) using G*Power 3.1 was performed to determine the minimum number of participants that will yield sufficient statistical power and strong validity of the results, so as to address the confirmatory research questions (presented above). Given the criteria of alpha level at .05, power of .95 and a medium effect size of .25 (Cohen, 1988) for a repeated measure design with 3 time points (on the sample test from the state exam), the required sample size is calculated to be 44. As a result, we over-sample a total of 100 to account for possible attrition along the project. For *C5*, a clustered RCT design will be employed with 8 eligible schools randomly assigned to treatment (T=5) or control/comparison conditions (C = 5). Schools will be matched before random assignment with the following school-level demographic and achievement data: ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and previous scores on English language proficiency tests (as given by the district to determine ELL status). The use of matching before random assignment can improve the precision of the estimate, hence, increase the statistical power in group-randomized studies (Raudenbush, Martinez, & Spybrook, 2007) and can eliminate the possibility of pretest differences on matching factors despite random assignment. The integrity of such assignment will be maintained because when a school is assigned to receive T in Year 1, then this school will continue to receive T in Year 2 and 3. A team of 20 instructional leaders will be selected to participate from 8 campuses, for a total of 160 participants. The treatment effect will be evaluated through a random selection of 2 teachers/classrooms per grade level. All participating students at all T and C schools will

have been pretested (state administered) in the spring of 2017, prior to random assignment. The longitudinal design will allow us to examine the cumulative impact of the component on student outcome. In addition, **C2** will be evaluated with a QED. Of the 600 participants per year, 70 will be randomly selected to participate and matched based on the following characteristics: years of experiences, grade level, type of certification, and gender, with 35 assigned to T and 35 to C. Baseline equivalence will be examined between the T and C groups. These 3 controlled evaluations, if implemented with high fidelity, are likely to produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the WWC Evidence Standards with or without reservations. Finally, **C3** (n = 100) and **C4** (n = 200) will be evaluated using one-group pre-post design to identify change throughout the intervention.