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**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS**  
**UNDER THE**

**Indian Education Discretionary Grant Programs—Native Youth Community Program**

**CFDA # 84.299A**

**PR/Award # S299A220061**

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PR/Award # S299A220061

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## **Project Abstract**

Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) and its tribal partners, the Santee Sioux Nation and Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, will implement the Indian Education Demonstration Grant Program to assist the approximately 700 Native American students (K-12) served by LPS develop the skills, knowledge and self-awareness necessary to be ready for life after high school. The overarching goal is college and career readiness for LPS Native American students, and will be achieved by meeting the objectives of reduced absences, increased reading proficiency, decreased suspensions and expulsions, and increased graduation rate. LPS will also address Competitive Preference Priority Three, to promote equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities through the district's Career Academy, by providing job shadowing and internship opportunities as well as dual enrollment for Indian students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades in the K-12 Education pathway. The Santee Sioux Nation's Society of Care will provide Trauma Warrior leadership development for secondary students and partner with LPS on an annual GONA (Gathering of Native Americans) each summer, while the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska will invite high school students to its Little Priest Tribal College for visits and speak to student clubs. In partnership with the Indigenous Roots teacher training program and UNITE Indian student organization at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Little Priest provides free college education to Indian students wanting to become teachers. Both tribes will also participate on a Partnership Advisory Committee to oversee all grant activities collaboratively. Morningstar Counseling will continue to provide school-based therapy to students, as well as professional development to school social workers and counselors on cultural competency and historical trauma so they can be more effective in their work. The addition of a dedicated High School Counselor to assist high school students with college and career planning, and compensation for teachers to be success

coaches for secondary students will all provide supports that ensure academic success and graduation. A Reading Interventionist for K-2 students and quarterly reading events for families of elementary Indian students will provide an important academic foundation for future success. Cultural programming through after school clubs at all levels will provide the connection to school that keeps students engaged. Together, these multiple interventions will contribute to the expected outcome of an increased high school graduation rate among Indian students in LPS.

## A. NEED FOR PROJECT

Identification of the Problem: As shown in Attachment 2, Needs Assessment, Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) has conducted several activities to determine the severity of the academic, social, cultural, and basic needs of our American Indian students. In short, these resources reveal a significant gap between the academic achievement of Indian students in LPS and all students, and the same is true of college preparedness and graduation. In addition, a community-wide comprehensive report through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Public Policy Center, called *Vital Signs*, that pulls together data from many sources in Lincoln released its most recent analysis of Lincoln in 2020. This report reveals pre-pandemic conditions for American Indian children and families were significantly worse than those of whites—from poverty rates and unemployment to homelessness and food insecurity to lack of affordable child care and health care, and we know that these conditions have only got worse due to the pandemic.

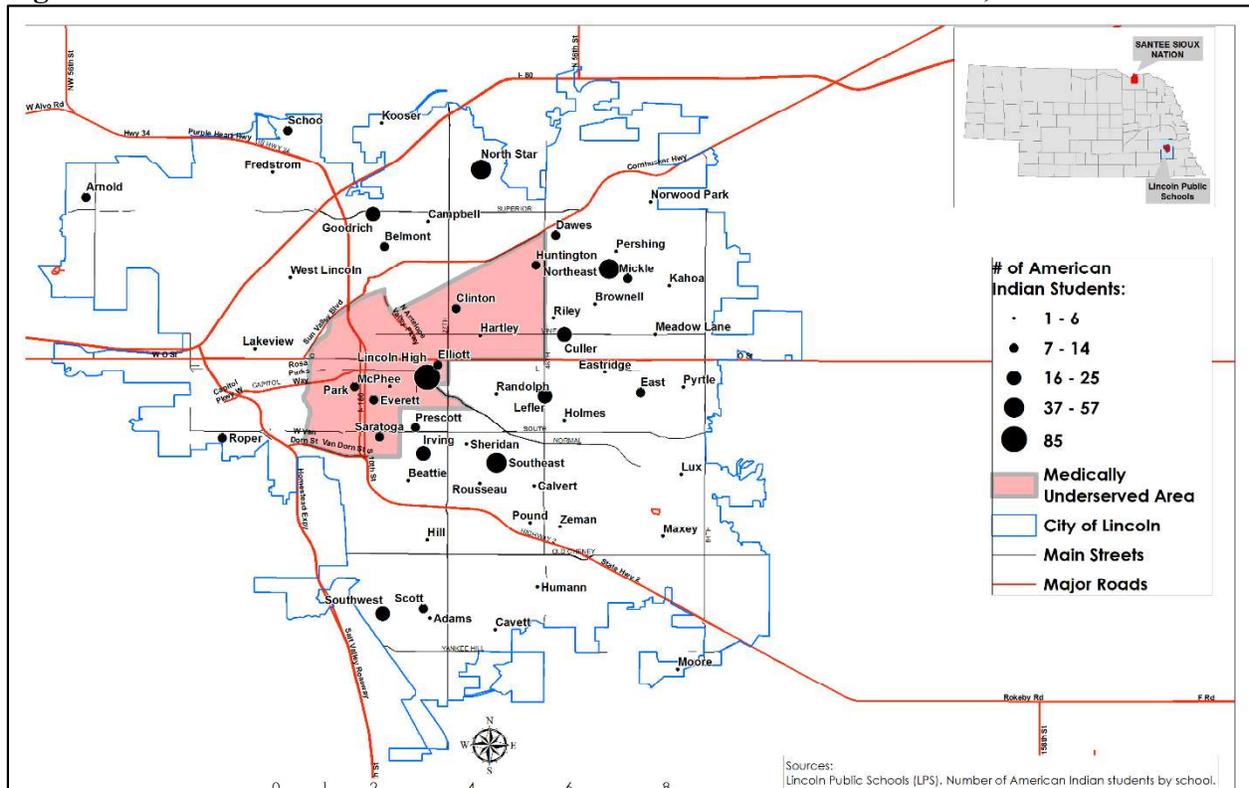
Lincoln is fortunate to have a number of resources available to help address many of these concerns. An uncharacteristically collaborative network of non-profit human service agencies, a strong health care safety net, and the willingness of all to shift quickly to the ever-changing landscape of need—particularly during a pandemic—all make it possible to reduce and remove many of these barriers to success. What is lacking from this system, however, is the intensive, individually tailored guidance and support to help each student achieve and sustain the motivation to make change. These are the strategies proposed in this project.

A new area this project will address is attracting Indian students into the field of teaching. LPS, like many districts nationally, was just starting to see the beginning of a teacher shortage as the COVID-19 pandemic began, and this concern has only accelerated in the last two years. Recruiting and retaining more teachers of color is now one of four goals for LPS based on the

recent completion of a five-year strategic plan, making this shortage an even larger challenge. Indian teachers make up the smallest racial group among LPS' certified staff, so strategies that alleviate this problem are crucial to not only this project, but also to the district's goal.

The Magnitude of Need: For the current 2021-22 school year, 715 Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) students in grades Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade completed a federal ED 506 form, used to self-identify students who are affiliated with tribes. Among those students, approximately 400 were in elementary school and the remaining 300 in secondary grades. The map below reflects the location of these students across the school district.

**Figure 1. Location and Number of American Indian Students in Lincoln, NE**



LPS data for 2018 through 2021 below shows graduation data, which is calculated for the district then disaggregated by ethnicity data collected on census forms for “on-time” graduates. As reflected below, because total American Indian numbers are so low, the graduation rate

fluctuates greatly from year to year, but consistently remains significantly lower than the all student rate.

**Table 1. LPS Graduation Rates for Indian and All Students**

|                          | Class of 2018 |     | Class of 2019 |     | Class of 2020 |     | Class of 2021 |     |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|
|                          | #             | %   | #             | %   | #             | %   | #             | %   |
| Total District Graduated | 2210          | 84% | 2220          | 84% | 2183          | 83% | 2366          | 82% |
| Indian Graduated*        | 5             | 36% | 11            | 69% | 8             | 57% | 10            | 53% |

\*Students who selected only "American Indian or Alaskan Native" on the Census form in grade 9 - the "official" data. This does not include all students registered with an ED506 form.

Academic proficiency among Indian students is also significantly lower than all students within LPS. State standardized testing using the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment for reading and math are included in Attachment 2 reflecting grades 3, 4, 5, and 8, all of which reflect average scores at least 12.5 points lower for Native American students than for all students.

The ACT measures performance in the context of college readiness. These data are reported for high school students as a measure of academic achievement. ACT composite scores for American Indian students for the spring 2021 administration were 4.0 points lower than for all students.

Participation in college and career preparation programs, such as the LPS Career Academy (TCA), are another indicator of college readiness. In the current school year, only 4 students in any career pathway at TCA, and only 3% of students in all other LPS focus programs (science/zoo school and arts and humanities) self-identified as American Indian.

Not surprisingly, then, the proportion of Indian graduates who enroll in post-secondary education from LPS is also quite low. Among 28 American Indian high school graduates in 2021, only 35% (7 students) were enrolled in college according to the National Student Clearinghouse, compared to 63% for white students.

Disproportionality in school discipline is an area of concern at LPS that is being addressed across the district, as it continues to reflect a troubling gap between suspensions and expulsion of students of color compared to white students. In the 2020-21 school year, 10.7% of Indian students had at least one suspension and/or expulsion, compared to 5.9% of all students. Additionally, absence from school is always an indicator of concern among Indian students. In 2020-21, average daily attendance for Indian students was 85.8% compared to 93.2% for all students.

Recruitment and retention of teachers of color is also concern at LPS, accelerated by impact of the pandemic. Currently, only two teachers identify as Indian in a district of more than 3,800 certified staff, making this a severe problem. Teachers' job satisfaction levels appear to have hit an all-time low this year as well, as those choosing to retire or take a leave of absence has increased this year. Nationally, the Merrimack College Teacher Survey conducted in early 2022 revealed that barely half of teachers are satisfied with their jobs, and only 12% are very satisfied, which is down from 39% in 2012.

Project Services to Address the Need: LPS is fortunate to have received an Indian Education Demonstration Grant in 2018, which is coming to an end this fall. Some of the strategies implemented in this current project will be carried forward as they show promise but have not yet had enough time for implementation to truly determine their effectiveness. The proposed project, then, is a blend of strategies meant to correspond to the many needs identified by Indian students in LPS. Though less intense at the elementary level, LPS wants to support students across the continuum of Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, increasing strategies progressively at each stage. Particularly in this time of uncertainty, it is necessary to have an arsenal of strategies in play in order to provide the level of support that students need to progress

and flourish in school, and to see a positive future beyond their K-12 education that allows them to thrive and be self-sufficient.

## B. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

Design of the Project: This project will utilize the following strategies across the continuum of Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade:

**Table 2. Design of Project Services by Grade Level**

|  | <b>Elementary</b>   | <b>Middle</b>   | <b>High</b>   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Mental Health</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-Based Therapy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-Based Therapy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-Based Therapy</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Academic</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Families Read Events</li> <li>• Reading Interventionist</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Success Coaching</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Success Coaching</li> <li>• Counseling</li> <li>• Eagle Feather Project/ Ceremony for Seniors</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Cultural/ Advocacy</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GONA</li> <li>• After School Clubs</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GONA</li> <li>• After School Clubs</li> <li>• Success Coaching</li> <li>• Trauma Warriors</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GONA</li> <li>• After School Clubs</li> <li>• Success Coaching</li> <li>• Trauma Warriors</li> <li>• NE Native Youth Gathering</li> </ul>                                      |
| <b>Career Readiness (w emphasis on Teaching Field)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After School Club Speakers (Tribal elders, UNITE, Little Priest)</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After School Clubs (Tribal elders, UNITE, Little Priest)</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After School Clubs (Tribal elders, UNITE, Little Priest)</li> <li>• Summer Focus Program</li> <li>• Intro to Education summer course</li> <li>• Dual Credit Tuition</li> </ul> |

This design took into consideration the potential for replicability of strategies by another urban school district with an Indian population of less than 2% of total enrollment.

### Description of Services by Intervention Category:

Mental Health: Students at all levels who are identified in need of **school-based therapy** based on their behavior and/or performance at school will be referred to Morningstar Counseling, a group of licensed mental health practitioners who work under the direction of one of the only Ph.D. level Indian psychologists in the U.S. This distinction sets it apart from other therapy contracts with community providers used by LPS because these therapists are trained on addressing the unique needs of American Indian students, including an understanding of historical trauma and the confusing and sometimes contradicting feelings they may have about their heritage. Once appropriate permissions are provided by parents/guardians, school-based therapy will be provided during the school day, to be scheduled once weekly to minimize the disruption to learning.

Academic: High intensity individual or small group **tutoring** will be administered as students are identified as significantly behind in reading or math by their teacher or counselor. Teachers will be identified for tutoring, which will happen during or after school depending on schedules. **Success coaching** is a strategy in the district's current Demonstration Grant that has begun to reflect the influence of one caring adult in the building who has consistent contact with a middle or high school student focused on academic and cultural support. Based on student feedback, it is clear that additional cultural knowledge and training is needed for teachers and counselors who serve as success coaches, but that students value the relationship they develop with their coach. Proposed project activities will include cultural training each summer and during the school year for this form of mentoring to have a greater impact on student performance. Similarly, a dedicated **high school counselor** will float among all seven LPS high schools to offer post-secondary planning and support specifically to Indian students in 11<sup>th</sup> and

12<sup>th</sup> grades. The district's three American Indian Advocates who are tasked with addressing the needs of students across the K-12 spectrum have worked to fulfill this need for many years, but are unable to provide the depth of support necessary, given their high caseloads of students. Dedicated, intense counseling will be more effective, and the counselor will work closely with The Career Academy (TCA) K-12 Education career pathway, Little Priest Tribal College and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) as well. An **Eagle Feather Ceremony** for graduating seniors is the culmination of the Eagle Feather Project in which school-based community support helps ensure academic success, and is a source of pride for high school students that has served to motivate their hard work toward the goal of graduation. Held in partnership with The Indian Center of Lincoln and the Santee Sioux Nation, this event in which students receive a sacred eagle feather and blanket is held each spring and brings together students, families, school and district officials and tribal communities to dance and celebrate this accomplishment through a cultural lens. At the elementary level, a dedicated **Reading Interventionist** will float among schools to support the needs of Indian students in grades K-3 who are struggling with reading skills. Though no longer possible, LPS had previously used general funds to employ interventionists at all schools to support all struggling readers with more intensive one-on-one or small group skill building. Elementary Indian students and families will also be invited to participate in quarterly **Families Read Events**, which include a meal (not provided with federal funds) and theme-based activities centered on a book by an Indian author, which is read aloud during the event. Families also receive books to take home to start or expand their own library. These events will be held in partnership with the Nebraska Humanities Council.

Cultural/Advocacy: All LPS Indian students and their families will be invited to an annual **GONA (Gathering of Native Americans)** each summer, sponsored by LPS and held in

partnership with the Santee Sioux Nation. SAMHSA has been asked to train tribal and district partners on this curriculum so that it may be sustained, and these partners will engage families in this cultural experience meant to create a sense of community among participants as they identify and address common issues. In an urban school district with multiple tribes represented, this strategy is vital to creating a kinship for students who may otherwise feel isolated among their predominantly white peers. **After school clubs** will be administered through partnership with the Lincoln Community Learning Center (CLC) office. CLCs are administered in the majority of LPS schools to offer academic and enrichment activities and child care before and after school. Administered in partnership with local non-profit human service organizations, CLCs are an effective mechanism to administer activities outside of the school day. LPS will contract with CLCs to offer cultural clubs for Indian students that are engaging and fun, providing historical knowledge as well as relevant activities centered on food, music and art. These clubs will also bring in elders from our three tribal partners to speak and interact with students with stories and history from their own lives as a more personal way to engage students. **Success coaching**, mentioned above as an academic intervention, is also intended to provide cultural support to students who may otherwise feel culturally isolated at school. **Trauma Warriors** is a program of the Santee Sioux Nation Society of Care in which a navigator helps young people work through their own personal trauma as well as the historical trauma of their own tribe and all Indian people in the U.S. through small group work, civic engagement and leadership development activities. This program began in Lincoln during the current Demonstration Grant, and LPS has seen students respond to this program very positively as an outlet for their creativity and personal development, and will support the program if awarded a new grant. Finally, the **Nebraska Native Youth Gathering** is an annual event sponsored by the Nebraska Department of

Education, bringing together Nebraska's four tribes as well as other state level organizations to plan a daylong event for secondary students to engage with Indian culture and with each other. Though held virtually in recent years, this event may return to an in-person opportunity for LPS students to visit a tribal reservation each school year.

Career Readiness with Emphasis on Teaching: All Indian students in LPS will have the opportunity to engage in after school clubs through CLCs, as mentioned above, that are focused on highlighting Indian culture in engaging ways. CLCs will also bring in representatives from **Little Priest Tribal College and UNL's UNITE** (University of Nebraska Inter-Tribal Exchange) to speak to students to help them see a path to college, and more specifically to a career in teaching. Little Priest and UNL have created a pathway for Indian students to receive a four-year degree and become teachers through the Indigenous Roots Teacher Education Program. This program provides free tuition and related costs to Indian students from Nebraska tribes for a bachelor's degree in education, including the cost of testing for certification. In an effort to create a pipeline to this program, LPS will create an **Introduction to Education course** for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to take as part of an existing TCA Summer Academy program. The program invites students with few or no high school credits as they enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade to participate in up to 10 credit hours of career-focused coursework including culinary arts, robotics, engineering, and now education. If awarded, the new course will be developed during the first school year and administered the following summer and each summer thereafter, with special invitation going to Indian students entering both 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The same staff who administer this program at The Career Academy will also recruit Indian students going into 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades to participate in the K-12 Education career pathway, with grant funds to be used for **dual credit tuition** at our partner institution, Southeast Community College. Students in this

pathway earn 29 total college credits, all of which are transferable to UNL, upon high school graduation. Indian high school students, regardless of their participation at TCA, will take an annual field trip each spring to Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska's Little Priest Tribal College, as well as the annual Education for All conference sponsored by the Winnebago Tribe.

Goals, Objectives and Outcomes: The overarching goal for this program, in line with the federal purpose of the Demonstration Grant for Indian Children Program, is to develop, test and demonstrate the effectiveness of chosen services to improve the educational opportunities and achievement of Indian students in this school district. To achieve this goal, LPS will focus on the four following objectives over the five-year period:

- (1) Increase in on-time **graduation rate** of Indian students from 53% to 75% by end of grant period
- (2) **Average daily attendance** among Indian students will increase to within 3% of the rate for all students by the end of the grant period
- (3) Decrease in **expulsion and suspension** of Indian students to within 2% of the rate for all students by the end of the grant period
- (4) Indian students will increase reading proficiency based on **classroom (K-2) and statewide assessments (3-5) of reading**

The rationale for these objectives, as articulated in a logic model, are as follows:

**Overall Goal: College and Career Readiness for Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) Native American Students**

| Intervention  | Participants/<br>Investments   | Short Term Outcome  | Data Sources and<br>Benchmarks*   | Long Term Outcome  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Elementary Grades K-5 Interventions</b>                |  |   |   |  |
| <b>Mental Health</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed Native American mental health practitioners (Morningstar Counseling)</li> <li>Native American students referred for therapy</li> <li>School Counselors &amp; Social Workers</li> </ul>   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with suicidal ideations are quickly identified</li> <li>identified as 'at risk' receive services within days</li> <li>will gain coping skills</li> <li>will regularly attend school</li> </ul>                   | By the end of the grant the data for Native American students will show ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an increase in <b>average daily attendance</b></li> <li>a decrease in <b>expulsions and suspensions</b></li> <li>an increase in proficiency on <b>classroom (K-2) and statewide assessments (3-5) of reading</b></li> </ul> ... and the performance gap will narrow. | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will apply resiliency strategies to stay in school and graduate</li> <li>will use appropriate coping skills to navigate daily life</li> </ul> |
| <b>Academic</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native American elementary students and their families</li> <li>Reading Interventionist</li> <li>Families Read events</li> <li>After school tutors</li> <li>LPS program staff</li> </ul>          | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will gain reading proficiency skills</li> <li>families engage in culturally-relevant reading with their child(ren)</li> <li>will own Native-authored literature</li> <li>will regularly attend school</li> </ul> |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will show improved performance in reading as determined by state assessments</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Cultural / Advocacy</b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLC after school Native American culture clubs</li> <li>CLC club leaders recruited from area tribes</li> <li>LPS program staff</li> <li>Native American students</li> <li>GONA program</li> </ul> | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will experience cultural continuity with their families and classmates</li> <li>will experience deeper engagement with school community</li> </ul>   |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and their families will develop protective factors that will lead to a reduction of risk behaviors</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Career Readiness (with emphasis on teaching field)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLC after school Native American clubs</li> <li>Tribal elders</li> <li>Speakers from UNL/UNITE and Little Priest Tribal College</li> </ul>  | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will learn about the teaching career field</li> <li>will develop an understanding of how to become a teacher</li> </ul>  |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will consider teaching as a professional career</li> <li>will enroll in college bound courses</li> </ul>                                      |

| Intervention  | Participants/<br>Investments  | Short Term Outcome  | Data Sources and<br>Benchmarks*   | Long Term Outcome  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Middle Level Grades 6-8 Interventions</b>              |   |   |   |  |
| <b>Mental Health</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed Native American mental health practitioners (Morningstar Counseling)</li> <li>Native American students referred for therapy</li> <li>School Counselors &amp; Social Workers</li> </ul>                                      | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with suicidal ideations are quickly identified</li> <li>identified as 'at risk' receive services within days</li> <li>will gain coping skills</li> <li>will regularly attend school</li> </ul>   | By the end of the grant the data for Native American students will show ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an increase in <b>average daily attendance</b></li> <li>a decrease in <b>expulsions and suspensions</b></li> <li>an increase in proficiency on <b>statewide assessments of reading</b></li> </ul> ... and the performance gap will narrow. | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will apply resiliency strategies to stay in school and graduate</li> <li>will use appropriate coping skills to navigate daily life</li> </ul> |
| <b>Academic</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native American students</li> <li>After school tutors</li> <li>LPS program staff</li> <li>Success Coaches</li> </ul>   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will gain reading proficiency skills</li> <li>will perform at or above grade level</li> <li>will regularly attend school</li> <li>will develop a relationship with a supportive adult at school</li> </ul>   |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will show improved performance in reading as determined by state assessments</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Cultural / Advocacy</b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLC after school Native American culture clubs</li> <li>CLC club leaders recruited from area tribes</li> <li>LPS &amp; CLC program staff</li> <li>Native American students</li> <li>GONA program</li> <li>Trauma Warriors</li> </ul> | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will experience cultural continuity with their families and classmates</li> <li>will experience deeper engagement with school community</li> <li>will address issues unique to their cultural experiences</li> <li>will develop a network of supports</li> </ul> |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and their families will develop protective factors that will lead to a reduction of risk behaviors</li> </ul>                                 |
| <b>Career Readiness (with emphasis on teaching field)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLC after school Native American clubs</li> <li>Tribal elders</li> <li>Speakers from UNL/UNITE and Little Priest Tribal College</li> </ul>   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will learn about the teaching career field</li> <li>will develop an understanding of how to become a teacher</li> </ul>  |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will consider teaching as a professional career</li> <li>will enroll in college bound courses</li> </ul>                                      |

| Intervention  | Participants/<br>Investments  | Short Term Outcome   | Data Sources<br>and<br>Benchmarks*  | Long Term Outcome  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <b>High School Grades 9-12 Interventions</b>              |   |  |   |  |
| <b>Mental Health</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensed Native American mental health practitioners (Morningstar Counseling)</li> <li>Native American students referred for therapy</li> <li>School Counselors &amp; Social Workers</li> </ul>  | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with suicidal ideations are quickly identified</li> <li>identified as ‘at risk’ receive services within days</li> <li>will gain coping skills</li> <li>will regularly attend school</li> </ul>  | By the end of the grant the data for Native American students will show ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an increase in <b>average daily attendance</b></li> <li>a decrease in <b>expulsions and suspensions</b></li> <li>an increase in the <b>graduation rate</b> for on-time graduates</li> </ul> ... and the performance gap will narrow. | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will apply resiliency strategies to stay in school and graduate</li> <li>will use appropriate coping skills to navigate daily life</li> </ul>                   |
| <b>Academic</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native American students</li> <li>After school tutors</li> <li>LPS Program staff</li> <li>Success Coaches</li> <li>Dedicated Counselors</li> <li>Eagle Feather Project &amp; Ceremony</li> </ul>   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will engage in culturally-relevant academic supports</li> <li>will regularly attend school</li> <li>will make consistent progress toward graduation</li> <li>will develop a relationship with a supportive adult at school</li> </ul>   |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will enroll in more college bound courses</li> <li>will graduate</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Cultural / Advocacy</b>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Native American students</li> <li>CLC After School Native American culture clubs</li> <li>CLC club leaders recruited from area tribes</li> <li>LPS Program Staff</li> <li>GONA Program</li> <li>Nebraska Native Youth Gathering</li> </ul> | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will experience cultural continuity with classmates and their families</li> <li>will have experiences with Native leaders and elders in their schools</li> <li>will experience deeper engagement with school community</li> <li>will engage in culturally-relevant academic supports</li> </ul> |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and their families will develop protective factors that will lead to a reduction of risk behaviors</li> <li>will graduate</li> </ul>                            |
| <b>Career Readiness (with emphasis on teaching field)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLC after school Native American clubs</li> <li>Tribal elders</li> <li>Speakers from UNL/UNITE and Little Priest Tribal College</li> <li>Dual Credit Tuition @ SCC</li> </ul>  | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will learn about the teaching career field</li> <li>will develop an understanding of how to become a teacher</li> </ul>   |   | Native American students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will consider teaching as a professional career</li> <li>will enroll in college prep courses</li> <li>will anticipate and plan for college or career</li> </ul> |

Review of Literature for Implementation and Rationale: Research shows that all students benefit from having teachers of color. A report by the Learning Policy Institute revealed that when taught by teachers of color, students of color have better academic performance, improved graduation rates, and are more likely to attend college. Similar research from the Center for American Progress suggests that regardless of race or ethnicity, students of color report feeling cared for and academically challenged by teachers of color. While the related work proposed in this application is not the only work being done to address this problem within LPS, the exposure to teaching and specifically to training programs tailored for American Indian students, will increase the potential for a new generation of Indian teachers in and around Lincoln.

A number of other strategies will be implemented through this project that are based on research findings correlating the type of intervention with increased student engagement and/or improved academic success, though none were originally specifically designed for American Indian students. Evaluations of federally-funded 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center programs have found that students who regularly participate in after school programming see improvements in their school-day attendance and engagement in school, as well as academic gains. Tutoring and mentoring such as that provided through success coaching are both backed by evidence as strategies to improve students' academic outcomes. Research by Benjamin Bloom, as well as Richard G. Freyer, Jr., referenced in Attachment 6, suggests that one-on-one tutoring with adequate resources—the method proposed in this application for middle and high school Native American students—is arguably the most effective form of instruction.

Trauma Informed Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TI-CBT) is the primary form of therapy that will be provided to students receiving this service. TI-CBT is an evidence-based practice according to SAMHSA, as is GONA. GONA, as well all the culture-focused strategies included

in this proposal, were selected with the understanding that tribal communities and elders greatly value the importance of providing cultural context in childhood in order to develop a meaningful life as adults. While LPS is an urban school district, it remains equally important that an understanding of the need for cultural programming result in opportunities for Indian students to feel a connection to their heritage and to each other. While there are few rigorous studies of the connection between cultural influences and academic performance, the belief in this correlation is strong among tribes.

Evaluation and Potential for Replication: Indian students within LPS are scattered throughout the district in almost 60 buildings. As such, it is a challenge to address the needs of all Indian students with existing limited resources. This grant was designed, then, to focus on strategies that directly correlate to federal program goals. Performance measures were developed to build on those of the district's current Demonstration Grant and to revise or replace those that were deemed not measurable due to the pandemic's influence or other factors. It is important to note that, as is common in a project that implements multiple strategies, it will be difficult to determine true change in outcomes with a direct correlation to any one strategy. In reality, LPS recognizes that it is the cumulative product of multiple strategies over time that will most likely result in change. It is also important to note that proposed strategies were developed based on the unique resources available in and near Lincoln, and while replicability of successful strategies should be possible because of their simplistic design, the conditions and resources of another school district and community may necessitate modifications.

### C. QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

Assurance of Recruitment of Underrepresented Groups: LPS will hire a Grant Coordinator to administer the day-to-day activities of the project. The hiring process for this and any other grant-funded position will include the development of a job description that clearly states a preference for someone who identifies as American Indian and meets all other position-specific criteria. If no such applicants come forward, the next priority will be for someone from a group that has otherwise traditionally been underrepresented in the district's employment. To assure that the Grant Coordinator and other positions are filled with such representation, LPS will notify all tribal partners of openings and ask for assistance with recruitment efforts, as is described in each Partnership Agreement. Outreach will also include the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's UNITE student organization, the Indian Center of Lincoln, and other agencies focused on serving American Indians in the region.

Qualifications of Project Director: The Project Director for this project is the Director of Federal Programs for LPS, Dr. [REDACTED]. This district administrator position is responsible for all federally awarded grants that come to the district, and includes primary responsibility for communication with federal project officers. Dr. [REDACTED] has been with LPS for over 20 years as a principal and district administrator, and has great experience implementing new academic support programs within school buildings, including the current Indian Education Demonstration Grant that has been successfully implemented over the last four years.

Qualifications of Key Project Personnel: Key personnel for this project will include a mix of current and newly hired staff. A **Grant Coordinator** position will be hired within the first four months of notification of an award. Certified teachers who are Indian will be among the most highly recruited, and with that in mind, it is best to hire at a point in time that makes it

least disruptive to school, which will likely be at the semester break. The qualifications of the Grant Coordinator will include a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education, human services or a related field, with a preferred two years of project management. It will be important for this person to have excellent communication and community partnership skills. Until the Grant Coordinator is hired, the Federal Programs Department has a **Grants Team** made up of a Grant Specialist and Budget Coordinator that are very experienced and skilled in start-up and implementation of federal grants. This team will assist the Youth Development Supervisor who oversees the Indian Education Team with the day-to-day administration until the Grant Coordinator is hired.

The **Youth Development Supervisor** oversees a team of student advocates who work with underrepresented groups across the district. African American, Latino/a/x, American Indian, homeless, and LGBTQ students all have dedicated staff who identify and work with students at greatest risk of not being successful at school, whether due to attendance, academic, or personal circumstances. Two **Indian Advocates** are funded through federal Title VI formula funding, and if awarded, this project will fund a third Advocate.

The Grant Coordinator, Grant Team, Youth Development Supervisor and Indian Advocates are all part of the Federal Programs Department, so under Dr. [REDACTED] supervision.

Qualifications of Evaluator: The evaluator identified for this grant is [REDACTED], Ph.D. Dr. Brunzman is an Assessment/Evaluation Specialist with Nebraska Educational Service Unit 18 in Lincoln, Nebraska. Her doctoral degree in psychology and Master of Arts degrees in psychology and educational measurement were all completed at the University of Iowa. Dr. Brunzman has worked as an assessment/evaluation specialist for more than 22 years. She has

been involved with a number of evaluation projects, including the production of data for Indian Education grants received by Lincoln Public Schools.

Other positions that are part of the current Demonstration Grant project that will continue if awarded include a Reading Interventionist and High School Counselor. Job descriptions for both are attached. Success Coach and tutoring positions also exist in schools across the district for teachers who wish to engage with students more deeply.

Priority partnerships with each tribe are equally important to the success of the current project, and LPS has established key relationships in each that it hopes to nurture with this new grant. In particular, the Santee Sioux Society of Care program provides important services to youth in Lincoln, such as the Trauma Warriors program, that result in a synergy with the LPS Indian Ed Team. In addition, the therapy program they administered as part of our current project has evolved into a spin-off relationship directly with a non-profit community-based mental health provider who now provides school-based therapy to Indian students throughout the district. Anitra Warrior, Ph.D., is director of Morningstar Counseling, which provides mental health therapy and professional develop to LPS teachers and clinicians. Dr. Warrior is one of only a few Native American psychologists in the U.S. with such relevant educational and professional experience.

A new addition that has great potential is the LPS partnership with the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, which runs the Little Priest Tribal College. This reservation institution of higher education offers an education program that is free to Indian students that, in partnership with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, creates opportunities for Indian students to receive a four-year degree in education and teaching certificate without personal cost. LPS looks forward to working closely with these institutions to create a pipeline for high school students to become teachers.

## **D. QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES**

Collaboration with Partners: Several of the strategies in this proposal would not be considered effective without the involvement of tribal partnerships. The historical and cultural perspectives that can only be passed on to Indian students by indigenous peoples are vital to developing a sense of community and connection that will contribute to these students' success. The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska will provide support for LPS work on college and career readiness by identifying elders to work directly with students in after school clubs and in the K-12 pathway at The Career Academy. Little Priest Tribal College, located on the Winnebago reservation, will also partner with LPS to host field trips, an annual conference, and mentorships with students.

The Santee Sioux Nation will also identify elders to work with students in clubs and at The Career Academy. Group-based therapeutic work, civic engagement and leadership programming will be provided to students in partnership with the Santee Sioux's Society of Care (SOC) program, a SAMHSA-funded program using evidence-based therapy with cultural influences to address issues of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues in youth and adults. Santee Sioux staff in Lincoln will lead the Trauma Warriors program for LPS students under contract. In addition, the SOC project introduced LPS to Morningstar Counseling and its therapists who now provide school-based therapy weekly for students. The provision of therapy by Native American therapists is a distinctly unique aspect of this project, ensuring one of the most important components for effective implementation. Morningstar therapists will also provide cultural competency professional development to LPS school social workers and counselors who work closely with students. This will be provided on-site in a full-day training

once each summer throughout the project. This will allow LPS to continue providing culturally competent services to Indian students long after the grant ends.

Both tribal partners have committed to ongoing participation on the Partnership Advisory Committee for this grant, as shown in Attachment 3, Partnership Agreements.

Appropriateness of the Project to the Needs of the Local Population: As part of the planning for this proposal, a survey was conducted with parents and students who have completed an ED 506 form at LPS. This survey was focused on learning the perception of greatest need at school, as well as perceived barriers to college and career readiness among Indian students. Survey results reflected three barriers that are supported by this proposal: (1) lack of understanding of financial support for post-secondary education; (2) lack of support for a student's Indian culture at school; and (3) lack of career planning support at school. It is clear that there is not enough intentional connection between high school counselors and Indian students for them to visualize their future in college or career.

The strategies proposed are intentionally heavy in providing professional adults for students to talk to about their future, and ways for them to explore potential career areas. One of the functions of the Advocate position within LPS has always been to assist students with financial aid and college enrollment forms, visiting colleges and planning life after high school in much the way a high school counselor does—primarily because counselor caseloads are too high for them to purposefully address these student needs themselves. Creating a dedicated counselor position for Indian students will greatly help this problem. The addition of specific roles for tribal elders will help create environments that promote Indian culture and help students feel a greater connection to school. Together with other layered strategies meant to improve

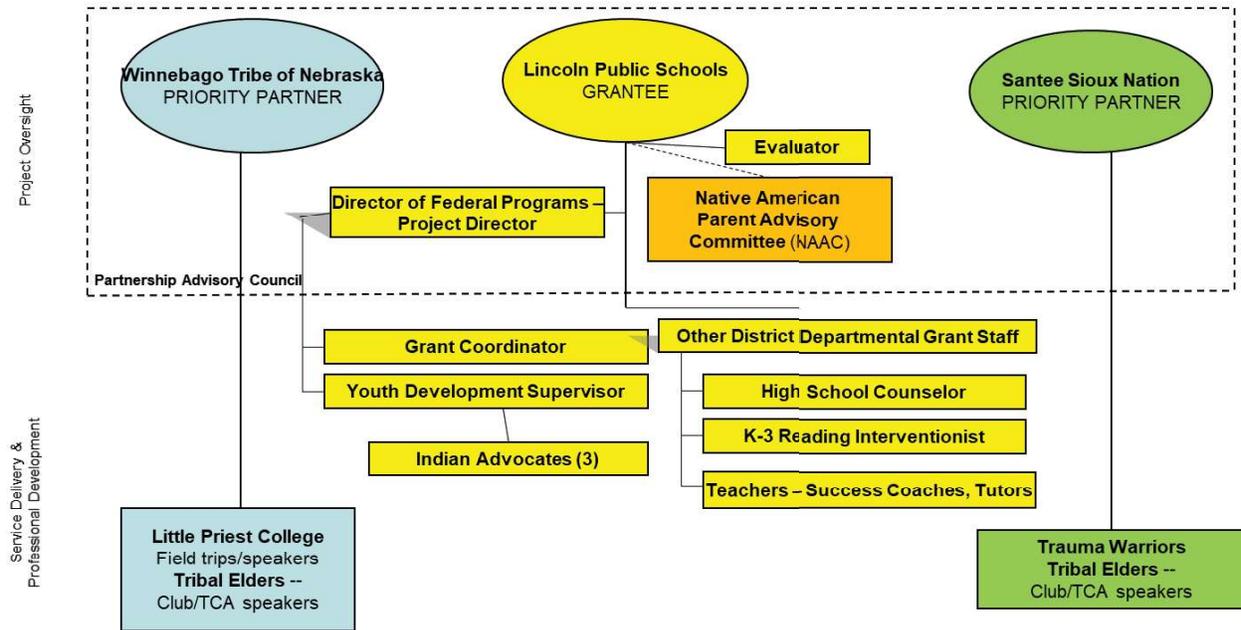
academic outcomes, these activities directly target the needs identified by Indian students and parents within Lincoln Public Schools.

## **E. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Management Plan: While LPS will serve as grantee for the project, it will be important to share the ownership of the project with our tribal partners. The primary mechanism to ensure this shared ownership will be the continuation and expansion of the Partnership Advisory Committee. This committee was developed in 2018 at the beginning of the current Demonstration Grant and includes tribal chairs (or a designated representative) from both Santee Sioux and Ponca Tribes, as well as members of the LPS Native American Advisory Committee (NAAC) which advises the district's Indian Education program, and additional Indian stakeholders from Lincoln. The committee will expand to include the Education Director from the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, as well as the Native Indigenous Centered Education Program Director from Omaha Public Schools, another urban district in Nebraska administering specialized programming to Indian students. This committee ensures that tribal partners, students and families have ongoing representation in a decision making capacity for the duration of the grant. The Partnership Advisory Committee will continue to be led by the Grant Coordinator, and will meet quarterly to be briefed on the project. Meetings will also include problem solving of implementation issues, review of budgeted versus actual expenditures, any personnel issues and other management issues that may arise. In addition to project staff, the Lead Evaluator for LPS will also attend these meetings and bring updated data analysis and reports as appropriate to help the council make determinations of progress and any possible need for modifications.

A management chart, which reflects the membership of the Partnership Advisory Committee, as well as the key personnel related to service delivery and professional development, is depicted below.

### Lincoln Public Schools Indian Education Demonstration Grant Management Chart



Lincoln Public Schools

At LPS, the Director of Federal Programs serves as the Project Director for all federally funded grants. The expectation of this grant-required role as primary communicator with federal project officers is one that the Director of Federal Programs identifies as necessary to her district function. The Director also provides overall administrative oversight to this and all federally-funded programs in the district, and bridges communication on all such programs to the Superintendent and Executive Team for the district. The Project Director position for this grant will be fulfilled by the Director of Federal Programs as a district-funded position.

LPS will hire a full-time Grant Coordinator dedicated to this project, if awarded, to fulfill the day-to-day oversight duties that are expected of grantees. This will be a grant-funded position, supervised by the Director of Federal Programs (Project Director). The district’s current Demonstration Grant has had such a position throughout the four years, though the person who has been in that role since the beginning of the grant recently accepted a statewide educational support position for Indian students with the Nebraska Department of Education, in anticipation of the end of this project. LPS will utilize all its current partnerships to ensure that a new Grant Coordinator who also has tribal affiliation is hired.

Within the LPS Federal Programs Department, the Youth Development Supervisor will also have an important role in carrying out grant activities, as this person supervises the Indian Education Team of Native American advocates who work directly with Indian students across all grade levels and all schools. As depicted, other grant-funded staff are located elsewhere in the district for supervision, but will work closely with the project to achieve grant goals.

To assist in articulating the specific day-to-day tasks of the Grant Coordinator and the reasonable time frame in which they should be completed, the following table will guide this person’s work. The Grant Coordinator will also meet monthly with the Federal Programs Budget Coordinator to ensure that expenses are being incurred appropriately and on time, and that budget items are categorized correctly.

**PROJECT TIMELINE (1<sup>ST</sup> Year)**

| Activity                         | Responsible                                     | Timeline (in months) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PROJECT OVERSIGHT                |   |                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                                  |   | O                    | N | D | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S |
| Hire and train Grant Coordinator | Director of Federal Programs (Project Director) |                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |





meeting was dedicated to reviewing and analyzing needs assessment data, reviewing the results of a needs survey conducted this winter with parents and caregivers of Indian students and other stakeholders, and discussing this group's beliefs about the appropriate services and interventions to include in the grant proposal. This same process was also conducted with the Partnership Advisory Committee. Several ideas for activities included in this proposal were borne of these discussions. In addition, the district Indian Ed Team surveyed middle and high school Indian students with a Success Coach to determine their satisfaction and value of this service. Finally, when meeting with Santee Sioux and Winnebago tribal representatives about this grant, project ideas were generated as well.

Because LPS has a current Indian Ed Demonstration Grant, a strong infrastructure already exists for the review and analysis of project data and progress, and for broad input on changes or improvements to its design. The Native American Advisory Committee, the Partnership Advisory Committee, and student equity groups across the district will continue to advise and support this project.

Sustainability/Capacity Building: In designing this proposal, significant consideration was given to the need to sustain successful strategies after the grant period in order to continue achieving positive results. The district also recognizes that gains made will take several years to be institutionalized and the commitment to maintain strategies determined to be successful is necessary from the beginning. As such, our current project was designed with much professional development that can be sustained long after the grant ends, which puts the district in a very good position if awarded a new grant. In addition, several student-focused activities will increase efficient implementation over the course of the grant. This will ensure that even if resources are not available to maintain all staff from the grant, the functions will be more systematic so they

can be folded into the work of existing staff. LPS also has experience with scrutinizing the impact of strategies toward the end of a grant in order to bring those most successful to the attention of district administration and Board of Education in order to determine their commitment to them.

## **F. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION**

Evaluation Plan: Four intervention categories are identified in the logic model and are aligned with objectives that direct the evaluation plan. Data collection, analysis, and reporting will occur throughout implementation of each intervention. The Evaluator will work with the Grant Coordinator to administer data collection responsibilities. The Grant Coordinator will be responsible for collecting data for which she or he has access, such as student specific data stored in the Student Information System. The Evaluator and Grant Coordinator may also assign data collection responsibilities to those who oversee implementation of the aligned intervention.

The Evaluator will analyze all data reported. Data collection will occur throughout the calendar year as identified in the Data Collection Table. In some instances, changes within participants over time will be compared. In other instances, comparison to peers will indicate the degree of impact of the intervention. For example, student academic achievement goals have been selected for student achievement to reach at-grade-level, or proficiency level, expectations. In instances where comparisons to peer performance can be made, the benchmarks will be set to match or exceed scores determined to be at the Proficiency level. At each data collection point, data will be shared with stakeholder groups so adjustments can be made as necessary.

Annually, a report of updated aggregate data will be made to those contributing investments into the programs as well as to interested district, state, and federal education representatives. Annual data review meetings will be held each fall with the Partnership

Advisory Committee for the purpose of reviewing intended outcomes and objectives against collected data. Outcomes and objectives will be reviewed annually. Adjustments to programming will be data-driven for the purpose of reaching objectives.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUDGET INFORMATION  
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Number: 1894-0008  
Expiration Date: 09/30/2023

Name of Institution/Organization

Lincoln Public Schools

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

| Budget Categories                 | Project Year 1 (a) | Project Year 2 (b) | Project Year 3 (c) | Project Year 4 (d) | Project Year 5 (e) | Project Year 6 (f) | Project Year 7 (g) | Total (h)    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. Personnel                      | 259,440.00         | 279,284.00         | 287,207.00         | 279,783.00         | 286,885.00         |                    |                    | 1,392,599.00 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits                | 67,952.00          | 72,104.00          | 74,188.00          | 73,601.00          | 75,584.00          |                    |                    | 363,429.00   |
| 3. Travel                         | 8,575.00           | 14,075.00          | 8,575.00           | 14,075.00          | 8,575.00           |                    |                    | 53,875.00    |
| 4. Equipment                      | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               |                    |                    | 0.00         |
| 5. Supplies                       | 16,660.00          | 10,941.00          | 6,434.00           | 8,945.00           | 5,360.00           |                    |                    | 48,340.00    |
| 6. Contractual                    | 131,946.00         | 105,649.00         | 105,649.00         | 105,649.00         | 105,649.00         |                    |                    | 554,542.00   |
| 7. Construction                   | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               |                    |                    | 0.00         |
| 8. Other                          | 2,700.00           | 5,220.00           | 5,220.00           | 5,220.00           | 5,220.00           |                    |                    | 23,580.00    |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8) | 487,273.00         | 487,273.00         | 487,273.00         | 487,273.00         | 487,273.00         |                    |                    | 2,436,365.00 |
| 10. Indirect Costs*               | 12,727.00          | 12,727.00          | 12,727.00          | 12,727.00          | 12,727.00          |                    |                    | 63,635.00    |
| 11. Training Stipends             | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               | 0.00               |                    |                    | 0.00         |
| 12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)      | 500,000.00         | 500,000.00         | 500,000.00         | 500,000.00         | 500,000.00         |                    |                    | 2,500,000.00 |

**\*Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):** If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

- (1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?  Yes  No
- (2) If yes, please provide the following information:  
 Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From:  To:  (mm/dd/yyyy)  
 Approving Federal agency:  ED  Other (please specify):   
 The Indirect Cost Rate is  %.
- (3) If this is your first Federal grant, and you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, are not a State, Local government or Indian Tribe, and are not funded under a training rate program or a restricted rate program, do you want to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC?  Yes  No If yes, you must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.414(f).
- (4) If you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, do you want to use the temporary rate of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages?  
 Yes  No If yes, you must submit a proposed indirect cost rate agreement within 90 days after the date your grant is awarded, as required by 34 CFR § 75.560.
- (5) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:  
 Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? Or,  Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is  %.
- (6) For Training Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a rate that:  
 Is based on the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))? Or,  Is based on the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))?