Introduction: Marlboro County School District (MCSD), with its headquarters located in the town of Bennettsville in Marlboro County, South Carolina, is a small school district in a rural community made up of several towns. The towns are Bennettsville, Blenheim, Clio, McColl, Tatum, and Wallace, South Carolina. MCSD has seven rural, community centered schools and 298 personnel, which includes 269 teachers, eight principals, and eight assistant principals. The students who attend MCSD schools are from high-poverty communities, with 100% of the students receiving free and reduced priced meals. The demographics of the students are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Area	Enrolled	AA	Hispanic	Other	White	FARM
Marlboro County School District	3,964	59%	1%	11%	29%	100%
South Carolina	778,047	27 %	6%	4%	66%	62%

Source: National Center for Children in Poverty, 2018; Marlboro County School District, 2020. AA – African American; FARM – Free and Reduced-priced Meals.

Marlboro County School District's vision is to partner with all stakeholders to develop responsible citizens, lifelong learners, and global leaders. The mission of MCSD is to provide a quality education and enable all students to achieve their highest potential. The beliefs, goals, and prime objectives (See appendix) are driven by the vision and mission of the district, along with the affirmations, known to the children and staff as #345 - (3 words) I love you, (4 words) I care about you, and (5 words) I am here for you. The purpose of the #345 initiative is to provide an effective way to show students they are loved, cared for, and that there is always someone there for them. With these tenets in mind, MCSD will design a human capital management system (HCMS) which includes an expansion of its current performance-based compensation system (PBCS) that will

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increase the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders, with the ultimate goal of enabling students to reach their highest potential.

Absolute Priority 1: Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS) or Performance Based Compensation Systems (PBCS). Marlboro County School District proposes to develop and implement a fair, rigorous, valid, reliable, and objective process to evaluate teacher and school leader performance, with the goal of improving student academic achievement measured against a baseline performance measure consistent with the South Carolina state consolidated plan. MCSD will expand their current PBCS, described in the proposal by providing opportunities for teachers and school leaders to receive incentive pay for increased student, teacher, and school performance. MCSD also proposes to increase the number of effective and highly effective teachers in the district by providing educators with the opportunity to receive ongoing, differentiated, targeted, and personalized support and feedback for improvement, which will include professional development opportunities designed to increase teacher effectiveness. MCSD will use this proposal as an opportunity to improve all aspects of its HCMS in order to bring the best teachers into the district and keep the most effective teachers in the district, using teacher evaluation and supporting teachers using professional development and other means as a way to do so. All aspects of this proposal are aligned to the goals and objectives of the South Carolina state plan.

Absolute Priority 2: High Needs Schools. As the data show, the percentage of students who receive free- and reduced-priced meals at each school in the district exceeds the application definition for Absolute Priority 2: High Needs Schools of 50 percent or more of each school's enrollment being from low-income families, based on eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch subsidies under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and meets Absolute Priority 2.

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Table 2

Name of School	Enrollment	% FARM	% Ethnicity			
			AA	H	W	O
Bennettsville Primary School (BPI)	599	100	79	< 1	14	7
Bennettsville Intermediate School (BIS)	281	100	80	< 1	13	7
Blenheim Middle School of Discovery (SOD)	561	100	76	1	16	7
Clio Elementary School (CES)	272	100	74	0	21	5
McColl Elementary Middle School (MEMS)	698	100	26	< 1	50	24
Wallace Elementary Middle School (WEMS)	499	100	39	1	49	11
Marlboro County High School (MCHS)	921	100	63	1	27	9

Source: MCSD, 2020. FARM – Free and Reduced-priced Meals; AA – African American; H – Hispanic; W – White; O - Other

The activities proposed under the grant involving teachers, principals, and other school leaders will concentrate on serving students in all seven high-need schools in Marlboro County School District. In addition to 100% of the students at the proposed schools receiving free- and reduced-priced meals, these schools are located in an area in which the percentage of students from families with incomes below the poverty line is 30 percent or more. According to the U. S. Census Bureau American Community Survey's 2018 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) for Marlboro County School District, 30% of the families live below the poverty line.

Marlboro County School District meets **Competitive Preference Priority 1—Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones.** MCSD is in census tract number 45069960100 of the Designated Qualified Opportunity Zone and proposes to support the schools in this QOZ census tract. Marlboro County School District proposes to provide the following services to benefit

the students, teachers, and school leaders in its designated QOZ: a) Provide effective teacher evaluations which will allow the district to identify and keep the most effective teachers and reduce the number of ineffective teachers; b) Use principal evaluations designed to assist principals in creating strong resilient classrooms under their supervision; c) Provide trained and skilled teacher evaluators who can identify effective teaching and train them to be better skilled; d) Provide pre-conferences for teachers and principals in order to determine their needs; e) Provide post-conferences for teachers and principals in order to discuss teacher and student growth; f) Offer districtwide professional development, based on teacher, school leader, and district needs in order to increase student learning; g) Provide school-specific professional development in order to meet the exact needs of each campus; h) Offer monetary teacher incentives that will allow teachers to receive additional compensation for going over and above their current level; i) Offer monetary principal incentives to support their efforts to assist teachers and other school leaders; and k) Provide Professional Learning Communities (PLC) support to encourage teachers and staff to work together for the benefit of the students.

Description of how the eligible entity will develop and implement a fair, rigorous, valid, reliable, and objective process to evaluate educator

Effective and highly effective teachers continue to be the most important component to ensuring a high-quality education for youth. It is important to attract the best teachers, retain the best teachers, and develop these teachers along the way. It is also critically important to be able to effectively evaluate teachers and provide the best support to them if they are having challenges. Principals and other school leaders need the evaluation tools and training to support the teachers, while increasing their own leadership skills. The South Carolina Department of Education uses student success on the state test as a way to measure student achievement. Value-added measures,

currently using SAS EVASS, is used to measure student growth. Educators who are not teaching in one of the required disciplines to take the state test are allowed to use other forms of evaluation. Marlboro County School District, along with the South Carolina Department of Education, require teachers to use student learning objectives (SLOs), which can be used as a form of evaluation for the teachers. An SLO, similar to an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students with disabilities, allows teachers to personalize the learning for the student. The SLO should identify the specific needs of the student, especially if they have challenges with their learning. Teachers are to identify academic supports that should be provided to their students and implement the best instructional practices to help them grow. Along the way, teachers are to monitor student progress towards established learning goals and determine whether or how many of the learning goals were met. Listed in the domains of the teacher evaluation are the components of the SLO. For example, identifying student needs and implementing the best instructional strategy to support the student are a part of the evaluation rubric. A copy of the rubric is listed in the appendix. In addition to using the state assessments and SLOs as a baseline for student growth to measure teacher and school success, MCSD will also use the South Carolina ADEPT system using the 4.0 rubric to evaluate teaching and learning, as well as teacher attendance to evaluate educator performance. Currently, the ADEPT system evaluates teachers using a 4.0 rubric based on planning, instruction, environment, and professionalism, with the end goal being student growth.

Involvement and collaboration of teachers and school leaders in the program development.

The teachers and school and district leaders demonstrated that they have a desire to create the best evaluation and compensation program that would most benefit the students, educators, and community. Teachers, principals, and district leaders met weekly as a team and more frequently individually in like-groups (teachers, principals, district leadership teams) to come up

with the best plan to increase student achievement and help them achieve their highest potential and improve the quality of teachers and school leaders in MCSD.

Teachers and school leaders were charged with shaping not only the level of compensation that they would receive through this project, they were also to determine, along with input from the district leadership, what should be used to evaluate teachers and school leaders to determine their effectiveness, thereby increasing student achievement and making Marlboro County School District the best school district in the country. Several teachers and school leaders signed letters of support (See Appendix – Letters of Support) to attest to their support of this project. Although South Carolina is not a union state, teacher groups and associations are also in support of this project as demonstrated by the letters of support from them as well as from local, state, and federal political officers (See Appendix – Letters of Support). For the purposes of this project, MCSD will use the state definition for a teacher. In the 2018 Highly Qualified Teacher report, a teacher is defined "as any instructor who has been assigned students in a school's or district's student information system for any period during a given school year. Included are teachers of record, virtual teachers, intervention providers, coaches, counselors, media specialists, or other professionals who have direct contact with students" (SCDE, 2018 HQT Report, p. 2).

(a) Need for Project

(i) Specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

Student Achievement/Student Performance

For many years, South Carolina has been at the bottom of academic achievement in the country. A 2010 article from the American Legislative Exchange Council highlighting the highest and lowest ranking school districts in America, rated South Carolina last. A more recent article in

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U.S. News and World Report (2019) ranked South Carolina as 43rd out of 50 states in educational performance. Even so, the schools made up of high poverty, majority students of color in Marlboro County School District perform even lower than the state. The data in Table 3 show the disparity.

Table 3

Percentage of Student Passing on State Assessments				
Entity	**ELA**	**Math**	**EOC - English**	**EOC - Algebra**
Marlboro County School District	23.3	23.1	29.5	21.5
South Carolina Dept. of Education	45.4	45.1	56.3	54.9

Source: SC School Report Card, 2020. ELA – English/Language Arts; EOC – End of Course

As Table 3 shows, the percentage of students in MSCD who passed the state assessment was substantially lower than the percentage of students who passed statewide. With less than 25% of the students in the school district performing at grade level, there is a need to attract and retain effective and highly effective teachers and to have the supporting evidence through data to remove ineffective teachers. There is also a need to provide the precise and most effective teacher professional development to teachers that is specific to the needs of the schools and classrooms. South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) defines student success as an elementary or middle school student who has attained at least a Level 3 (Meets Expectations) or a high school student who has earned a "C" or above on state assessments (SCDE, 2020). They are concerned, along with MCSD, that this large population of low-income and minority students be taught by effective and highly effective teachers and not have an imbalance of ineffective or novice teachers in the classroom. As the data show, there is a need for increased teacher support, direction, and training. A closer look at the data by school, seen in Table 4, shows that the schools are having a

challenge helping the students reach their full potential. Table 4 identifies the percentage of students, by school, who passed the state teste– SC READY in English/language arts and math.

Table 4

% Passed SC READY English Language Arts by School (2019)						
Grade	**MCSD**	**BEMS**	**BIS**	**CES**	**MEMS**	**SOD**	**MEMS**
3	27.2	21.7	25.6	20	27.8	--	37.8
4	21.8	25.7	16.8	33.3	29.7	--	18.4
5	16.7	8.3	14.5	19.2	16	--	28.6
6	25.6	17.4	--	--	33.3	47.7	14.8
7	23.8	17.4	--	--	28.2	40.4	21.7
8	26.8	15.3	--	--	32.9	45.7	27.8
SC READY Mathematics by School (2019)						
Grade	**MCSD**	**BEMS**	**BIS**	**CES**	**MEMS**	**SOD**	**MEMS**
3	32.9	21.7	20.5	44	45.8	--	44.4
4	17.8	0	13	33.3	23.3	--	32.7
5	25	2.8	26.9	30.8	25.5	--	32.1
6	28.6	21.5	--	--	30.6	52.3	23
7	17.2	5.3	--	--	35.2	31.9	10.9
8	18.3	9.7	--	--	18.4	43.5	13.9

Source: Marlboro County School District Annual Report, 2019 – 2020. Percent met standard.

-- No grade level data available.

The SC College-and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) is given to students in grades 3-8 in English Language Arts and Mathematics. A score of 3 or above is needed to

determine whether the student met standard. In some cases, the percentage of students who passed the test at several of the schools was in the single digits. According to the state plan, reading and math teachers must use data from test scores to determine success. The data from the most recent SC READY will be used as baseline for teachers who are evaluated using this format for student success as a part of their final evaluation and to determine incentive eligibility. As the data show, there is a need to increase student achievement at every school within the district.

Table 5 provides information regarding high school students who took the SAT. Data from the SAT is used to show schools how prepared students are for college by measuring key skills such as reading comprehension, computational ability, and clarity of expression. Students at the MCSD high school scored 880 out of a possible 1600-point score. Based on the information provided from the SC READY assessment and SAT scores, the students underperformed on both the state test at the elementary and middle school levels and the SAT test at the high school level. A low SAT score may impede the opportunity to attend college for these students and could impact their career chances of getting a job that requires a college degree, perhaps continuing the cycle of poverty. There is a significant need to increase student achievement and student performance.

Table 5

SAT Scores – Highest Composite Score is 1600			
Entity	2019 Reading and Writing	2019 Math	**2019 Composite**
MCSD	453	426	**880**
State of SC	521	500	**1021**

Source: Marlboro County School District Annual Report, 2019 – 2020

Teacher Salaries/Compensation - The mean teacher salary in South Carolina is $49,783 as of April 27, 2020, but the range typically falls between $35,000 and $62,000. As with any compensation system, salary ranges can vary depending on the city and other important factors, including education, certifications, additional skills, and number of years in the profession. Table 6 reveals that the mean teacher salary for teachers with a Bachelor's degree in Marlboro County School District is $43,045. The starting salary is $36,000. The highest salary for a teacher with a Bachelor's degree is $50,091, which are all lower than the state and surrounding districts. Table 6 also shows the highest paying district (*) in the state. Although not within the driving distance of the other school districts, it demonstrates the disparities found in rural areas with no large tax base.

Table 6

Teacher Salaries - Marlboro County and Districts in Close Proximity in South Carolina				
Name of School System	**Distance from MCSD**	**Mean**	**Beginning**	**Highest**
Chesterfield County SD	30 miles	$44,543	$36,875	$52,211
Darlington County SD	30 miles	$48,331	$39,119	57,544
Aiken County SD*	150 miles	$49,970	$40,227	$59,713
Marlboro County SD	N/A	$43,045	$36,000	$50,091
South Carolina Dept of Ed	N/A	$49,783	$35,000	$ 64,567
United States of America	N/A	$58,950	$30,036	$79,637

Source: South Carolina Department of Education, 2020. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019.

Although money, in and of itself, is not the motivating factor to many teachers who enter the profession, who do so because of a love of teaching and improving students' chances of having a better life, if improving teacher salaries can entice better candidates to enter the profession, retain high-quality teachers, or encourage teachers to improve their efforts in the classroom, then

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considering ways to increase teacher pay through educator incentives is necessary. As shown in Table 6, teacher salaries in South Carolina are low compared to the United States as a whole. With Marlboro County School District being a part of a small, rural community, they do not have the resources to increase the base pay for teachers; therefore, the salaries are low. MCSD is currently a part of the E3 TLS 2017 grant; however, the grant does not allow for classroom teachers to receive compensation. Those funds are for principals and other school leaders who are outside of the classroom and are not the "boots on the ground" educators.

Teacher Retention - A review of the trend data regarding teacher retention shows that a little more than 19% of the teaching staff have left the district over the last three years, for multiple reason from retirement to moving to another district. With the number of teachers in the district averaging around 265 per year, the number of teachers who leave and new teachers that must be hired each year is alarming. It is extremely important to hire effective and highly effective teachers and particularly important to retain effective teachers. The chart below shows some trend data regarding teachers who leave the district. Multiple studies have proven that when students are exposed to an effective or a highly effective teacher, they do better. The studies prove that teacher quality is extremely important and keeping these effective teachers in high needs schools will greatly benefit students, especially those in low-performing schools (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Goe and Stickler, 2008; Reform Support Network, 2015).

Table 7

Teacher Retention Trend Data – Reasons for Leaving the District			
Reason for Leaving	**2017 - 2018**	**2018 - 2019**	**2019 - 2020**
Retirement	15	26	12
Changed Profession	1	0	1

Teacher Retention Trend Data – Reasons for Leaving the District			
Reason for Leaving	**2017 - 2018**	**2018 - 2019**	**2019 - 2020**
Teaching Position in another SC District	11	9	32
Teaching position in another state	2	7	2
Non-teaching position in another SC District	1	6	11
Termination	2	1	No data
International teacher returned to country of origin	7	2	No data
Personal Choice	11	3	2
Total Number of Teachers Leaving the District	**50**	**57**	**60**
Total Teaching Staff in the District	302	296	266

Source: MCSD, Human Resources Department, 2020

As Table 7 shows, many teachers are leaving to go to another school district, especially in year 2019 – 2020. In 2017-2018, 17% of the staff had to be replaced, 2018-2019 data show that 19% needed to be replaced, and in the current year, 2019 – 2020, a startling 23% of the teaching staff will need to be replaced. The data show that the majority of these teachers are going to another school district in the state. A report from Learning Policy Institute states that "teachers in schools serving students of color and students in poverty were more likely to report that, in their decision to leave teaching, testing and accountability measures and administrative support" (Thomas and Hammond, p. 17, 2017) played a major role. The years of experience with classroom management, implementing successful instructional strategies, and focusing on the needs of the classroom of an effective teacher go away when the effective teacher leaves. MCSD is dedicated to attracting and keeping the most effective teachers. Ineffective teachers will be coached and supported, but eventually transitioned out of the position. There is a need to create strategies that address selective

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teacher retention. For this proposal, selective retention references the U.S. Department of Education's description (2015) to make a conscious decision to support all teachers, retaining those who are effective or highly effective and removing those who are ineffective.

Table 8

Teacher Experience in MCSD				
Entity	**< 3 years**	**3 – 9 years**	**10e– 20 years**	**20 years or >**
MCSD	12.6%	19.3%	35.2%	32.9%
South Carolina	8.4%	30.5%	32.3%	28.9%
United States	9%	33.3%	36.4%	21.3%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2018; SCDE HQT Report, 2018.

As the data in Table 8 show, MCSD has a higher percentage of teachers who are inexperienced than the state or the country as a whole. A 2012 report by the Carsey Institute noted that rural and high poverty schools tend to hire a higher percentage of beginning teachers than schools that are non-rural or low poverty (Gagnon and Mattingly, 2012) and goes on to state that rural students have been shown to have less access to advanced mathematics courses and consistently lag behind their peers. MCSD is both in a rural area and has high poverty. Additionally, as is typical for schools with high turnover rates, a large percentage of teaches are teaching out of field (Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond, 2017; Sutcher, 2016) in South Carolina at 65.1% for reading/math teachers in Title 1 schools. The state of South Carolina defines an Out-Of-Field Teacher as "a teacher who is teaching one or more courses or classes in a subject for which he/she does not have the appropriate certification. In South Carolina, a teacher has the appropriate certification if he/she has a certificate in the area or a certification permit in the area."

Also notable is that the ethnic composition of the teachers is 57% White, 36% African American, 2% Hispanic, and 17% Other. There is a need for cultural proficiency training for the teachers.

Teacher evaluation - Currently, MCSD follows the guidelines of the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) regarding school accountability and teacher effectiveness. The state of South Carolina and Marlboro County School have established that high-poverty children and minority students should not be served disproportionately by teachers who are 1) ineffective, 2) out-of-field, or 3) inexperienced (Consolidated State Plan (CSP), 2018). SCDE has defined an ineffective teacher as "a teacher on an annual or continuing contract who has received a Not Met rating for one year or a teacher on an induction contract who has received a Not Met rating for a second year" (CSP, 2018. p.81). Also stated in the plan is the definition for out-of-field teachers as "a teacher who is teaching one or more courses or classes in a subject for which he/she does not have the appropriate certification" and an inexperienced teacher as "a teacher who has three or fewer years of teaching experience as indicated on his/her South Carolina license." SCDE recommends that teachers be evaluated at least three times per year (CSP, 2018). Currently, new and struggling teachers in Marlboro County School District are evaluated each year, but all teachers are not evaluated yearly. There is a need to create an efficient and effective evaluation system for teachers and provide support to principals for capacity to evaluate every teacher up to three times per year.

Principal evaluation - Likewise, principals are evaluated based on the state's evaluation system for principals; it is rigorous enough to ensure that all components of the school be addressed; however, it is missing one vital component. The principal's evaluation should be tied to using selective retention to measure principals' success at recruiting, developing, supporting, assessing, retaining, and rewarding the teachers in their buildings. There is a need to expand the evaluation system for principals and school leaders that will assist them in being effective school leaders

regarding teacher retention. There is also a need to provide supports to principals in the process of evaluating teachers and creating an environment of learning.

This proposal will address the following gaps and weaknesses that are preventing MCSD from becoming a great school district: teacher retention, effective school leadership, teacher compensation, increasing student achievement, and teacher and principal evaluation measures. It is important to improve the current system in order to improve recruitment and retention efforts, provide targeted professional development, ensure two-way communication and feedback, and develop an evaluation system that is objective, rigorous, and valid and provides an opportunity to increase teacher pay and raise student academic achievement and close achievement gaps. There is a need to increase opportunities for teacher pay to increase through performance-based compensation in high-needs schools in MSCD. If these gaps and weaknesses are successfully addressed, it will enable Marlboro County School District to show the students that the affirmations, known to the children and staff of MCSD as #345 - (3 words) I love you, (4 words) I care about you, and (5 words) I am here for you, are not just tied to the emotional success, and self-esteem, but to their academic success as well.

(ii). The proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies.

As previously stated, MCSD is a part of the E3 grant, which provides incentives to school leaders for increased achievement, teachers who are no longer teaching in the classroom who take on a leadership role, and as a sign on bonus to teachers who are brand new to the district. However, the most critical component missing in this grant is the teachers who are the "boots on the ground." In order to increase student achievement, the E3 grant supposes that if school leaders are effective, they should be able to provide the right supports to teachers to help drive achievement up. The

challenge the district is facing is that the teachers, the ones who are doing the work, are not being compensated through incentives to go above and beyond. Also as previously stated, most teachers are not in this profession for the money, but it can be encouraging to know that you are valued.

With this in mind, MCSD is applying for the TSL grant in order to build on the current effort by providing incentives for teachers, principals, and other school leaders that will increase student achievement and close achievement gaps between the highest achieving and the lowest achieving students. This project, entitled *Maximizing, Creating, Strengthening, and Developing #345 (MCSD #345)*, will expand the current performance-based compensation system (PBCS) model to provide teachers and school leaders with incentives and awards for increasing student achievement and closing achievement gaps as the students show academic growth using established baseline data. Once the teachers meet the base criteria for student growth, teachers will have an opportunity to receive additional incentives using measures from the South Carolina 4.0 rubric, teacher attendance, and school growth. Principals will be compensated for growing, supporting, and developing their staff so that the best teachers stay at their schools and those who are ineffective are not retained, using selective retention methods.

The South Carolina Department of Education has created several policies in their consolidated plan for the benefit of the students and to increase student achievement. MCSD will build upon these efforts to improve the outcomes for students. The district will use existing funding streams from other programs or policies related to this process using community, State, and Federal resources. Another example of a funding stream used by the state and MCSD is that new teachers receive up to $5,000 for loan forgiveness through qualifying loan forgiveness programs. Another example is the PACE program, initiated through the South Carolina Department of Education. This program provided an opportunity for twenty low-income, rural school districts, of

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which MCSD was one, to request funds to provide teacher recruitment and retention incentives. An example of how the incentives could be used includes funds for PACE-related fees, mentor support, and critical subject salary stipends.

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

Marlboro County School District (MCSD) is determined that the majority of its students are not taught by inexperienced and/or ineffective teachers and has put into place a project that is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. This effort will involve hearing from all stakeholders, ensuring that they have a voice in determining the needs and design of this project.

Marlboro County School District looked at all components of its human capital management system to determine what was working and what needed assistance.

Recruitment – MCSD currently provides a recruitment bonus to attract effective and highly effective teachers to the district. In order to be eligible for the bonus, teachers new to the district must provide proof of their effectiveness using student growth as a measure. A new graduate who is hired as a teacher must have exemplary grades (B average or above) and teach in their field. South Carolina and across the country have difficulty hiring teachers in their field. This grant will provide a bonus to teachers who come into the district ready to teach in their field. The district will also provide a dedicated website and an aggressive outreach strategy across the state and nation for teacher candidates who matched MCSD's mission (Reform Support Network, 2014).

Professional Development will be tied to *retention* practices – MCSD currently provides professional development for their staff. Professional Development is in the form of a) Weekly STEP meetings; b) Guest speakers/consultants; c) Weekly collaboration meetings for leaders and

teachers to discuss with each other benchmark results; d) Conferences; e) Workshops; f) In person or virtual classes/conferences/workshops; g) Book studies; h) Data review and analysis. Through this grant, MCSD will continue to provide the previously mentioned avenues for receiving professional development; however, the district will ensure that teachers are receiving the right professional development for the needs. With such high turnover rates and the percentage of teachers with 0 – 3 years' experience, it is imperative that teachers receive the right and the best professional development. Teachers will provide, through pre-conferences at the beginning of the year, an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses in the pedagogy. Principals and school leaders will take note of the needs of the teachers and provide professional development based on the needs of the teachers on the campus. Upon reviewing the data, once the principal determines that the majority of teachers have similar needs, a campus-wide training will be held to support teachers. In addition to providing professional development for classroom management, pedagogical strategies, content alignment, and other classroom supports, MCSD will also provide cultural proficiency training for the teachers and staff so that they can reach all of the students.

MCSD will revise the existing *performance-based compensation system* (PBCS) model to provide teachers and school leaders with incentives and awards for increasing student achievement, increasing equity, and closing student achievement gaps. These incentives are designed to award teachers and school leaders based on student growth, achievement data, retention, and meeting prescribed measures in the state's 4.0 teacher evaluation rubric. This project is different from the previous model in that teachers will be well-trained and supported by teacher leaders and mentors, as they receive an incentive for their achievements. To be eligible to participate in this program, educators and school leaders must meet the baseline eligibility requirements that are applicable to their current position.

Teacher evaluation – South Carolina uses the 4.0 Rubric to evaluate teacher effectiveness, tied to student achievement. The rubric evaluates planning, instruction, environment, and professionalism. At the state level, the SC Ready, the South Carolina statewide test is used to measure achievement in math and reading. Teachers who do not administer or whose students do not take the SC Ready (non-reading or math teachers, special needs teachers, etc.) will use Student Learning Objectives (SLO) to evaluate their effectiveness. The SLO is a way to measure the impact the teacher has on student growth, based on the teacher's ability to set the right goals for students to learn and grow, accurately measures student growth, and uses this information to plan, implement, and adjust instruction to ensure student progress. Each year, the SLO is required of all classroom teachers and used as an artifact to support SCTS Indicators. Using a baseline measure with either the state assessment, the SLO, or MAP test, student growth will be measured.

Additionally, other departments within the district will be a part of the comprehensive effort to support teachers and students. Counselors will play a role in supporting the students, which should help them to do better in class. *Counselors* will provide classes on self-esteem, youth risk behaviors, anger management, or character-building strategies that will benefit the students. An *effective curriculum*, aligned to the state curriculum, will be used to educate the youth. The curriculum will provide tools and other resources for the teachers, as well as being culturally proficient, to help the teachers plan their lessons, effectively instruct the students, and assess student understanding in a timely manner.

(iv) 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.

The project design is appropriate to address the needs of the target population and has created the following goals and objectives to measure program success aligned to Department of Education

TSL performance measures (PM).

Goal 1: Increase Student Achievement

Objective 1.1: By the end of the project period, the number of students who pass the SC Ready in math will increase by 25%, as measured by the baseline score.

Objective 1.2: By the end of the project period, the number of students who pass the SC Ready in reading/language arts will increase by 25%, as measured by the baseline score.

Objective 1.3: By the end of the project period, the number of high school students who score at least a 1200 on the SAT will increase by 25%.

Objective 1.4: By the end of each year, the number of students who meet the SLO growth target in at least four classes will maintain or increase by 50% as measured by the pre-test or SLO goals.

Goal Two: Increase the Number of Effective and Highly Effective Teachers in the District

Objective 2.1: By the end of the project period, the number of teachers rated effective or highly effective will increase by 50%, as measured by their yearly evaluation rating and student growth.

Objective 2.2: By the end of each project year, teachers will have at least 10 opportunities to receive ongoing, differentiated, targeted, and personalized support and feedback for improvement through professional development.

Objective 2.3: The number of teachers rated at the highest level who received performance-based compensation and remain in the same high-need school in the district for at least four years will increase by 70%, as measured by the baseline year.

Objective 2.4: By the end of each project year, the percentage of project teachers who earn performance-based compensation based on student growth will increase by 30%, as measured by the previous year's earning.

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Objective 2.5: By the end of the project period, at least 75% of the teachers will earn performance-based compensation based on student growth.

Goal Three: Improve the Human Capital System

Objective 3.1: By the end of the project period, MCSD will create a comprehensive recruitment system to attract effective and highly effective teachers to the district.

Objective 3.2: By the end of each project year, at least 90% of teachers who were assigned a mentor will report that they received ongoing, differentiated, targeted, and personalized support and feedback as measured by self-report.

Objective 3.3: By the end of the project period, MCSD will have developed a fair, rigorous, valid, reliable, and objective process to evaluate educators.

Through *Project MCSD #345*, MCSD will create a performance-based compensation system that will attract and retain effective and highly effective teachers, improve the pedagogy of the teachers it hires, and provide opportunities for growth for teachers and achievement for students. The following plan demonstrates the performance-based compensation plan for the district. In order to earn any incentives at any level, the teacher must improve student achievement at the classroom level and 75% of the students assigned to the class must show at least a 10% growth for the year to be considered for any performance-based compensation. The maximum amount that a teacher may receive each year, using all of the categories as shown below, is $11,500. It is estimated that the amount of incentives most teachers will receive each year is $7,500, increasing each year as the program continues and more teachers become eligible. The idea of this payout plan is to make the payout understandable, comprehensive but not too complicated, and achievable with the goal of making a difference in the lives of children.

Table 9 – Teacher Performance-Based Compensation Rubric

Teacher PBCSe– Initial student growth must be at least 10%	
Student Growth Measures	
75% of Students grow by 30% of more	$3,000
75% of Students grow by 20%	$2,000
75% of Students grow by 10%	$0
School Growth Measures	
School grows by 30% or higher	$4,000
School grows by 20%	$3,000
School grows by 10%	$2,000
Teacher Evaluation Using the 4.0 Rubric or SLO (Teacher Growth Measures)	
Exemplary	$2,000
Proficient	$1,000
Needs Improvement	$0
Unsatisfactory	$0
Teacher Attendance/Teacher Retention	
Absent 0 – 3 days	$1,000
Absent 4 – 10 days	$500
Absent more than 10 days	$0

A teacher is eligible to participate in the incentive program if at least 75% of her students show growth by at least 10%. An example of a teacher payout using the chart would show the following: 75% of students of Teacher A show growth of 30% from the previous year. This growth

being at least 10% makes Teacher A eligible to receive incentives. With 75% showing 30% student growth, Teacher A will receive $3,000. Additionally, Teacher A is also at a school where the teachers worked together in order to help the students at the school grow by 30%. This gives Teacher A another $4,000. Teacher A also receives Exemplary on her teacher evaluation, having participated in all components of the 4.0 rubric, including participating in weekly PLCs and receives an additional $2,000 for earning an exemplary on the teacher evaluation. Finally, Teacher A only missed two days during the entire year and received an additional $1,000 for a total of $10,000 earned. Another example shows that 75% of Teacher B's students had 10% growth. Although Teacher B did not receive any incentive for student growth, the school that Teacher B is assigned to had 20% student growth. Teacher B is eligible to receive $3,000 for school growth. Teacher B earned a proficient on the teacher evaluation and received $1,000. Finally, Teacher B missed 5 days and received a bonus of $500. Altogether, Teacher B received $4,500. The final example comes from Teacher C. Only 50% of the students in Teacher C's class showed 10% growth. Although Teacher C came to school every day, the fact that at least 75% of the students did not grow, Teacher C will not receive any performance-based incentives. Showing less than 75% of the students or less than 10% student growth on the state test, MAP test, or through an SLO disqualifies a teacher from receiving any funds. Student academic achievement is the ultimate goal. Teachers will have the opportunity to mentor a new or struggling teacher each year on their campus. Mentor teachers must have at least 75% of their students showing at least 20% growth in order to be able to mentor another teacher. They must continue to maintain their own growth and help the new or struggling teachers to have at least 10% growth for up to 75% of their students. They will receive $1,500 for mentoring another teacher with both meeting their student growth measure. The total award that a mentor can receive is $11,500. Principals choose the mentors.

Likewise, principals and other school leaders will have an opportunity to receive an incentive for school growth through this grant. The point of school growth being a major component of this PBCS is to encourage the school staff to work together as a team, including teachers and other school leaders. Following is the plan for assistant principals and other school leaders who contribute to student growth and school success to earn incentives.

Table 10 – Assistant Principal and Other School Leader Performance-based Compensation

Other School Leader PBCS – Based on School Growth	
School Growth Measures	
School grows by 30% or higher	$4,000
School grows by 20%	$3,000
School grows by 10%	$2,000
Evaluation Appropriate Instrument	
Exemplary	$2,000
Proficient	$1,000
Needs Improvement	$0
Unsatisfactory	$0
Attendance	
Absent 0 – 3 days	$1,000
Absent 4 – 10 days	$500
Absent more than 10 days	$0

Based on this payout plan, assistant principals and school counselors would receive compensation based on school growth, their performance evaluation, and attendance. In order to

demonstrate that the role of counselors was instrumental to school growth, in addition to their regular duties, counselors must provide support to students through at least one class assigned to them to teach for the year. This course should be a class that assists students in resiliency-building, i.e. self-esteem, youth risk behaviors, anger management, or character-building. Counselors will also be required to participate in their assigned PLC. To receive a portion of the payout for school growth on their campus, assistant principals must receive training on teacher evaluation and assist the principal with yearly evaluations on the campus. The assistant principal will also be required to provide at least three training sessions each year, based on teacher, student, or school needs. The maximum amount that an assistant principal or other school leader could receive is $7,000.

The principal's evaluation will be based on school growth of student success, the evaluation based on the state evaluation instrument, attendance, and selective teacher retention. Below is the rubric to explain the principal payout.

Table 11 – Principal Performance-based Compensation

Principal PBCSe– Based on School Growth	
School Growth Measures	
School grows by 30% or higher	$5,000
School grows by 20%	$4,000
School grows by 10%	$3,000
Evaluation Appropriate Instrument	
Exemplary	$3,000
Proficient	$1,000
Needs Improvement	$0
Unsatisfactory	$0

Principal PBCSe– Based on School Growth	
Attendance	
Absent 0 – 3 days	$1,000
Absent 4 – 10 days	$500
Absent more than 10 days	$0
Selective Retention	
Retained 95 – 100% of Effective Teachers	$3,000
Retained 90% - 94% of Effective Teachers	$2,000

Using the information from the chart above, principals who effectively help the teachers to be more effective, increase student achievement, and selectively retain their teachers have an opportunity to earn up to $12,000. Student achievement and growth are the focus of each area.

(b) Quality of the Project Design

(i) The extent to which the proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale

  Project MCSD#345 will do several things and is aligned to the Department's Performance Measures (PM): 1) create an advanced evaluation system that will help principals identify and keep the most effective teachers and reduce the number of ineffective teachers *(PM D, E)*; 2) use principal evaluations designed to assist principals in creating strong resilient classrooms under their supervision *(PM D, E)*; 3) build the skills of the teachers so that student achievement increases *(PM A, B, F, G)*; 4) offer districtwide and school-level professional development that focus specifically on teacher, staff, and student needs, including content support, classroom management, and cultural proficiency in order to increase student learning *(PM A, B, C, G, H)*; 5) provide trained and skilled teacher evaluators who can identify effective teaching and train them

to be better skilled *(PM D, E)*; 6) provide pre-conferences for teachers and principals in order to determine their needs *(PM D, E)*; 7) provide post-conferences for teachers and principals in order to discuss teacher and student growth *(PM D, E, H)*; 8) offer monetary teacher incentives that will allow teachers to receive additional compensation for going over and above their current level *(PM A, B, F)*; 9) offer monetary principal incentives to support their efforts to assist teachers and other school leaders *(PM A, B, F)*; and 10) Provide Professional Learning Communities (PLC) support to encourage teachers and staff to work together for the benefit of the students *(PM G, H)*.

One of the most important interventions that a child can have to bring them to the next level and reach their highest potential is an effective or highly effective teacher. The importance of an effective teacher cannot be overstated. One study that measured the impact effective teachers had on children who are now adults found that the children who had an effective teacher were more likely to attend college, earn higher salaries, and less likely to become teenage parents (Chetty et al., 2013). The inverse was found for students exposed to teachers who were inexperienced. The research of Bill Sanders has been continually touted, but it bears repeating again. His research studying the achievement levels of students who had access to effective teachers and comparable students who were in the classrooms of ineffective teachers is heartbreaking, showing a huge gap in learning (Sanders and Rivers, 1996). Imagine being the parent of a student of an ineffective teacher or even worse being the child. The more opportunities a student has to be taught by an effective teacher, the better their chances. The opposite has been found to be true with an ineffective teacher. The benefits of a highly effective teacher are even better than an effective teacher, hence the need for a teacher evaluation system that provides feedback for growth and improvement (Stronge, 2006; Darling-Hammond, et. al, 2012).

School leaders, in the form of principals, assistant principals, and other school staff designated as leaders, are also critical. The leadership skills needed to support and guide the teachers on the campus are necessary to increase student achievement. An effective school leader is one who can help increase teacher satisfaction and retention but also can lead the school to increased student achievement (Mulford, 2003; Grissom and Bartanen, 2019).

An advanced evaluation system that will allow the district to identify and keep the most effective teachers and reduce the number of ineffective teachers: An evaluation is necessary in order to determine teacher needs and is only as good as its design. The evaluation system needs to evaluate multiple factors, but especially the teacher's knowledge of the content and teaching ability or skill. It also needs be used to regularly evaluate teachers and to provide feedback for improvement (Cicchinelli, 2013; Darling-Hammond, et. al, 2012). The purpose of the evaluation is two-fold. It is used to provide feedback to teachers to assist them in improving their teaching strategies and to document accountability (Stronge, 2006; Tucker and Stronge, 2006). The evaluation used should and will use a methodology that will produce consistent results across raters and produce face, content, and construct validity evidence. The information received from the teacher evaluation will be used by the principals to determine additional supports that the teacher needs and to assist the teacher in finding a position that is more suitable for them, if they are not effectively able to reach and grow the students. *Use principal evaluations designed to assist principals in creating strong resilient classrooms under their supervision.* SCDE has very specific guidance on what an effective principal must be able to, specifically share effective teaching strategies, use coaching skills, and manage staff turnover and succession by providing opportunities for effective induction and mentoring to encourage professional growth of teachers and other school leaders. The principal should monitor and evaluate the instructional programs, technology, and materials on the

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campus so that students can grow academically, and teachers have the tools to be successful. Finally, the principal should ensure that assessments data and educational research are used while continuously monitoring progress at the school (Tucker and Stronge, 2006; Darling-Hammond, et. al, 2012). The principal evaluation will be used to ensure that effective strategies are being used. *Build the skills of the teachers so that student achievement increases and offer districtwide and school-level professional development that focus specifically on teacher, staff, and student.* It is extremely important that teachers receive the supplies, materials, technology, and curriculum to be successful, but most importantly, teachers need professional development in order to know how to effectively implement strategies that reach the students. The professional development should also be on-going and job-embedded (Elmore, 2002). For example, one of the best strategies to use for teaching students of color and high poverty students is using project-based learning (PBL). Teachers need to understand why and more specifically how to effectively reach students using PBL. Teachers will also need cultural proficiency strategies in order to reach the majority African American, high poverty student population (Delpit, 1995, 2006; Gay, 2010; Ladson Billings, 1995). Job-embedded professional development takes place in real time, allows the teacher to focus on current issues within the classroom, and can be practiced alone, in a one-on-one interaction, or within groups as with the PLC (Croft, et. al, 2010; Hirsh, 2009). The principals will be able to use information from the initial conference and subsequent classroom evaluations to determine the teacher skills that need improvement. *Provide trained and skilled teacher evaluators who can identify effective teaching and train them to be better skilled.* A survey taken by the principals identified that one challenge that greatly impedes their ability to evaluate all teachers in a timely manner each year was the lack of trained and certified teacher evaluators. Teachers need feedback and support. In order to ensure that there are enough evaluators who can provide feedback

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to teachers, this project proposed to increase the number of people who are trained and certified to evaluate teachers. *Provide pre- and post-conferences for teachers and principals in order to determine their needs.* The pre-conference is a part of professional growth for teachers and an important component of the pre-conference/observation/walkthrough/post-conference cycle. The pre-conference will be used to help teachers and principals understand expectations for the actual evaluation. During this time, teachers will have a chance to explain what will be will be taught and will be encouraged to bring a copy of the rubric that will be used for the evaluation. They will bring their lesson plans and use this an opportunity for growth and a discussion of their needs and current abilities. The pre-conference will be used as an opportunity to set goals and plan professional development needs. The post-conference will be used to determine if goals were met and professional development was successful. The pre-conference, along with the actual evaluations and post-conference, are important to determine the professional development needs of the teachers (Sawchuk, 2015; Cantrell and Kane, 2013). *Offer monetary incentives to teacher and school leaders.* A recent study across 31 countries, including the United States, suggests that teacher cognitive skills (as measured by literacy and numeracy skills tests) lead to better student academic performance. This study also found that countries where teachers are paid more in comparison to similarly educated and experienced peers tend to draw teachers from the higher parts of college skills distributions, positively impacting student academic outcomes (Wills, 2019). Increased teacher pay may also result in increased student outcomes when incentive pay is also be paired with mentorship and training programs (Barshay, 2013). More success has been found with incentive programs that provide individual (teacher and school leader) and group incentives (school-wide) as the MCSD program is proposing (Ahn and Vigdor, 2011). Principal evaluations will be focused on their ability to use selective retention to measure success recruiting, developing,

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supporting, assessing, retaining, and rewarding the teachers in the building (Reform Support Network, 2015). *Provide Professional Learning Communities (PLC) support to encourage teachers and staff to work together for the benefit of the students.* Teachers and staff must work together in order to achieve student success for the entire campus. PLCs allow teachers to collaborate and plan for student success, especially when they have common students to support (Mathewson, 2016; Hord, 2015). The benefits of PLCs are numerous. PLCs allow teachers to experience collegiality, reduce isolation, and support job-embedded learning for educators to name a few. Teachers and staff can use the opportunity to review student data and come up with strategies to improve student achievement (Hord, 2015). Participation in PLCs will be a part of the professionalism component of the evaluation for teachers and support staff.

MCSD will align its evaluation model to the strategies included in the SCDE design. Based on a continuous improvement model, the South Carolina design is created to meet the state agency's commitment that all students in South Carolina are taught by teachers who are effective, in-field, and experienced, and at a minimum that low-income and minority children enrolled in schools assisted under Title I, Part A are not served at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers. The evaluation will provide ongoing, differentiated, targeted, and personalized support and feedback for improvement, along with the appropriate professional development to teachers and staff. Baseline data used will come from pre- and post-tests, previous state assessment data, and SLO data, as appropriate to the student evaluation method used. The teacher evaluation will encompass student achievement and the categories listed in the South Carolina 4.0 Rubric. The categories include Instruction, Planning, Environment, and Professionalism. Every teacher who receives an incentive through *Project MCSD#345* must receive a formal evaluation each year and go through the full process. Teachers who do not go

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through the process and do not receive a formal evaluation are not eligible for the PBCS. Principals

also follow a similar process/cycle based on the principal evaluation form to determine success.

The evaluation model is in the form of a continuous improvement cycle as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Continuous Improvement Cycle
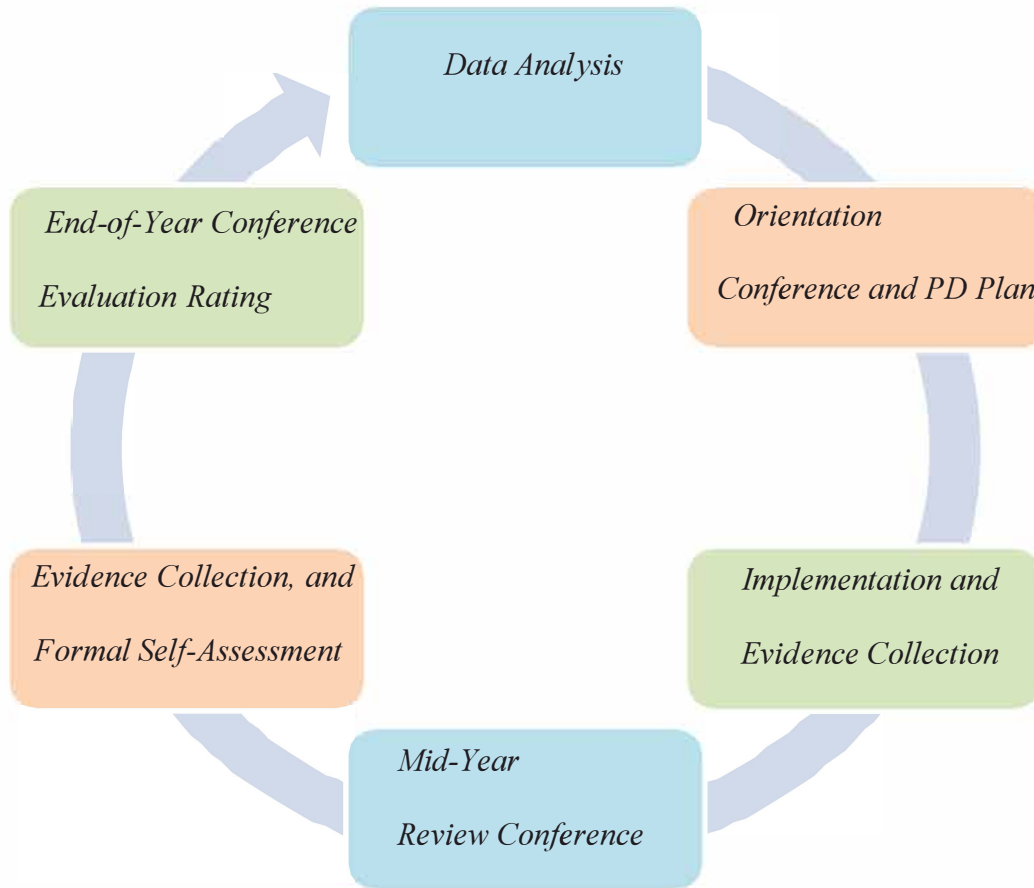
Source: Adapted from the SCDE PADEPP, 2019

Data Analysis of Students, School, and Self – Student data will be analyzed to determine their

current level using baseline data to determine student growth between two or more points in time.

Direct student growth could include state assessments, such as SC Ready, SCPASS, Access, and

others, or local formative assessments, such as MAP, DRA, SLO's, common formative

assessments, TE 21, benchmark testing, objective performance-based assessments, and others

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(SCDE, 2017). For *Project MCSD#345*, SAS EVAAS or another growth tool will be used to calculate growth. **Orientation Conference and Professional Development Plan** – The pre-conference will be used as an opportunity to discuss goals, challenges, and needs for professional development and support. **Ongoing Plan Implementation and Evidence Collection** – walk-throughs, formal evaluations, and site visits (for principals) will be used to see practice being implemented. Evaluators should "inspect what they expect." Evaluations are used as a form of accountability as well as a way to determine the professional development needs of the person being evaluated. Targeted professional development and support is provided throughout the year. **Mid-Year Formative Review Conference** – Principals receive a mid-year review conference to determine how the school is doing and to review student data if it is available. Development opportunities are provided if needed. **Ongoing Implementation, Evidence Collection, and Formal Self-Assessment (Self-Review)** – Learning continues, and teachers and school leaders begin gathering data to show that they have met the standards established at the initial conference. Written reflections regarding professional strengths and weaknesses and how to enhance effectiveness are highlighted. **End-of-Year Conference and Evaluation Rating** -during this conference, strengths and growth areas are discussed, and summative ratings are provided with written evidence to support the overall rating, and next steps. Then the cycle begins again. Ratings are Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, and Unsatisfactory. School leaders who receive Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory ratings are not eligible to receive incentives.

(ii) The methods of evaluation provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes

The required performance measures will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the proposal. The components of the evaluation plan include data from student performance

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indicators (e.g., overall student academic achievement; improved scores on the tests compared to baseline data; percentage of students performing at/above grade level; teacher/mentor logs, teacher and school leader surveys, attendance records, teacher and school leader evaluations, and programmatic indicators (e.g., how well the project is being implemented and meeting objectives on time and within budget), and staff development. Data will be collected, analyzed, and reported by comparing baseline data for the program participants to determine growth within the project.

Through data collection procedures, interviews, pre- and post-surveys, and reviews of project and school records, appropriate feedback will be provided on the quality or effectiveness of all major activities and strategies to program administrators throughout the project year and at the end of each project year to facilitate appropriate project implementation improvements. The evaluator will meet with program administrators at the end and/or the beginning of each project year to discuss findings from the annual report. The project evaluator will provide on-going evaluative feedback on all implementation elements so that timely on-going programmatic modifications can be made throughout the duration of the project's implementation and documented in the final report. Results of the formative and summative evaluations will be used to define program goals and objectives and to determine the overall effectiveness of the project.

(c) Quality of the Management Plan

Adequacy of the management plan to achieve program objectives on time and within budget

MCSD has a permanent staff of administrators, teachers, and district level professionals who are dedicated to and will maintain the validity and reliability of *Project MCSD#345*. District staff will develop, guide, and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning through the use of the South Carolina College and Career Readiness Standards, various assessments and instructional

strategies, observations, and lesson plans. MCSD will offer successful and effective professional development geared to the immediate and long term needs of the staff to increase effectiveness.

The superintendent of schools, Dr. Gregory McCord will be the Project Director, devoting 25% of his time, in-kind, to this project. Dr. McCord is an innovator who cares about students and staff alike. The program manager will report to Dr. McCord. A program manager, hired to oversee the program, will devote 100% of time to this project. The program manager must have at least a bachelor's degree, master's degree preferred, a background in education or evaluation, and experience management school programs. A job description is included in the appendix. The program manager will provide program oversight, manage the budget, order supplies and materials, set up professional development, provide coaching support, conduct teacher evaluations, and work with the evaluator to complete the program evaluation. Annual and final reports will be submitted to the Project Director for submission to the USDoE. Principals will provide oversight of the program on their campuses. The Grants department coordinator, Ms. Margaret Quick, will assist, as needed, for guidance regarding grant guidelines and rules. She will also provide support with the grant evaluation and feedback and assistance with the electronic submission of the report. Ms. Quick will devote 25% of time to the project. Ms. Barbara McColl, Human Resources Director, will lead the HCMS component. She has more than 25 years in HR Solutions. She will devote 25% of time to the project. A Teacher Evaluation Coordinator will be hired to provide support to principals who need additional evaluators or support for teacher success. This position will work with every principal in the district and will devote 100% of time to the project. Teacher mentors must be certified in the field they are teaching in, maintain exemplary status on the teacher evaluation, and have at least 75% of students of record showing growth of at least 20%. The external evaluator will hold a doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed. D.) and have program evaluation experience.

MCSD will match TSL funding at 50% of the project, a major commitment of resources in this small rural community. The program manager will work collaboratively with the principals, Finance, Human Resources, and Curriculum departments to ensure that all the required resources are purchased, appropriate personnel are hired, and professional learning opportunities and trainings are scheduled at the beginning of the school year. During the planning, implementation, and sustainability stages, Finance will work with *Project MCSD#345* in order to make sure that adequate district resources are allocated for grant implementation and will provide appropriate budgets to the project as soon as possible, aligned to the correct line items, to ensure the budget is spent correctly and the program begins on time and work continues on budget. A data analyst will support the program manager in collecting and monitoring data to ensure progress towards project goals. To assist with sustainability, the district will use state and local funding to support the project. The district technology coach will provide job-embedded professional learning opportunities for technology integration in order to assist teachers with cultivating a 21st century learning environment. Math and reading are focus areas for the state assessments and will be integrated across the curriculum. The literacy interventionist will provide professional development in understanding the South Carolina 4.0 Rubric, creating SLOs, and teaching effective literacy strategies for all teachers, regardless of the subject matter they teach.

Each quarter, the program manager will present budget updates to the Project Director and Advisory Council and will ensure that a diversity of perspectives is sought in the operation of the proposed project by surveying parents, teachers, the business community, and others. Community representation will be through the Advisory Committee.

The timeline below provides details of program activities, including who is responsible to ensure the work gets done. Ongoing activities occur from year to year.

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Table 12 - *Clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.*

MCSD has established the following timeline with activities, responsibilities, and milestones.

Timeline of Major Grant Activities Years 1 - 3 (October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2023)			
Major Activities	*Timeline*	*Responsibility*	*Benchmarks/Milestones*
Submit awarded grant to MCSD for Board of Education acceptance	Oct 2020	Superintendent Grants Department	Approved project available to plan for implementation
Staff Evaluation Cycle begins. Ongoing to May of each year.	October 2020 and yearly	Superintendent Principals, Teachers	Teachers practice improves
Hire qualified Program Manager	Dec. 2020	Human Resources	Position vacancy filled
Complete contracts for external evaluator and service providers	Dec. 2020e– yearly	Project Director, Program Manager	Contracts executed; project activities are completed on time and within budget
Purchase supplies and materials for program participants	Jan. 2021- ongoing	Program Manager, Campus designee	Teachers and schools prepared to implement major program activities
Recruit Classroom-based Mentors to provide support to teachers	Jan. 2021 - May 2023	Project Director, Principals	Mentors identified and paired with new and/or struggling teachers at high-need schools

Timeline of Major Grant Activities Years 1 - 3 (October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2023)			
Major Activities	*Timeline*	*Responsibility*	*Benchmarks/Milestones*
Decide on and schedule districtwide professional development	Jan. 2021e– Sept. 2023	Program Manager, Service Providers,	Teachers begin integrating professional development strategies across the curriculum
Meet with evaluator to discuss expectations and evaluation plan	Feb. 2021- ongoing	Program Manager, Evaluator	Written plan to evaluate program components; final report submitted to funder on time
Hold quarterly meetings with key stakeholders and Advisory council	Apr. 2021- quarterly	Program Manager, Key stakeholders	Provide overview of the project to determine if changes are needed
Student evaluation data compiled to evaluate student growth	July 2021 yearly	Program Manager, Evaluator	Student data used to determine teacher payout
Survey program participants	Aug. 2021e– ongoing	Program Manager, Participants	Evidence of survey results shared with district leadership and participating departments
Staff payouts (beginning 2021)	Dec. and May	Human Resources	Increase in student achievement
Final report is submitted to the funding agency	Nov. 2023	Project Director, Program Manager, Evaluator	Project completed on time and within budget; report completed

d) Adequacy of Resources

(i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

Project MCSD#345 has the great potential and likelihood of creating system change and improvement. MCSD has had years of experience developing and delivering curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices to guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning across all grades and courses. MCSD promotes and focuses on student centered teaching and learning. Additionally, MCSD will continue to provide opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills. MCSD will continue to use multiple assessment data and student/teacher data to monitor, adjust, and support instruction and practices to ensure student success. MCSD will work collaboratively and support learning through mentoring and coaching. Lastly, MCSD will continue to utilize current techniques, as well as seek new and innovative ways to recruit and retain highly effective staff in its efforts to increase student achievement and growth. Based on the research, the strategies listed in the proposal have great promise for improvement and system change. MCSD will ensure that the strategies are implemented with fidelity and will document, along the way, the improvements that occur through this project.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

The staff development, teacher mentors, and enhanced evaluation plan created through the proposed project will impact the student population of the district for years to come. The funds requested will be used to support and design professional development for teachers and school leaders, increase capacity to attract and retain effective and highly effective teachers and school leaders, and enhance the current teacher evaluation. *Project MCSD#345* funding will be matched with MCSD general fund dollars and other resources to meet the required 50% match. This will

allow the MCSD to improve the education for all students. MCSD has laid the groundwork for the district to build and create an equitable college and career readiness culture throughout the district.

(iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources beyond the length of the grant; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success

District level administrators will use routine cost-control mechanisms that involve work and budget planning as well as systematic review of the project's costs to ensure alignment to detailed work and budget planning. Actual accomplishments and their costs will be compared to the planned workflows and budgets. MCSD is committed to continue the activities after the grant period. The district staff and school leaders will enthusiastically work to meet the goals and objectives of the project to make a change through the systems developed under the grant. MCSD will continue to look for other sources to continue the program in subsequent years. MCSD will continue to seek partnerships within the community and write additional grants to support district- and school-level initiatives related to this project. Once it is proven that the strategies implemented in MSCD through Project MCSD#345 increase student achievement, students from all over the area will come to the school and student enrollment will increase thereby increasing district funding. MCSD will continue to strategically use district resources to grow students and teachers.

Additionally, support and commitment from stakeholders, including teachers, principals, community members, and community leaders are demonstrated in the form of letters of support of the project (See Appendix). As previously stated, teachers, school leaders, and district leadership participated in the planning of this proposal and will be instrumental in the implementation of the project. They are committed to the success of the project and the success of the students they serve. MCSD #345 – Supporting emotional well-being, self-esteem, and academic success of students.

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