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### **Absolute Priority 1: Performance-Based Compensation Systems (PBCS)**

LEADing Onward is an innovative strategy to improve student performance through an integrated approach to education. One critical tenet of this approach is the Performance-Based Compensation plan for educators. This plan is unique in its approach linking teacher development and student achievement through a consistent shared coaching experience grounded in the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) rubric. It describes how teachers can receive annual raises of 1%-10% based on their performance measured by the TEAM rubric. It assesses teachers' instruction, planning, environment, and professionalism through a system of frequent observations, constructive feedback, student data, and professional development that correlates with improvements in student achievement. Senior organizational and school leaders will be eligible for bonus compensation based on their schools' results for student achievement, attendance, teacher retention, and observable leadership behaviors.

### **Absolute Priority 2: High-Need Schools**

LEADing Onward will serve the five public charter schools in the LEAD Public Schools (LPS) network in Nashville, Tennessee. LPS has partnered with both the State and Metro Nashville Public Schools to turnaround some of its most challenging schools. Half of the LPS network consists of zone-enrolled schools; half are "fresh start" schools. LPS serves 3,000 students, predominantly minority and low-income children. These 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are some of the most vulnerable in the city. Students enter LPS with a history of extreme academic, social, and emotional deficits. Across the network, 76% are Economically Disadvantaged. Schools range from 54.7% to 100%. LPS schools have a history of difficulty retaining highly effective teachers. A full description of needs by school is located on pages 4-10.

## Competitive Preference Priority 1: Services in the Qualified Opportunity Zone

LPS provides services in Qualified Opportunity Zones. Two of its schools are in Opportunity Zones. The other three are open-zoned and serve students in nearby Opportunity Zones.

### (i.) Census tract numbers of the Qualified Opportunity Zones

- **47037016000** - LEAD Academy High School is in this census tract.
- **47037016000** - LEAD Cameron Middle School is in this census tract.
- **47037015628** - LEAD Southeast Middle School serves many students from this census tract as a nearby Charter School with open enrollment. The school's census tract is adjacent, number 47037015613.
- **47037013700** - LEAD Brick Church Middle School serves a high number of students from this census tract as a nearby Charter School with open enrollment. It is located in an adjacent census tract, 47037012701.
- **47037010401** - LEAD Neely's Bend Middle School serves a high number of students from this census tract. It is a Charter School with open enrollment located nearby, in census tract 47037010602.



The map above shows LEAD Charter Network School sites. Light blue borders show Opportunity Zones in Nashville. This illustrates school locations in or near Opportunity Zones.

### (ii.) How the applicant will provide services in the Qualified Opportunity Zones

LEAD Public Schools will provide services in Qualified Opportunity Zones through a Performance-Based Compensation System for educators. This program will help ensure a higher

quality of education in these neighborhoods, benefitting educators at these schools, students attending them, and the entire community living in these Qualified Opportunity Zones.

**Competitive Preference Priority 2**

LEAD Public Schools has never received a grant and has never been a member of a group that received a Teacher and School Leader Federal Grant or a Teacher Incentive Fund grant.

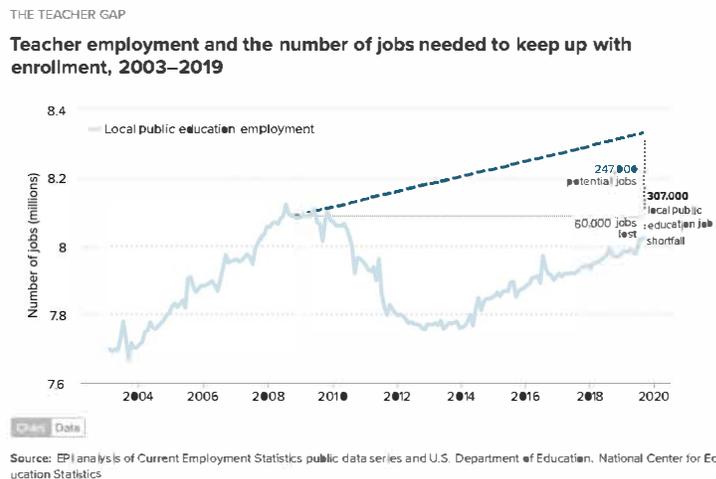
**Eligibility**

LEAD Public Schools (LPS) is a network of charter schools in Tennessee functioning as a local education agency. In Tennessee, charter schools and Charter School Management Organizations (CMO) operate through the authorization of local education agencies. LPS is a charter school network with three Metro Nashville Public Schools-authorized schools and two schools operating under Tennessee’s Achievement School District (ASD). ASD is an LEA established within Tennessee by the Tennessee First to the Top Act as an intervention for turning around schools identified in the bottom 5% for school performance. ASD schools are run by ASD staff or CMOs authorized to run them.

**A. Need for Project**

**1. Gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities  
Confronting the brutal facts: The teacher pipeline, At-Risk Students and Ourselves.**

LEAD Public Schools and education as a whole are staring into the face of an impending crisis. With a shortage of qualified teachers, ever-growing



Economic Policy Institute

student needs, antiquated compensation and development structures, the challenge facing our country is significant.

External market conditions

- The Economic Policy Institute (2019) showed a teacher shortage of 307,000.
- Ingersoll (2018) determined 44% of teachers quit the profession within five years.
- Even more troubling, Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) noted:
  - Turnover rates are 50% higher for teachers in Title I schools, which serve more low-income students.
  - Mathematics and science teacher turnover rates are nearly 70% greater in Title I schools than in non-Title I schools.
  - Turnover rates are 70% higher for teachers in schools serving the largest concentrations of students of color.
- As more and more teachers leave the profession, even fewer are pursuing education as a career. The Center for American Progress (2019) noted that Tennessee enrollment in teacher preparation has declined programs declined by 47% from 2010 to 2018.

These external market pressures are extraordinary and have significantly impacted LPS.

Working with economically disadvantaged students who are significantly at-risk and enrolled in Title I schools, LPS has averaged a 33% educator turnover over the last five years. In 2019, the number of teacher applications at LPS was half what it was in 2015, dropping from 360 to 180.

These shortages are most prevalent in high school math, science, ELL, and special education.

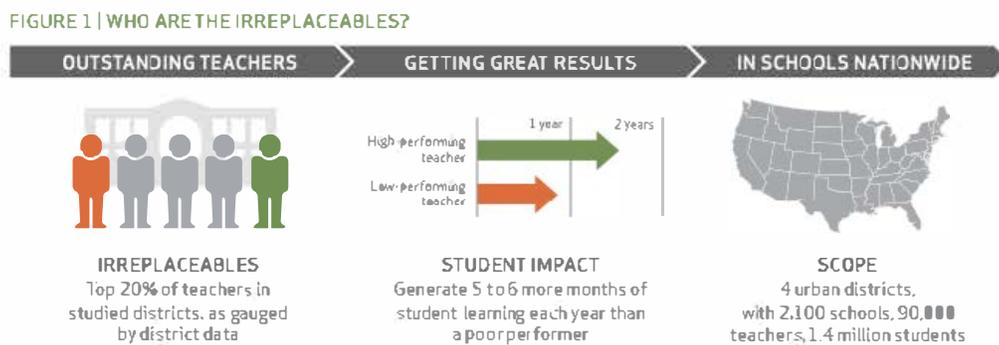
% of Teachers Retained	Brick Church	Neely's Bend	Cameron Middle	LEAD SE HS	LEAD SE MS	LEAD Academy
2018-2019	52%	50%	77%	100%	88%	70%
2019-2020	61%	68%	75%	81%	79%	79%

With declining teacher applications, LPS has focused its efforts on retaining current staff members. Over the last two years, these efforts have yielded some successes but have also highlighted the vulnerability of its two most challenged schools as shown in the above chart.

Neely’s Bend and Brick Church, LPS schools authorized through ASD, serve the most high-need

student populations and have experienced LPS’s highest teacher turnover rates. The disparity between LPS averages and its ASD schools is disconcerting. If LPS is going to realize its mission to ensure students are *Ready for College and Life*, staff retention must be improved.

While these trends are challenging, the most disturbing aspect is that teacher efficacy is significantly discounted within research; all teachers’ retention is weighted equally. The reality of this situation is that not all teachers are equally effective. The value of highly-effective educators within challenging environments is heightened, especially with high-need populations. Research conducted through The New Teacher Project (TNTP) estimates that highly-effective teachers generate five to six more months of student learning each year than a poor performer (Wu, 2012). This pivotal report included more than 90,000 teachers where the top 20% were described as “irreplaceable” and averaged nine years of teaching experience.



**The “Irreplaceables” are teachers so successful that they are nearly impossible to replace.**

Estimates of Irreplaceables percentage based on teachers with value-added or growth data; District A high performers: 21%, District B high performers: 20%, District C high performers: 20%, District D high performers: 18%; Student impact estimates calculated following the methodology of Hahnfeldt and Jackson (2012). Source: District data from SY 2009-10 and SY 2010-11.

During the 2018-2019 school year, less than 35% of LPS teachers had more than three years of teaching experience at LEAD. In February 2020, the LPS team conducted a SWOT analysis as a part of its Strategic Plan, bringing this concern to the forefront and identifying the overall inexperience of its teachers as a significant weakness. LEAD’s most effective educators are its

most valuable resource. It is imperative to create conditions to attract, develop, and retain them. If LPS is unable to confront and remedy this situation, the consequences are dire, according to Garcia and Weiss (2019):

A lack of sufficient, qualified teachers threatens students’ ability to learn. Instability in a school’s teacher workforce negatively affects student achievement and diminishes teacher effectiveness and quality. High teacher turnover consumes economic resources that could be better deployed elsewhere. Filling a vacancy costs \$21,000 on average. Carroll (2007) estimated that the total annual cost of turnover was \$7.3 billion per year, a cost that would exceed \$8 billion at present.

Serving the most At-Risk Students

Demographics for LEAD Public Schools (LPS) are similar to those of schools where students are not likely to succeed academically. While each school displays distinct characteristics, all serve student bodies that can be easily defined as At-Risk Students.

	LPS	Brick Church	Neely’s Bend	Cameron Middle	LEAD Southeast	LEAD Academy
Free/Reduced Lunch	76.0	100.0	80.5	79.7	54.7	74.1
Limited English Proficient	49.7	18.3	36.3	69.1	59.5	40.5
Students with Disabilities	12.7	19.5	14.3	12.0	9.9	11.8
Hispanic	48.0	12.4	44.1	71.4	46.0	45.9
Black	34.6	82.3	40.9	22.1	17.9	41.4
Asian	2.5	0.6	0.6	0.0	7.7	0.7
American Indian	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.2
White	14.5	4.1	14.4	6.0	28.1	11.7

With the lack of a traditional K-12 feeder school pattern, LPS schools begin enrolling students LEADing Onward is an innovative approach to improving student performance through an integrated approach to education. It will serve the five public charter schools in the LEAD Public Schools (LPS) network in Nashville, Tennessee. This plan is designed to attract, develop, and retain highly-effective educators by providing a performance-based compensation model, consistent development opportunities, and a supportive work environment. This plan is revolutionary because it links teacher development and student achievement through a consistent

shared coaching experience grounded in the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) rubric. Teachers can receive annual raises of 1%-10% based on their performance, and school leaders are eligible for bonus compensation based on their schools' results. Teacher performance will be determined using the TEAM rubric. It assesses teachers' instruction, planning, environment, and professionalism through a system of frequent observations, constructive feedback, student data, and professional development that correlates with improvements in student achievement. Senior organizational and school-based leaders earn bonus compensation based on student achievement, attendance, teacher retention, and observable leadership behaviors. Brick Church, Neely's Bend, and Cameron are all zoned enrollment schools that serve elementary school student bodies that have been on the state's priority list within the last three years. Alex Green Elementary is a feeder to LEAD Brick Church, Amqui Elementary is a feeder to LEAD Neely's Bend, and John B. Whitsitt Elementary is a feeder to Cameron. The inclusion of the elementary schools noted above signifies their student achievement ranked in the bottom 5% of all schools in the state. The students matriculating from these schools are significantly behind their peers by the time they enter 5th grade at LEAD.

Each fall, LPS students take the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. This nationally-normed assessment is given to over five million students annually, providing useful insights into the performance of incoming fifth grade students. The Fall 2019 standards for LPS fifth grade students in both Math and English/Language Arts are provided below.

	Math Standard Score	National Percentile	ELA Standard Score	National Percentile
Cameron	190.9	1 <sup>st</sup>	186.3	1 <sup>st</sup>
Brick Church	196.7	2 <sup>nd</sup>	190.3	1 <sup>st</sup>
Neely's Bend	200.2	5 <sup>th</sup>	195.0	4 <sup>th</sup>
LEAD Southeast	205.1	18 <sup>th</sup>	205.7	50 <sup>th</sup>

LPS students enter fifth grade substantially behind their peers. At the zoned enrollment schools, they enter fifth grade below the 5<sup>th</sup> percentile. LEAD Cameron students scored at the 1<sup>st</sup> percentile in both math and ELA. Brick Church students had similar scores. Neely's Bend was slightly better but still well below expectations for beginning fifth-grade students. Open enrollment students at LEAD Southeast Middle School scored higher but behind their peers, at the 18<sup>th</sup> percentile for math. Their ELA scores appear to be on track; however, a handful of high achieving students skew this average. A full 61% of students (91 of 149) start fifth grade behind their peers nationally. Furthermore, 33% of students begin fifth grade below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile, demonstrating significant reading gaps.

*Improving Equity and Access to High-Performing Teachers*

For LPS to achieve its goal of seeing every student *Ready for College and Life*, it is critical to provide students with “irreplaceable” teachers by attracting, developing, and retaining highly-effective teachers. In the last five years, this has been a challenge since turnover rates have averaged 33%. In fact, from 2016 to 2019, LPS hired 205 different teachers while never having more than 185 teaching positions in a given year. Compounding this problem, the vast majority of teacher applicants are first-year teachers.

Simply put, student achievement declines significantly when a highly-effective educator producing 1.6 years of growth is replaced with a novice teacher producing 0.8 years of growth. A student beginning the year at the 1<sup>st</sup> percentile with an ineffective teacher is likely to end the year even further behind. However, that same student could easily grow from the 1<sup>st</sup> percentile to the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile when placed with an effective educator, making up considerable ground and putting them on the path to perform at grade level. Retaining highly effective educators year after year is the key to sustained growth and closing the achievement gaps for the most vulnerable

students. LEADing Onward is designed to achieve this ideal by attracting, developing, and retaining highly-effective educators.

In Tennessee, educators are evaluated using the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) Rubric. It measures educators’ performance using ratings from one to five. A score of five is significantly above expectations; a score of one is significantly below expectations. Scores include Planning, Instruction, Environment, and Professionalism. The TEAM rubric is more fully described on pages 26-29. Educators’ ratings on this rubric vary widely across LPS schools. Generally, schools with lowest teacher retention (page 4) have lower scores on teacher evaluation (above), the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students (page 6), and the lowest academic achievement (pages 7,10). The chart above shows the disparity of highly-effective teachers across LPS.

Instruction	LPS	Brick Church	Neely's Bend	Cameron Middle	LEAD SE HS	LEAD SE MS	LEAD Academy
1.0-3.19	32.7	50.0	38.5	24.2	8.3	27.8	41.9
3.2-3.49	25.0	0.0	26.9	24.2	16.7	38.9	25.8
3.5-3.99	25.0	27.8	26.9	30.3	16.7	22.2	22.6
4.0-4.24	9.0	5.6	7.7	9.1	16.7	11.1	6.4
4.25+	8.3	16.7	0.0	12.2	41.7	0.0	3.2

The TEAM Instructional Rubric includes scores for Planning, Instruction, and Environment. Instructional averages above 4.0 are exemplary at LPS; these teachers create a cadre of LPS “irreplaceables”. However, only 17.3% of LPS teachers earned this designation while 32.7% of teachers earned scores below a 3.2. Teachers who earn a score that low typically struggle to produce the academic gains needed to close the gap for struggling students. For 2019-2020, most teachers (42 of 51) who earned a score below 3.2 were in their first or second year of teaching at LEAD. The continued development and retention of these novice teachers is a key component of LEADing Onward because after two to three years of coaching and development, these same

teachers routinely produce exemplary student growth scores. Inevitably, losing these developing teachers creates a pattern of one novice teacher replacing another with devastating impacts on student achievement. To break the cycle at LEAD, continuity of staff and their development is essential.

Professionalism	LPS	Brick Church	Neely's Bend	Cameron Middle	LEAD SE HS	LEAD SE MS	LEAD Academy
1.0-3.19	12.8	44.4	26.9	6.3	0.0	0.0	11.1
3.2-3.49	6.4	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	11.4	7.4
3.5-3.99	27.6	33.3	23.1	6.3	8.3	48.6	40.7
4.0-4.24	16.7	5.6	19.2	15.6	33.3	14.3	22.2
4.25+	32.7	16.7	30.8	59.4	58.3	59.4	18.5

The TEAM evaluation system also measures professionalism in a rubric that captures teachers’ performance outside of classroom instruction. It includes domains for professional growth and learning, use of data, school and community involvement, and leadership. The chart above compares Professionalism scores across LPS. Educators at Brick Church and Neely’s Bend showed the greatest need to improve in this area, scoring much lower than other LEAD Schools. Those schools have the largest staff turnover and are home to the most first-year teachers at LPS. These results align with both student and staff achievement.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	TN	Brick Church	Neely's Bend	Cameron Middle	LEAD SE	LEAD Academy
Students At or Above Grade Level	36.4	10.5	18.8	24.2	28.3	16.5
ELA Proficient	34.9	8.6	14.4	13.3	23.2	19.7
Math Proficient	37.0	11.0	15.4	34.4	33.5	11.7

The Tennessee Report Card shows school and district performance on TNReady end-of-year standardized assessment. Results of the most recent assessment (2019) are provided above. LPS showed a lower rate of achievement than Tennessee Schools overall. On average, 36.4% of TN students scored at or above grade level, while LPS ranged from 10.5% to 28.3%. In Math,

11.0% - 33.5% of LPS students were proficient, and in English/Language Arts only 8.6% - 23.2% ranked proficient. Student achievement is a clear opportunity for growth across LPS; however, Student Academic Growth shows promise.

Tennessee uses the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) to measure academic growth from year to year. This "value-added" system uses a complex formula that compares each student's performance on state tests with their peers and their past performance. The goal is to change the trajectory of students so that students who did not achieve in the past will be able to meet academic expectations in the future. Schools are rated from Level 1 through Level 5. Level 5 shows improving achievement to a very high degree; Level 3 designates maintaining the

STUDENT GROWTH	Brick Church	Neely's Bend	Cameron Middle	LEAD SE	LEAD Academy
Student Growth Overall	5	4	5	5	3
ELA Growth	4	5	5	5	3
Math Growth	5	3	5	5	3

current rate. At LPS, a high growth rate is critical, since students often begin school at LEAD performing one to two grade levels behind their peers. All LPS schools showed a positive Student Growth trend, mostly rating 4 and 5. Producing this level of growth across all LPS schools is essential to closing the previous gaps in student achievement. Statewide results showed overall student growth varied across the state, emphasizing the importance of student growth at LPS.

*A flawed system for teachers: under-recognized, developed, and compensated*

Based on recent estimates by The New Teacher Project (TNTP, 2015), school districts spend, on average, nearly \$18,000 per teacher toward training, mentoring, evaluating, and ongoing support for teachers annually. Their return on that investment is minimal at best. TNTP found:

- Most teachers do not appear to improve substantially from year to year - including many who fail to master foundational skills and competencies.

- Even when teachers improve, they were unable to link their growth to any particular development strategy.
- School systems are not helping teachers understand how to improve - or even that they have room to improve at all.

LEAD has overcome many of these challenges but still struggles with others. Teachers have consistently grown and developed, but that development and has been inconsistent from campus to campus. Some schools employ more instructional coaches; others require teachers to participate in more coaching sessions. Teacher development remained decentralized and was a function of the effectiveness of school-based personnel. Some schools developed and retained teachers, while others were unable to do so. The results fluctuated annually. Ultimately, due to low staff retention rates, student performance plateaued. For every highly effective LPS teacher (rated above 4.0 on Instruction), there are two teachers who are novices and likely to be ineffective (3.2 on Instructional). For LEAD Public Schools to eliminate students' achievement gaps, students need more consistent access to highly-effective educators.

That consistent access can only come as the result of attracting, developing, and retaining teachers over time. This work is complex and is driven by weighing the value gained through employment at LEAD against other organizations and opportunities. For some employees, the decision will be guided by the work, for others - development opportunities, and for others - financial rewards. Compensation is a significant factor in this process for many, and LEAD's antiquated human capital strategy and lockstep teacher pay system was a clear contributing factor to teacher turnover. The fallacies and pitfalls within this system are many. They are encapsulated well in a recent report from The New Teacher Project entitled *Shortchanged: The Hidden Costs of Lockstep Teacher Pay* (2014). LEAD fell into the same trap as most school systems where:

...the money devoted to teacher salaries is not actually paying for great teaching. Instead, it is paying for paper credentials and time on the job. Neither of these is a reliable indicator of student success, particularly beyond the first few years in the classroom. As a result, lockstep pay hampers recruitment, creates perverse incentives for retention, and ignores the urgency of bringing top talent to the schools that most need great teachers.

LPS understands that schools' core business is teaching and learning. Furthermore, teachers are the single most critical component in closing students' achievement gaps. The problem with lockstep teacher compensation is that it communicates and reinforces the opposite. It poses three significant impediments for teachers:

1. Low early-career salaries keep talented people from even considering teaching.
2. Great teachers feel pressure to leave the classroom to earn more compensation and move up the traditional career path, while less successful ones are encouraged to stay.
3. The best teachers aren't recognized for leading classrooms where they are needed most.

LEAD's starting salary for first-year teachers has changed four times in the last five years.

This year, as a result of local and regional benchmarking for first year teachers, LPS settled on an initial salary of \$44,500 to match

Metro Nashville Public Schools. Even

this baseline is significantly below

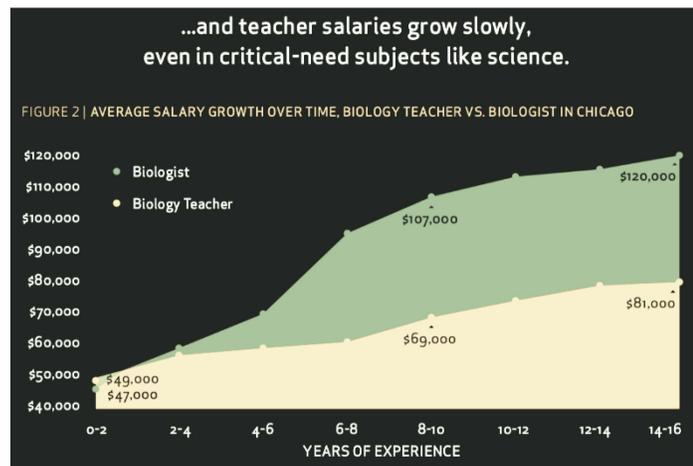
Nashville's living wage of

\$56,000. According to a recent study

by move.org, the average Nashvillian spends \$2,192.76 on necessities each

month, rating it the 23<sup>rd</sup> highest in the nation. For any teacher facing this situation, the financial rewards and sustainability of becoming a teacher are tenuous at best. A case study completed by

TNTP (2018) demonstrates this trade-off well. The for-profit world exercises a different



compensation strategy where individuals can earn more and earn it earlier throughout their career than they could in the classroom. The graph above illustrates this, comparing biologists with biology teachers.

For LEAD teachers, the lockstep system for teacher pay created an internal pressure for the best teachers to leave the classroom as quickly as possible. The upward trajectory of becoming an Instructional Coach or Dean was the only opportunity to rapidly increase their compensation trajectory as they would in any other profession. In addition, movement upward along the career track was the only way to be recognized as an effective educator. It is good to move up and to make more money, but this paradigm is contrary to what is best for students. To establish teachers as the most critical resource in LPS, a system that rewards and recognizes their contribution to the classroom and achieving incredible student outcomes must be implemented.

Within LPS and many other school districts, there is a strong disincentive for teachers to teach where they are needed most. With a lockstep system of a large school district, teachers can earn the same amount of compensation teaching at a highly affluent school in the suburbs as at a Title I school. The emotional toll, the stress, and frequent lack of parent involvement mean Title I schools often have a significantly more demanding work environment than schools in affluent settings. Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) noted turnover was 50% higher in Title I schools. As a result, effective educators working in these challenging environments face a choice: continue teaching where they are needed the most or move on to teach somewhere else. If the compensation is equal, a teacher's only leverage to create a more beneficial value proposition for themselves is to seek the environment that allows them to feel most fulfilled in their personal life. Given the challenges of these Title I schools, the only rational choice a teacher can make is to move to an easier work environment. LEAD has recognized this disincentive and has chosen

to overcome it. LEADing Onward has been intentionally crafted to attract, develop, and retain the best teachers and keep them where they are needed most.

**2. Integration with related efforts using existing funding streams**

**3. Part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students**

LEAD Public Schools (LPS) is conscientiously striving to be the “Best Place to Work” by integrating new opportunities for educators to earn rewards based on their performance and student outcomes. LPS believes in investing in teachers, recognizing they are the most important in-school factor for student success. Since its inception 13 years ago, LPS has consistently provided students across Nashville with substantial opportunities to access an excellent, college-preparatory 5th -12th grade education and has seen strong results. It has a history of college acceptance for 100% of its graduates.

In 2019, in response to the needs outlined previously, LPS began researching and designing an integrated approach aimed to improve student achievement and develop organizational capacity. Through that review, one truth kept coming to the forefront; there were no silver bullets. For decades, researchers have studied the educational landscape to understand what ingredients create the most successful learning environments to promote student achievement. Focusing on any single element within this environment could produce incremental changes for student outcomes, but building the type of sustained radical transformation desired at LEAD, a more integrated approach was required. That change could only be realized through intentional leadership.

In a 2011 report titled Return on Leadership: Competencies that Generate Growth, Komm and his colleagues found that having good people alone did make the most significant difference in an organization’s performance. Top performing organizations all had *exceptional* talent. They stated, “having good leaders is not good enough; only excellence makes the difference.” They

found no standard formula for success. No specific set of skills or competencies universally demonstrated the most significant impact. Leadership effectiveness varied depending upon the organization and its unique and specific growth strategies. They further noted that the top-tier leaders consistently made the most significant impact on the organization in three focused areas - developing critical skills throughout the organization, team leadership, and change leadership.

*Our nation's underperforming schools and children are unlikely to succeed until we get serious about leadership.*

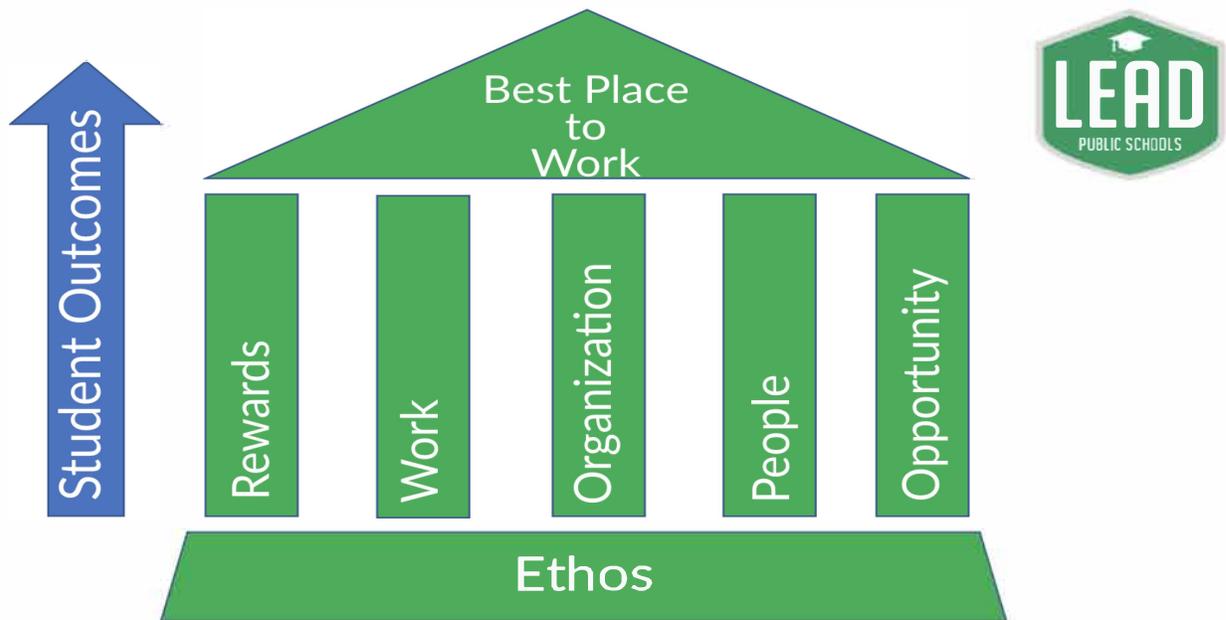
*Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr & Cohen, 2007.*

LPS network leaders determined that it was essential to clarify and define the strategy for organizational development moving forward in this initiative. This action may seem overly simplistic, but the process of realizing this vision, its composition, and aligning it with the organizational values and a series of observable behaviors was both painful and growth-evoking. The result was the LEAD Public Schools Employee Value Proposition.

#### **LEAD Employee Value Proposition (EVP)**

The goal of the LPS Employee Value Proposition is to provide clear, shared language that defines the attributes that employees and the labor market perceive as the value they gain through employment at LEAD. The power of a value proposition is harnessed by leveraging its unique ability to define goals and provide an integrated blueprint on executing them. The work of Huling, McChesney, and Covey in the Four Disciplines of Execution offers an excellent framework for leaders in bringing these tools to life. By leveraging the four disciplines: focusing on the wildly important, acting on lead measures, keeping a compelling scorecard, and creating an environment of accountability, LEAD believes it can produce transformative student outcomes even though it requires significant changes in human behavior. Below is an outline of

our employee value proposition.



This archetype clearly outlines LEAD’s organizational goals to improve Student Outcomes and become the “Best Place to Work”. LPS employees will accomplish these goals while they derive value from LEAD Rewards, Work, Organization, People, and Opportunity. *Opportunity* includes development opportunities and professional growth. *Work* includes alignment between individual interests and work content, as well as work-life balance. *People* includes the quality of coworker engagement, quality of leadership, and the team. *Organization* includes mission and purpose as well as reputation. *Rewards* includes compensation, benefits, and paid time off. The LPS Ethos serves as a foundational set of charter traits shared by students, faculty, and staff that are brought to life by clearly defined and observable leadership behaviors. While these concepts are broad, they provide the framework for LEAD to execute and achieve its goals.

The goal of improved student achievement fits into this framework and one LPS initiative for improved teacher development is outlined below.

- Focus on the wildly import - clearly defined coaching rations and protocols

- Act on leading measures - observe and respond to teachers' mastery of the five core behavior management techniques
- Keep a compelling scorecard - use a shared tracker with consistent language
- Accountability - leadership discussions daily and weekly within school teams, bi-weekly meetings with principals and heads of school, monthly network data review

This process provides a clear plan for leaders to execute, while also creating value for teachers. Teachers want to become more effective; they want to be coached. This initiative differentiates LPS in the marketplace by providing an instructional coach for every eight teachers to ensure all teachers have the support they need to become effective. Furthermore, it signals to teachers that LPS will consistently coach and develop them by providing high-impact strategies that produce significant student gains. By highlighting this goal, aligning resources, and creating a shared importance through accountability, all LEAD members can embrace this behavioral change. As a part of its EVP, other initiatives during the 2019-2020 school year included:

- A performance-based compensation strategy for teachers and leaders
- An incentivized approach to keep the best teachers in the classroom
- An established ratio of one instructional leader for every eight teachers
- A defined leadership development program including executive coaching
- A customized 360 survey tool to evaluate leadership development against a series of observable behaviors grounded in LPS Ethos
- Clear expectations for the development and management of teachers using Tennessee's TEAM evaluation model
- A best-in-class paid 16-week maternity plan

Integrated together, these initiatives are designed to produce significantly improved student outcomes through improved retention of employees, improved ability to attract talent, clarity of roles, responsibilities, more effective coaching and management, leadership readiness, and alignment.



### Finding, hiring, and retaining the right talent

*(includes staffing planning, sourcing, interviewing, hiring decisions, onboarding)*



### Managing for performance results

*(includes motivating/engaging employees, quality conversations, shared priorities, and developing employee skills and capabilities)*



### Fair compensation and the employee value proposition

*(includes performance-based compensation strategy, market data, incentive plans, total compensation, and other benefits)*



### Building organization capacity and capability

*(includes leadership credibility, job accountabilities, organization structure, effective teams, and HR administration)*

LEAD created an aligned talent development approach (above) to link these initiatives and highlight their interconnectedness. One of the most pivotal and transformative components within this approach is the Performance-Based Compensation Plan. LEAD did this to create an environment where educators could be transparently rewarded for their positive impact on students, as evidenced by their consistent efficacy. LPS used the Four Disciplines of Execution to launch this initiative.

Within performance-based compensation systems across education, too often, there is an over-reliance on state testing data to determine pay. The fallacy here is that if teachers focus too much on the outcome (improved student achievement on standardized tests), they get caught up in the whirlwind of everything that goes into it. LPS has adopted a different approach. Instead of focusing on the outcomes of student achievement, it has oriented teachers toward the leading indicators predictive of student growth that the teacher is capable of improving over time. At

LEAD, there is a statistically significant positive correlation (0.82) between TEAM evaluations and TVAAS growth. This trend is significant because it allows teachers to focus on honing their craft by leveraging the TEAM rubric to improve student outcomes through shared developmental language and as a roadmap to improving instruction. Furthermore, it links teachers' coaching with personal accountability and rewards them financially for their efforts.

Another element of the LPS PBCS is a year-end bonus for principals and organizational leaders. While leading indicators drive the entire approach, a more balanced approach is used for leaders: 50% of compensation is dependent upon student outcomes as measured by TNReady achievement and growth, and the other 50% is driven by school culture, student attendance, teacher retention, and professional growth.

Rewards focus on educator development and the process of improving rather than merely an end result across the organization. This action creates an aligned environment where compensation functions alongside Opportunity, People and Work to attract and develop and retain educators. Southwest Airlines serves as an incredible case study of an organization that has achieved similar goals through its unique employee value proposition. The company's overall attitude can best be summarized by the airline's Co-founder and Chairman Emeritus Herb Kelleher, who said, "The business of business is people." Southwest has been an organizational leader with incredible customer ratings, minimal turnover, and high employee satisfaction. These outcomes at Southwest were not the result of simply paying a premium for talent. Instead, they were rooted in an overall strategy that incorporates hiring against culture fit, modeling the way, aligning the work, and empowering and appreciating their employees. Along with compensation and culture, they make a compelling and unique proposition within the labor market. LEAD Public Schools (LPS) has a similar goal: to create a consistent culture of sustainable growth and

student achievement through this same type of integrated strategy defined by the employee value proposition.

One year ago, LPS secured funding from the Scarlett Family Foundation to begin this work in earnest by establishing a new three-year program, Developing High-Performing School Leaders. This project is helping LEAD identify and systematize strong teacher development practices rooted in a common, content-specific vision for instruction for long-term talent development. It is based on developmental leadership, using leadership coaching and supports to assist leaders toward a better understanding of themselves to help others work toward excellent instruction. Over three years, it will build on skills and knowledge for three cohort groups: beginning with leaders at the organizational level and expanding to include school leaders, then emerging leaders. Each cohort of educators will participate in executive coaching through the Leadership Research Institute, Teach Like a Champion training through TNTP, and DesignED coaching.

This program is designed to allow leaders to fully understand and leverage their individual authentic leadership style and build a customized development plan. To help leaders understand and articulate their unique and authentic leadership style, they will be assessed using a common set of shared protocols. MAI Positive Core™ will be the primary assessment. It combines the results of four highly-respected assessment tools to create a comprehensive and actionable picture of individual and team strengths, leverage points, gaps, and targeted areas for development. The four assessments include:

- **Emergenetics Assessment** - This assessment provides clear insights into preferred thinking styles and behavior preferences which are used to increase individual effectiveness and expand the capacity to work with others.
- **VIA-IS: Signature Strengths Assessment** - The Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) is a self-report questionnaire that measures 24 strengths of character

organized under six core virtues. The VIA report identifies the respondent's signature values.

- **Strengths Finder 2.0** - The results provide a stack ranking of the respondent's signature talents and develop natural talent.
- **Kolbe** – The Kolbe A Index measures a person's instinctive method of operation (MO); how a person takes action and solves problems; identifies the ways he or she will be most productive.
- **Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)** - The TKI assists in understanding your preferred conflict mode, five conflict resolution approaches, and expanded tools in resolving conflict.

An individual plan is created using information from those assessments, and executive coaching begins. A 360-degree feedback tool is given to managers, peers, and direct reports and is used to measure progress over time. This customized assessment is aligned with LEAD's ethos through a series of observable leadership behaviors. It provides keen insights into authentic leadership development across the organizational hierarchies. Once completed, this data is then coupled with more targeted executive coaching, allowing leaders to develop faster over time in their areas of most critical need. Currently, this initiative is in its second year. It began with network-level leaders and will be followed by principal leadership, then assistant principals, and instructional coaches. Through assessment and ongoing support, they will assist in diagnosing the current impact of teacher development efforts, provide systemic development to instructional leaders, and address organizational culture. This initiative is designed to retain excellent leaders where everyone is committed and contributes to the organization's mission. Over time, it is expected to contribute to the body of knowledge on school leadership and to support teacher development and its effects on student outcomes.

Alongside these human capital initiatives, LPS invested in strongly-aligned curricula in English/Language Arts and math to ensure students have access to rigorous, grade-appropriate content. To support the curriculum and teacher development initiatives, LPS made additional instructional coaching personnel investments, creating a 1:8 ratio for teacher development. These

efforts have proven effective; most teachers rated observation/feedback and professional development as effective, according to 2020 Insight evaluation results at the end of the school year.

These strategies, coupled with PBCS, align with LPS’s recently-developed Strategic Plan. It identified talent recruitment, talent and leadership development, and teacher shortages as the most critical weaknesses. At the same time, Human Capital was the greatest strength, particularly strengthening employee value, teacher development and compensation, leadership development, and the depth and breadth of its Senior Leadership Team.

Additionally, LEADing Onward is aligned with Tennessee’s Best for All initiative. Its focus on setting all students on a path to success, particularly its three elements for educators (Recruitment, Pathways, Development). This project employs Tennessee’s Best for All *Recruitment* strategies by continuing to support improvements to educator compensation, *Pathways* strategies to elevate teacher leaders and professional development, and *Development* strategies to support the development of effective leaders in schools. It also implements its student strategy, Supports, quickly and appropriately responding to students’ needs.

**4. How the proposed project will successfully address identified needs.**

LEADing Onward addresses the previously identified needs and gaps through clearly identified solutions aligned with the LPS Strategic Plan and Tennessee’s Best for All.

Gap	Objective	Alignment
Student academic achievement	1. Increase Math/ELA proficiency score for LPS students by 4%	<u>Best for All</u> Supports - Quickly and appropriately respond to students in need  Development - Support the development of effective leadership structures in schools; create cohorts of educators focused on professional development.
Teachers’ skills in instruction & professionalism (TEAM rubric)	2. At least 4%more students earn an ACT score of 21 or higher	
	3. All LPS schools earn a TVAAS rating of 4 or 5	
	4. 75% of teachers at who have been at LPS for at least 2 years score 3.75 or higher on TEAM observations	

Inexperienced teaching staff	5. Increase employee satisfaction according to EOY Teacher Snapshot/TNTP Insight Survey	Recruitment -Improvements in educator compensation <u>LEAD Strategic Plan</u>
Limited number of teacher applicants	6. LPS teacher retention rate 85% or higher; retention at ASD schools at least 80% 7. Highly effective educators in high need schools will increase by 10% 8. 45 new instructional leaders complete Leadership Development Program 9. LPS leaders will create a talent pipeline allowing for 80% of future leadership positions to be filled from within	Improved student achievement outcomes due to more effective leaders and more effective teachers. Sustained growth over tie through retention and continued development of leaders

LPS believes the best way to improve student performance is by attracting, developing, and retaining great teachers and leaders. In the winter of 2018, LPS began working in earnest on a performance-based compensation system for teachers. Part of that work included conducting a significant review of past TEAM performance by teachers as related to student outcomes. Across Tennessee, there is no correlation (0.07) between TEAM evaluation scores and TVAAS growth outcomes for students. However, LPS breaks this trend with a statistically significant correlation between its highest-performing teachers (0.82) and student growth on TVAAS. From 2016 to 2019, teachers who consistently produced Level 4 and Level 5 TVAAS growth rated as highly effective through their observations at all LPS sites. Teachers who consistently produce Level 4 and Level 5 TVAAS growth were rated as highly effective through their observations at all LPS sites. LPS showed a consistent trend, teachers improve significantly from Year 1 to Year 5. LEAD believes this is directly attributable to the consistent leadership and norming practices across its network. The inter-rater reliability and consistency amongst network observers are defining characteristics of LEAD’s talent development strategy. Understanding where teachers are and what it takes to help them improve are the foundation of LEADing Onward, and consequently, improving student achievement.

Nationally, one of the most significant critiques of performance-based compensation plans for teachers is that they over-rely on student achievement data. Because of the strong positive correlation between TEAM scores and TVAAS outcomes, LEAD chose to focus on the leading-edge internal indicators instead of the lagging student outcomes. This decision allowed teachers to focus on a series of short-term concrete goals and action steps with their coach, as opposed to the long-term and misguided approach of trying to “teach to the test”. This formed the basis for LEADing Onward, recognizing that teachers embraced the plan and that it would prove valuable in improving student achievement.

### **Quality of the Project Design**

#### **1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale**

LEADing Onward is the culmination of extensive research and collaborative planning aligned with Tennessee's Best for All strategic plan and LEAD's desire to improve teaching and learning across the Network. The LPS team was deliberate in seeking counsel and outside expertise as it reviewed best practices related to organizational development, employee value propositions, teacher and principal development, and performance-based compensation. LEAD took an innovative approach in designing its plan. The team did not focus on a single strategy to determine what worked. Instead, it analyzed each aspect of best practices in this context. LPS is confident that LEADing Onward will produce positive outcomes for students during the funding period and beyond, because its key program elements are based in sound evidence of principles of human and organizational development as well as K-12 education. LEAD Public Schools (LPS) believes that the best way to improve students' outcomes is by recruiting, developing, and retaining highly-effective teachers and leaders. It developed a plan to redesign the Employee Value Proposition by providing clear, shared language that describes "why". The "why" at LEAD is clearly defined as significantly improved student outcomes and a desire to be the "Best

Place to Work" in Nashville. Simon Sinek says, “**People don't** buy what **you do**; they buy why **you do it**. And what **you do** simply proves what **you believe**”. LEAD believes that by looking critically at the work, the opportunity, and the rewards, they can craft an integrated approach to develop and sustain capacity building across all organization levels for the foreseeable future.

Initiative	Research Basis
Performance-Based Compensation	A merit pay program was associated with a modest but statistically significant positive effect on student test scores (Springer, et al., 2017)
Teacher Development	Highly-effective teachers generate five to six more months of student learning each year than a poor performer (Wu, 2012).
Principal Development	School leadership is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning. School leadership alone can determine 5-7% of overall student performance (Leithwood, et al., 2010).
Educator Retention	Students from schools with higher teacher turnover scored lower in both English/Language Arts and Math. Schools with more low-performing and Black students had even more pronounced effects (Ronfeldt, et al., 2013).
TEAM model	Since implementing the TEAM evaluation model for teachers in 2011, Tennessee demonstrated the fastest improvement in the US, according to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). Tennessee moved from ranking 45 <sup>th</sup> in the nation to 25 <sup>th</sup> and 30 <sup>th</sup> in math and ELA, respectively.
Employee Value Proposition (EVP)	EVP is proven to help organizations recruit and compete for top talent. Organizations are able to effectively source from more than 60% of the labor market (Yehuda, 2019).
Signing and Retention Bonuses	Level 5 teachers that receive a retention bonus were 23% more likely to remain teaching in a Priority School (Springer, Rodriguez, and Swain, 2012).

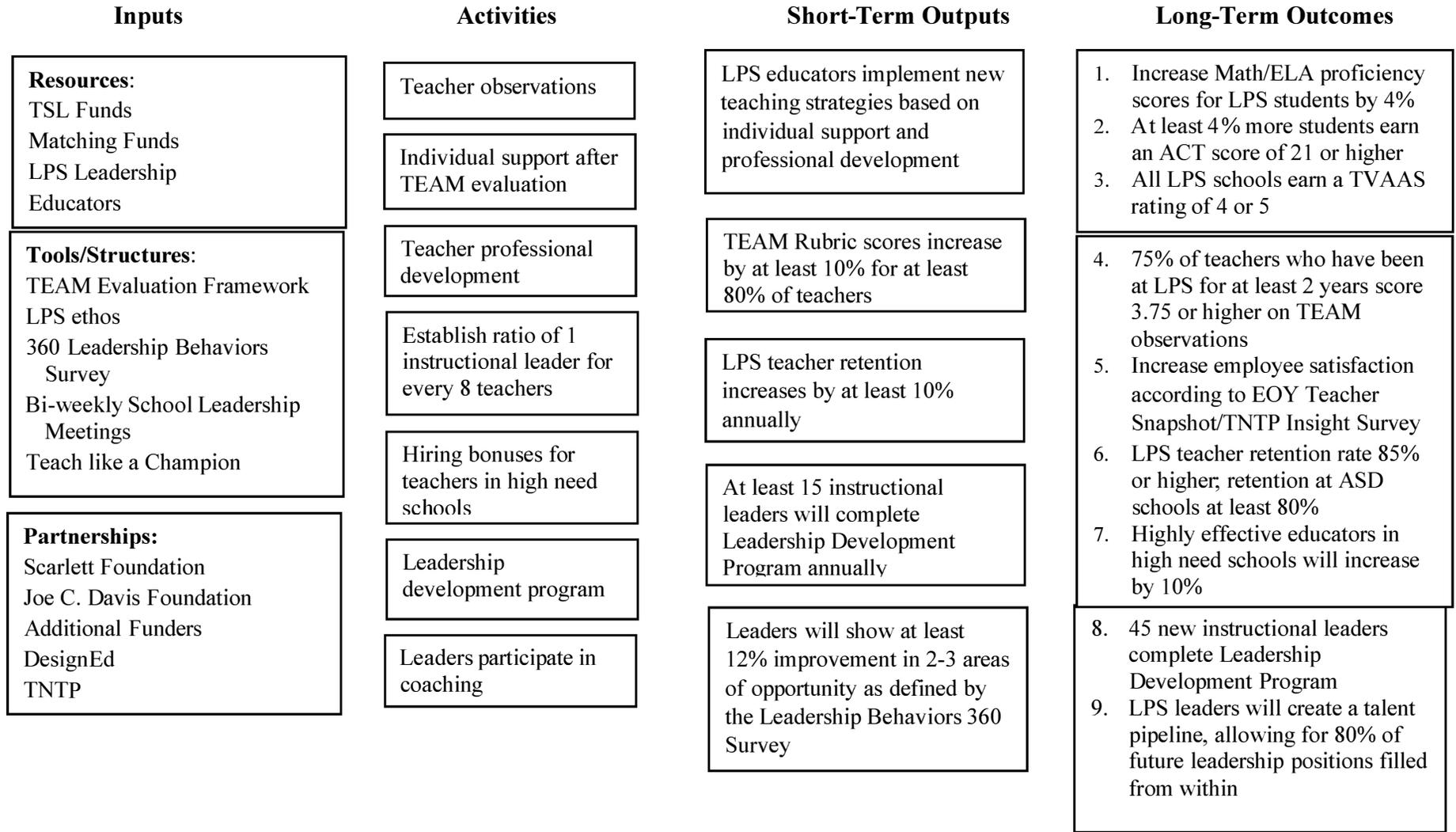
LEADing Onward provides an integrated approach engineered to avoid past pitfalls.

Initiative	Why they fail - Pitfalls to avoid
Performance-Based Compensation	Over-reliance student performance data Systems too complex to implement or too simplistic to be effective Environment of individualism that undermines teacher collaboration (Springer, et al., 2017)
Teacher Development	Teacher awareness of need to improve Teacher awareness of how to improve (TNTP, 2015).
Principal Development	Most traditional principal preparation programs lack cultural leadership development or human development component (Kouzes and Posner, 2007)
Educator Retention	Challenging work environments Lack of support, especially for new teachers Lack of respect Inadequate compensation
TEAM model	33% of teachers felt their schools had inadequate resources to help them improve (Tennessee Department of Education, 2016)
Employee Value Proposition	Widespread ambiguity and lack of clarity around EVP Less than half of companies have a long-term plan for getting the most from the EVP (Yehuda, 2019).
Signing/Retention Bonuses	Even when bonuses drew teachers to the poorest schools, they could not compensate for the lack of support in these schools (David, 2008).

The LEADing Onward logic model, as seen on the following page, highlights the organizational action plan to achieve these transformational outcomes for students and LPS. The integrated nature of this approach is unique as it takes neither a top-down nor bottom-up approach to achieving the defined goal.

## LEADing Onward Logic Model

Goal: Improve student achievement by increasing ability to attract, develop, and retain highly effective educators across LPS schools



LEAD Public Schools (LPS) uses the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) evaluation rubric for teachers as a part of its PBCS. Tennessee's Department of Education developed TEAM to measure teacher efficacy and to support educators in doing their best work by providing them with a model that helps them continuously improve their practice. The TEAM rubric is designed so that all teachers have room to grow and improve their craft. Even high-performing teachers have opportunities to grow and develop in specific areas such as questioning, while novice teachers can focus their efforts on mastering the elements of classroom management. TEAM's classroom observations are scored on a rubric that outlines clear expectations of high-quality instruction, planning, classroom environment, and professionalism. It is based on comprehensive standards with variations for all types of educators (general educator, English as a Second Language, alternative education, special educators, physical educators, and other specialties). LEAD has developed a consistent protocol in which all teachers receive at least three formal evaluations for at least 45 minutes, which are coupled with bi-weekly coaching and feedback. These evaluations are distributed equally across two semesters; at least half are unannounced. The TEAM rubric assesses high-quality instruction and facilitates productive conversations about instruction. Evaluations differentiate performance for teachers and school administrators into five effectiveness groups according to their evaluation results. The five groups are: Significantly Above Expectations (Level 5), Above Expectations (Level 4), At Expectations (Level 3), Below Expectations (Level 2), and Significantly Below Expectations (Level 1).

Evaluator training is an essential component of on-boarding for all new and returning instructional leaders at LPS. This foundation ensures equity and consistent implementation of LPS human development initiatives and PBCS. This shared vision of excellent instruction has

allowed LPS to strongly correlate instructional practices measured by the TEAM rubric into leading indicators of student achievement, Key practices to ensure fidelity are extensive and time-consuming, but this system wide fidelity allows LPS to leverage TEAM as a leading indicator for student achievement on a consistent basis. They include:

- All observers achieve TEAM certification, which includes a sample assessment of scoring to ensure alignment with national raters at NIET.
- All observers norm consistently by practicing scoring and coaching together within the LPS network and their schools.
- New instructional leaders are provided the opportunity to norm at other LPS schools.
- Walkthroughs during the first month of school and the first round of TEAM observations are co-observed, pairing two instructional leaders at the same school to ensure fidelity.
- Network teams aggregate and analyze TEAM data reporting out trends to network leadership and principals.
- The Head of Academics and Innovation co-observes and collaboratively scores with all new instructional leaders across LPS.

Within, the TEAM model, teachers are scored in the areas of Planning, Environment, Instruction, and Professionalism. Each area has clearly defined expectations for scores of 5, 3, or 1, including the option of scoring 4 or 2 for performance between those ratings. Each section's scores are averaged for an overall score for Planning, Environment, Instruction, and Professionalism. The complete rubric is in the Appendix.

- **Planning** - Instructional Plans, Student Work, Assessment
- **Environment** - Expectations, Managing Student Behavior, Environment, Culture
- **Instruction** - Standards and Objectives, Motivating Students, Presenting Instructional Content, Lesson Structure and Pacing, Activities and Materials, Questioning, Academic Feedback, Grouping Students, Teacher Content Knowledge, Teacher Knowledge of Students, Thinking, Problem Solving
- **Professionalism** - Professional Growth and Learning, Use of Data, School and Community Involvement, Leadership

Research from TNTP’s Mirage study (2015) noted that teachers improved most when their development is defined clearly, as observable measurable progress toward an ambitious standard for teaching and student learning. Instructional leaders at LEAD leverage the TEAM rubric to establish that ambitious standard and to outline the concrete action steps teachers can work towards to improve student outcomes. This work is essential for the development of teachers, and it permeates the culture of LEAD far beyond the formal TEAM structures. Teachers and instructional leaders use this consistent language for development through their weekly and bi-weekly coaching sessions. By leveraging the TEAM framework and investing in additional coaching resources to create a

1:8 ratio of instructional leaders, LEAD has been able to create and implement an effective developmental approach for all

<b>Years at LEAD</b>	<b>Average TEAM Score 18-19</b>	<b>Average TEAM Score 19-20</b>	<b>Score Difference from 18-19 to 19-20</b>
<b>&lt;1 year</b>	3.21	-	-
<b>1</b>	3.46	3.62	0.16
<b>2</b>	3.64	3.77	0.13
<b>3</b>	3.89	3.93	0.04

teachers. The table above highlights the TEAM Instruction average scores for teachers by their years of experience at LEAD. Generally, after two years at LEAD, teachers score effective. By their third year at LEAD, they score highly-effective.

Increases in teachers’ scores on the Instruction rubric over time are driven by evaluation observations. Instructional Coaches and/or School Administrators evaluate teachers during at least three instructional observations and corresponding performance review conversations, which involve feedback on their instruction and professional responsibilities. These observations are effective, because they are not used solely to rate teachers and determine their current skills. They designed as support for teachers by recognizing their strengths and providing assistance in

developing areas that need improvement. During post-observation conferences, coaches provide actual individualized professional development.

LEAD Public School – TEAM Overview from 2019-20

<u>Observation 1</u>	<u>Observation 2</u>	<u>Observation 3</u>	<u>Observation 4</u>
Status: Announced	Status: Unannounced	Status: Announced	Status: Optional
Dates: 9.3.19 – 10.17.19	Dates: 10.28.19 – 12.13.19	Dates: 1.13.20 – 2.28.20	Dates: 3.9.20 – 4.9.20
Included Rubrics:	Included Rubrics:	Included Rubrics:	Included Rubrics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Instruction</li> <li>• Professionalism (Draft)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning*</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Instruction</li> <li>• Professionalism (Draft)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction</li> <li>• Professionalism (Draft)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction</li> </ul>
			*Note – Professionalism scores will be finalized by 4.15.20

For each observation and performance review, the evaluator and teacher present draft scoring of the indicators outlined in the professionalism rubric to calibrate and appraise current performance regarding these expectations. For Observations 1 and 3, a formal pre-conference is held to evaluate the lesson plans. For Observation 2, instructional plans are randomly selected by evaluators and scored for planning purposes. By March 1, teachers may request an additional instructional observation by the evaluator or another individual given they have met the pre-established criteria. These observations are unannounced and are averaged with the scores earned from the previous three observations only if they improve the overall score. They will not replace their lowest observation.

**Evidence-Basis for TEAM** - This rubric is modeled after the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching's evaluation model, based on educational psychology and cognitive science research. It focuses on learning and instruction, as well as an extensive review of national and state teacher standards organizations, including Schacter & Thum (2004), Milanowski, Odden & Youngs (1998), Danielson (2007), incorporating guidelines developed by The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, The National Board for Professional Teacher Licensure, Massachusetts' Principles for Effective Teaching, California's

Standards for the Teaching Profession, Connecticut's Beginning Educator Support Program, and The New Teacher Center's Developmental Continuum of Teacher Abilities.

**Prior Experience in Developing and Implementing Similar Activities** - LEAD Public Schools implemented a Performance-Based Compensation pilot program for teachers during 2019-2020. During this year:

- 157 teachers were eligible for an end-of-year performance adjustment
  - 138 teachers plan to return for 2010-2021
  - Current retention of those eligible (138 of 157 = 87%) represent a 20% increase from the five-year retention rate of 67%. Previously, the best retention rate was 77% (2018-2019).
  - Eligible teachers earned an average pay increase of approximately 5.2%
  - 16.5% of eligible teachers earned an adjustment of 10%
  - 88 of 157 eligible teachers earned an increase of 5% or more through the end-of-year adjustment. Of these, 91% (80 of 88) stated they intend to return for the 2020-2021 schoolyear.

LEAD’s initial results for PCBS are promising, but they could not rectify the prior year’s increases in baseline teacher compensation due to the lockstep teacher program. As a result, LPS chose to implement a one-time adjustment to teachers’ base compensation. It was also based on classroom performance with specific incentives targeted toward the longest-tenured teachers. This mid-year adjustment, coupled with the end-of-year adjustment resulted in teachers, on average, earning a 8.9% increase. LEAD’s best teachers, the “irreplaceables”, earned more than a 20%

pay increase this year. These data points represent a paradigm shift for teachers at LPS. This demonstrates its profound impact on improving academic outcomes. Unfortunately, TNReady, Tennessee’s standardized assessment, was not administered in 2020 due to the

<b>TEAM Score</b>	<b>&lt;2 Years’ Experience at LPS</b>	<b>2+ Years’ Experience at LPS</b>
1-3.19	0	0
3.2-3.49	\$375	\$625
3.5-3.99	\$625	\$1,250
4.0-4.24	\$875	\$1,875
4.25+	\$1,250	\$2,500

COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, it is not possible to correlate the 2020 academic results with this data. Given past results, LPS is confident its students would have shown significant progress.

The chart on the right illustrates compensation based on mid-year TEAM scores.

LPS has experience successfully implementing large Federal and State grants. It secured a Charter Schools Program grant for \$4,000,000 over five years to open two new schools. They are currently in good standing and achieving goals outlined. LPS implemented a Federal School Improvement Grant to support its turnaround schools, a Priority Schools State Grant for \$350,000, a District Priority School Improvement Grant (\$175,000), and a School Level Competitive improvement Grant (\$825,000). These grants provided additional support through Instructional Coaches, Response to Intervention Coordinators, and training for coaches. It has received Charter Schools Facilities Grants of \$300,000-\$400,000 annually for the past three years to upgrade and support school sites.

**2. Evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes.**

**Educator Feedback** - LEADing Onward is designed with ongoing formative performance feedback and support for educators after each observation and formative assessment of the project's implementation and impact. Bi-weekly Leadership Team meetings at the school and network level include data discussions on performance of educators and students. Data gathered will inform decision-making for project modifications and will be used to help ensure the annual objectives are accomplished and the final project goals are attained.

Fidelity checks of evaluators are an important ongoing element. They are a vital part of initial training through the Tennessee Department of Education and include follow-up checks to ensure fidelity across all evaluators in the state. LPS has built additional training protocols and fidelity checks within its framework. Details of this plan are on pages 29-30.

**Project Evaluation** - Upon notification of funding, LPS will contract with an external evaluator to ensure an objective evaluation designed to determine project impact, attainment of objectives, and achievement of GPRA outcomes. The evaluator will have experience in

education, Federal grant evaluation, and addressing GPRA measures and project goals. LEADing Onward evaluation will include formative evaluation to guide implementation and determine any necessary modifications to help ensure it meets its project goals and achieves GPRA outcomes.

LEADing Onward Project Outcomes, GPRA Measures	
<b>Goal: To improve student achievement by increasing ability to attract, develop, and retain highly effective educators across LPS schools</b>	
GPRA 1 - The percentage of educators in all schools who earned performance-based compensation.	
GPRA 2 - The percentage of educators in all High-Need Schools who earned performance-based compensation.	
GPRA 3 - The gap between the retention rate of educators receiving performance-based compensation and the average retention rate of educators in each high-need school whose educators participate in the project.	
GPRA 4 - The number of school districts participating in the TSL grant that use educator evaluation systems to inform human capital decisions: Recruitment; hiring; placement; retention; dismissal; professional development; tenure; promotion; or all of the above.	
GPRA 5 - The number of High-Need Schools within districts participating in a TSL grant that use Educator Evaluation and Support Systems to inform the following human capital decisions: recruitment; hiring; placement; retention; dismissal; professional development; tenure; promotion; or all of the above.	
GPRA 6 -The percentage of performance-based compensation paid to educators with State, local, or other non-TSL Federal resources.	
GPRA 7 - The percentage of teachers and principals who receive the highest effectiveness rating.	
GPRA 8 - The percentage of teachers and principals in high-needs schools who receive the highest effectiveness rating.	
	<b>Evaluation Source</b>
Outcome 1 - Increase Math/ELA proficiency score for LPS students by 4% annually	TNReady
Outcome 2 - At least 4% more students earn an ACT score of 21 or higher	ACT
Outcome 3 - All LPS schools earn a TVAAS rating of 4 or 5	TVAAS
Outcome 4 - 75% of teachers who have been at LPS for at least 2 years score 3.75 or higher on TEAM observations	TEAM
Outcome 5- Increased employee satisfaction according to EOY Teacher Snapshot/TNTP Insight Survey	Teacher Snapshot Survey
Outcome 6 - LPS teacher retention rate 85%; at ASD schools will be at least 80%	HR records

Outcome 7 - Highly effective educators in high need schools will increase by 10%.	TEAM, HR
Outcome 8 - 45 new instructional leaders complete Leadership Development Program	PD Records
Outcome 9 - LPS leaders will create a talent pipeline allowing for 80% of future leadership positions to be filled from within.	HR Records

**3. Differentiated Levels of Compensation**

An important aspect of the PBCS at LPS is its ability to recognize “irreplaceable” teachers through transparent differentiated levels of compensation. Teachers’ performance on the TEAM rubric determines their salary increase for the upcoming school year. Their evaluation score is comprised of three instructional observations and a professionalism score on the TEAM rubric. Instructional Rubric scores are averaged and account for 70% of overall score. Professionalism scores are averaged and contribute 30% of the score. As shown in the following chart, teachers are placed into a band (Apprentice, Practitioner, or Professional) based on their current salary. These bands outline performance thresholds and raises possible for the year. Promotion to the Advanced Teacher Band requires an application and approval of an external unbiased committee.

LEAD Public Schools Performance Compensation System									
Base Pay	\$44,000		\$48,000		\$52,000		\$65,000+		
Performance Band	Apprentice Band		Practitioner Band		Professional Band		Advanced Band (appl)		
Salary Increase Based on TEAM Rubric Score	1.0-3.19	2%	1.0-3.19	1%	1.0-3.19	1%	1.0-3.19	1%	
	3.2-3.49	4%	3.2-3.49	3%	3.2-3.49	2%	3.2-3.49	2%	
	3.5-3.99	6%	3.5-3.99	5%	3.5-3.99	3%	3.5-3.99	3%	
	4.0-4.24	8%	4.0-4.24	7.5%	4.0-4.24	5%	4.0-4.24	4%	
	4.25+	10%	4.25+	10%	4.25+	10%	4.25+	5%	

Principals and Leaders have the opportunity to earn up to a \$20,000 bonus based on school improvement. This multi-faceted approach is based LPS needs and uses data from TVAAS student growth (30%), TNReady student achievement (20%), teacher retention (20%), student attendance (10%), Insight survey (10%), and individual performance goals (10%). Details for

this bonus follow. In addition to this, Principals can earn an additional \$5,000 based on the TN accountability framework and Reward School status.

**TVAAS - 30% (up to \$6,000)**

- Level 5 = 100%
- Level 4 = 80%
- Level 3 = 50%

**TNReady - 20% (up to \$4,000)**

- 5% Success rate improvement for Math and ELA = 100%
- 4% Success rate improvement for Math and ELA = 80%
- 3% Success rate improvement for Math and ELA = 60%
- 2% Success rate improvement for Math and ELA = 40%
- 1% Success rate improvement for Math and ELA = 20%

**Teacher Retention - 20% (up to \$4,000)**

- 75%+ retention = 100%
- 70%-74% retention = 80%
- 65%-69% retention = 60%

**Student Chronic Absenteeism - 10% (up to \$2,000)**

- 100% - Earn above a 3.75 overall rating for Chronic Absenteeism
- 80% - Earn 3.00 - 3.74 overall rating for Chronic Absenteeism
- 60% - Earn 2.5 - 2.99 overall rating for Chronic Absenteeism

**Insight Survey - 10% (up to \$2,000)**

- 100% - Earn an 8.0+ score for the instructional culture index score on the Insight Survey
- 80% - Earn a 7.0-7.9 score for the instructional culture index score on the Insight Survey
- 60% - Earn a 6.0-6.9 score for the instructional culture index score on the Insight Survey

**Key Performance Indicators - 10% (up to \$2,000)**

- Principal and Heads of School will agree to 1-2 individual performance goals aligned to the largest developmental opportunity for the Principal.

**C. Quality of the Management Plan**

LEADing Onward is likely to achieve its objectives on time and within budget, because it will be supported by current leadership, will be led by an effective, experienced Project Director, and will be supported by an Advisory Board. It has clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

LEAD Public School's Head of Academics and Innovation, Chris Elliott, will be integral to the project's success. Together with Dwayne Tucker, LEAD's Chief Executive Officer, will

guide the project, ensuring it continues to adhere to the LEAD ethos and provide needed supports for teachers and school leaders in improving performance and recognizing this through compensation. He will allocate 25% of his time toward this initiative.

LPS will hire a Project Director (1.0 FTE) with experience in compensation analysis and familiarity with talent development within an educational setting to lead and manage grant implementation for this initiative. Ideally, this individual will be designated as a Certified Compensation Professional (CCP). This credential is indicative of the type of subject matter expertise that was instrumental in designing LEAD's model and will be vital in moving forward. The Project Director will direct, coordinate, and ensure the project's integrity by adhering to Federal requirements, funding guidelines, and the LEADing Onward proposal. The Project Director will monitor, track, and assess project goals and outcomes on an ongoing basis and manage the grant budget, ensuring the expenditures are allowable and that the match is fully attained. This individual will work closely with LPS Leadership and network with other agencies, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and private sector businesses for future program development and funding. The complete job description is in the Appendix.

The Vice President of Development, Eloise Alexis, will support this initiative, working with the Project Director and current partners, seeking additional philanthropy to expand funding necessary due to the compounding effect of salary increases, and working toward project sustainability. She will also serve on the project's Advisory Board.

The LPS Director of Talent, Patrick Rudd, will support this initiative and work with the Project Director in implementing the TEAM Evaluation Rubric and confirming that it is implemented with fidelity. He will also serve on the project's Advisory Board.

The LEADing Onward Advisory Board will meet quarterly to discuss the project’s status and determine if any modifications should be put in place. Members of this group will include the Project Director, the Evaluator, Network Leadership, a Principal, an Instructional Coach, a teacher, Director of Talent Resources.

LPS has a history of securing and effectively implementing major grants and donations to begin and sustain educational initiatives. The proposed project will be implemented with the same attention to detail and timeliness.

**Timeline for Implementation**

Activity/Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility
Hire Project Director and Evaluator	10/20-11/20	HAI*, CEO
Finalize project budget with key stakeholders	10/20	CEO*, CFO, HAI, PD
Finalize contracts with partners	11/20	HAI*, PD
Establish baseline data	11/20	EV
Convene Advisory Board	11/20, quarterly	HAI*, PD
Refine evaluation tools	1/21	EV
TEAM training for new Instructional Coaches	11/20	HAI
TEAM evaluations for all educators, 3-4 times annually	9/20, ongoing	HAI
Provide individualized coaching based on needs identified during TEAM evaluations	11/20, ongoing	Instructional Leaders
Model and coach effective instructional strategies	11/20, ongoing	HAI, Instructional Leaders
Salary adjustments for teachers determined based on TEAM ratings	5/21, annually	HAI, HR
Administer End-of-Year surveys to educators	5/21	EV
Implement educator focus groups	5/21	EV
Collect data - educator performance, student performance, school-level data	6/21	EV
Evaluate, compile, review Year 1 data to refine project	7/21	PD*, HAI, CEO, VPD, DT
Administrator bonuses paid	9/21, annually	CFO, HR

Implement Year 2 with modifications	9/21	PD*, HAI, VPD, DT
Compose and submit annual ED report	10/21, annually	PD*, EV
Implement plan for sustainability through fundraising	10/21, ongoing	VPD*, VPO

*PD- Project Director, CEO-Chief Executive Officer, HA -Head of Academics and Innovation, VPD- VP of Development, VPO-VP of Operations, DT- Director of Talent, HR-Human Resources, EV-Evaluator. Where more than one individual will be involved, an \* is provided to show main responsibility.*

#### D. Adequacy of Resources

##### 1. Likelihood the proposed project will result in system change or improvement

This initiative is expected to result in systems change because it is grounded in research on education, performance compensation, and business leadership. LEAD Public Schools has successful experience implementing major grants and new initiatives, it is in good financial health, and the proposed project will be guided by current LPS Network Leaders and a well-qualified, experienced Project Director.

##### 2. Likelihood to build local capacity

LEADing Onward is likely to improve the education of students attending high need schools because it includes a comprehensive program not only to evaluate and compensate educators on effective teaching, but also because it provides the necessary supports through individual training and coaching that will guide them in implementing best practices based on individual needs.

##### 3. How the activities will continue after the grant period ends

The real measure of sustainability will be teacher performance leading to improved student achievement and retention of highly effective educators after the TSL Federal grant concludes. To help ensure adequate funding is available for future years, data and outcomes from the project's impact will be shared with philanthropic organizations and individual contributors. Individual donors and family foundations working to create impact in the Nashville area continue to express interest in LEAD Public School's vision to the best place to work in

the city, especially for teachers. The Vice President of Development will work with the CEO and Board of Directors, the Project Director and current philanthropic partners to seek additional philanthropy. LEAD will also continue efficient stewardship of the budget and other resources in order to make as much available for the performance compensation program. This is critical since educators will earn raises rather than bonuses for their PBCS. The LEAD Leadership Team has a history of securing the funding for the pilot phase of this initiative, as well as for other significant initiatives, and is expected to also accomplish this for LEADing Onward.

LPS augments its budget to ensure sufficient support for students and faculty through funding from private foundations, corporate giving programs, special events and individual donations. It is dedicated to actively raising philanthropic funds for the benefit of its students from a variety of sources. It is supported by a number of different foundations and corporations, including: Advance Financial, Ajax Turner, Broad, Capstar Bank, Charter School Growth Fund, Clarcor, Deloitte, Frist, Lee, Nashville Rotary, Parks Family, Pinnacle, Scarlett, and the US Department of Education. LPS It anticipates total philanthropic dollars of \$1M per year. For example, LPS has secured significant funding through foundations, Federal grants, and State grants. It is expected to continue to receive similar support throughout the life of this initiative, during and after Federal funding.

All LPS schools are in good financial health, rated as “Excelling” in the Financial Framework. LPS has obtained clean audits every year it has been in operations and has built a healthy cash balance of over 60 days cash on hand. Its board, and especially the LPS Finance Committee, has significant financial and accounting experience from the private sector. LPS Board members have a history of 100% making monetary contributions and 100% making in-kind contributions.

LPS purposefully provides conservative estimates of both revenue rates, enrollment and major expenses in order to ensure that school budget targets are met the opening of financially sustainable new school models, with each of the opening schools individually generating modest surpluses at scale. Its schools benefit from the network-wide positive fund balance during the first start up years and then begin to contribute to the positive fund balance over time.

### **Partners' Commitment**

The matching gifts contributed in support of this grant will be funded utilizing private gifts and grants, in-kind contributions, as well as public grant funds that align with the grant deliverables and outcomes. They are more fully outlined in the Budget Match Narrative. The LPS ethos of Commitment, Self-Reliance, Discipline, Courage and Serving Others drives not only its behaviors in the classroom and offices across the network, but also guides development and expenditures in network and school budgets.

LPS's confidence in its ability to identify and secure grant matching funds is based on its history of good stewardship of allocated budgets and philanthropic dollars. The commitment to ethical and transparent leadership by the CEO, Board of Directors and Senior Leadership Team have attracted support from local and national foundations, organizations, corporations and individual donors. The CEO and Board are engaged in governance and fundraising, including making their own significant investments in LEAD and bringing other current and prospective donors to the table. Fundamentally, LEAD operates in the belief that the long hours and outcomes-driven work that teachers and school leaders provide deserve a living wage, and access to increases that can make a lasting impact on economic stability.

### **Support and Commitment from Educators**

Dwayne Tucker, LEAD's Executive Director sought to attract and retain good teachers through a model that incentivized a teacher's development in a straightforward way. Initially,

teachers were skeptical about performance pay due to concerns about rewards based on student test scores. However, they quickly recognized that this plan was specifically designed for them based on their performance, acknowledging that as their performance improved student achievement would, too. In fact, shortly after adopting this PBCS, one of the teachers, Alyssa Patel, was quoted in the local newspaper, “It allows you to drive your own path forward which you don’t usually get in teaching.”

LPS teachers completed an End-of-Year survey where it was clear they felt their school was committed to improving their instructional practice and they overwhelmingly approved of the PBCS and felt it was fair.

- 85.1% felt fairly compensated for their work. (12.8% were neutral.)
- 87.2% believed that this approach to compensation made sure that great teachers were paid well. (12.8% were neutral.)
- 63.8% felt that evaluation ratings were accurate reflections of teacher effectiveness. (29.8% were neutral.)

Teacher support was clearly evident in the final, open-ended question: “What change have you appreciated the most within our organization as an employee?” Nearly all (96%) identified the compensation system and/or its supports. One teacher said, “I really appreciated the increased amount of opportunities to receive personalized feedback on my instruction. Overall, I appreciate the intentionality of increasing teachers’ salary to keep good teachers teaching longer. It was nice to see a substantial increase in salary this year and I look forward to the future salary incentives provided by LPS in the future.” Others stated “I have loved the coaching relationships that have grown within my first year with LEAD. I feel seen and valued. It motivates me to continue working hard.” And “Unlike many organizations and companies LEAD stands out and changes things that are important for employees.”

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