

LA-SFEC: Advancing Meaningful Family-School Engagement

The Center for Literacy and Learning

CDEA 84.310A

Application for New Grant Under the Statewide family Engagement Centers Program

Fiscal Year 2022

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A. Quality of the Project Design

Overview

The Center for Literacy and Learning (The Center) has served Louisiana for 30 years, training tens of thousands of educators in evidence-based teaching practices. Based on the Dual-Capacity Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships, The Center’s proposed “LA-SFEC: Advancing Meaningful Family-School Engagement” model is designed to work in close collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Education, which has developed a family engagement framework and is investing in strengthening statewide family engagement infrastructure, efforts, and activities. The Center is well-positioned to deepen its engagement with educators, families, and communities as a Statewide Family Engagement Center.

Need Statement

Increasing family-school engagement through a dual-capacity building framework is crucial in Louisiana. The state trails national averages in almost every indicator. This is shown in the average scale scores of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessments in mathematics, reading, and writing at grades 4 and 8, with Louisiana consistently among the states that perform significantly lower than the national publicⁱ. Many institutions rank states by educational quality, using a variety of benchmarks and matrices, and Louisiana falls toward the bottom of each one^{ii iii iv}.

A selection of the state’s population characteristics, in the table below, show multiple social and economic indicators that contribute to and exacerbate the consequences of poor academic outcomes:

Indicator	Louisiana	U.S.
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Child Poverty (Census) ⁱ	27%	17%
Overall Poverty (Census) ⁱ	18%	12%
Students not graduating on time (NCES) ^v	20%	14%
Children 6-17 repeating one or more grades (NSCH) ^{vi}	14%	6%
Per pupil expenditures (adjusted for regional cost differences) (NCES) ⁱⁱ	\$12,847	\$13,301
Children in the care of grandparents (Census) ⁱ	10.4%	4%
Children with a parent ever incarcerated (NSCH) ⁱⁱⁱ	12%	7%

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data show children in Louisiana significantly underperforming, compared with their national counterparts; the divide is even more stark for low-income families. With the state at a poverty level 50% higher than the national average, the consequences of low literacy attainment are particularly high in Louisiana, with the worst impacts on families that are economically disadvantaged and from ethnic and linguistic minorities.

2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)^{vii} outcomes include:

Indicator		Louisiana	U.S.
4 th Grade Reading – Below Proficient	Families qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL)	82%	79%
	Non-FRL	56%	50%
	Overall	74%	66%
4 th Grade Math – Below Proficient	Overall	71%	60%

8 th Grade Reading – Below Proficient	Overall	73%	68%
8 th Grade Math– Below Proficient	Overall	77%	67%

A 2020 scan of state policies^{viii} by The Education Trust and CASEL rates Louisiana as “Barely Supportive” in the category of *Student, Family, and Community Engagement*. The report notes that the state department of education has a) dedicated staff to carry out activities to support schools and school districts in engaging families and communities and b) detailed guidance for schools and school districts to engage students, families, and communities for P-12 grades. However, the state department of education does not offer ongoing professional development to districts or schools for student, family and community engagement and integration of family-school engagement into teacher evaluation rubrics. This need for strengthening of infrastructure related to student, family, and community engagement and high-quality professional development will be addressed by the proposed project.

Conceptual Framework

The Center will build upon its statewide resources, its close working relationships with schools, school districts, the State Education Agency—Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) — and its national network of experts and innovators to serve as Louisiana’s Statewide Family Engagement Center (LA-SFEC). The Center will work closely with a 15-member advisory board with representation from families of students (8 members), educators (2 members), students (2 members), and other community stakeholders (3 members), to build and strengthen the statewide infrastructure for family engagement (this advisory board is detailed further in the Quality of the

Management Plan section of this proposal). The LA-SFEC Director will oversee all program implementation, and three Family Engagement Specialists will support the project efforts.

The objectives of the proposed project are:

Objective 1: Increasing capacity of Louisiana’s statewide infrastructure by working with LDOE’s Be Engaged initiative and LEA-level parent and family engagement district coordinators through trainings on individual- and system-level best practices that can support family-school engagement

Objective 2: Increase Louisiana families’ capacity for effectively partnering with educators and school administrators to support child’s academic success.

Objective 3: Increase Louisiana educators’ capacity for positive and collaborative interactions with parents and families.

Objective 4: Rigorously implement and evaluate an equity-driven, family-engaged Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model in 4 schools across 2 LEAs to then create a scalable model for other interested schools in Louisiana and beyond.

The Center’s LA-SFEC addresses all four of the Competitive Preference Priorities in its framework and design, as will be noted throughout this proposal. Specifically:

Competitive Preference Priority 1 (CPP1): Evidence-Based Activities – As this project design will detail, an evidence-based Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model will be incorporated into the project design. Additionally, the project incorporates FASTalk, a family engagement tool that promotes equity and builds partnerships between teachers and historically underserved families by sharing engaging, at-home learning activities via text messages in each family’s home language. FASTalk is an emerging best practice supported by evidence. Additionally, the statewide resources for educators and families will include lists and resources related to evidence-based practices and interventions that support effective family engagement, with

a focus on practical tips for adoption and implementation of such practices. As part of the grant, the three family engagement specialists will complete professional development in a total of three evidence-based interventions that support students through family-school partnerships. Over 40 percent of requested funds each year are budgeted to support establishing or expanding technical assistance for evidence-based parent education programs.

Competitive Preference Priority 2 (CPP2): Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 - The LA-SFEC design addresses students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs through approaches that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, language, and disability status. PBIS is integrated through both aspects (statewide and focused evidence-based intervention) of the project design to support social, emotional, and mental health, which are especially critical as a result of the pandemic and the compounding effects of hurricanes in Louisiana. The evidence-based interventions in the two LEAs during the grant period will include conducting needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students and families, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families.

Competitive Preference Priority 3 (CPP3): Promoting Equity—Starting with the Advisory Board, the LA-SFEC design is centered around giving value and safe spaces for all voices and supporting underserved students and their families. The program is designed to serve several subgroups of students and their families who are typically underserved, with a special focus on advancing family-school engagement to support students of color, English learners, and migrant students. The selection criteria for the elementary and middle schools where the evidence-based interventions will be implemented accounted for both high percentages of students with limited English proficiency, who identify as being from a minority racial or ethnic group, and hail from

economically disadvantaged households. With the exceptional needs in Louisiana’s schools, the model prioritizes serving the highest need schools with the most disadvantaged populations. The included budget allocates over 80% of funds toward LEAs, schools, and community-based organizations that serve high concentrations of disadvantaged students.

The project’s inclusive, equity-driven, and culturally responsive design will help to expand and improve the engagement of underserved community members in informing and engaging decision-making at the local and State levels. Among other measures to make LA-SFEC meetings and resources accessible, most public resources offered through the project will be offered in at least two languages, with additional adaptations provided as necessary to ensure access to all families.

Competitive Preference Priority 4 (CPP4): Strengthening Cross-Agency Coordination and Community Engagement — The LA-SFEC model is working in lockstep with LDOE’s family engagement initiatives focused on a statewide infrastructure that engages cross-agency, cross-sectoral, and community partnerships. The Center has developed partnerships with schools, LEAs, organizations serving families, and institutions of higher education, including with LSU, that facilitate coordination among state entities while also operating on a local level. Additionally, the diverse set of Advisory Board members will also support the strengthening of cross-sectoral coordination and community engagement in family-school engagement efforts.

The Center has based its LA-SFEC design on the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships, which is based on existing research and best practices^{ix} (CPP1). The Dual Capacity-Building Framework is designed to be a guide for creating a pathway to successful family engagement efforts that result in student achievement and school improvement. The model maps out “Essential Conditions” that must be created to ensure success, such as mutual trust relationships between parents and educators and committed resources and infrastructure. Parents

and educators build capacity through capabilities, connections, cognition, and confidence. This work leads to empowered educators and engaged parents who, in turn, support student and school improvement.

The Center's approach to launching LA-SFEC is two-pronged, detailed below. The Statewide Engagement prong will focus on reaching all Louisiana LEAs, students, educators, and families through comprehensive evidence-based approaches to family engagement (CPP1 and CPP3). The Evidence-Based Practice Intervention prong, in partnership with LSU and the Family Engagement Lab, will implement and evaluate evidence-based and emerging best practices that will add to the statewide resources for Louisiana as well as to the knowledge base on including family members in SEL efforts. LA-SFEC and partners will establish a Research Practice Partnership to inform and support the implementation of the evidence-based Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) approach with a variety of family engagement components that have shown to improve student wellbeing and success (CPP2).

Statewide Engagement:

The Center has built strong and successful partnerships with LDOE in its 30 years of supporting students, educators, and families in the state. The Center has already built a statewide presence and deep engagement with local and state entities, which it will leverage to channel free and accessible resources to families and educators across the state. This engagement is built on several already existing, sustainable platforms through which the Center can bring new evidence-based practices and deeper interventions to support family engagement (CPP1 and CPP4).

BE ENGAGED[®] Birth-12 Framework

LDOE recently launched its BE ENGAGED[®] Birth-12 Framework, which includes several modalities for family engagement, including identifying Family Engagement Coordinators at each

LEA in the state. LDOE's program is informed by research that suggested family engagement to be one of the most powerful predictors of social-emotional development, educational attainment and success in school and life for children and youth^x. BE ENGAGED was created to advance family engagement as an empowering partnership among families, educators, practitioners, and the community with shared responsibility for the personal success of children and youth.

The Center will support LDOE's implementation of BE ENGAGED by providing district-level supports, as well as general community resources (CPP4). The Center will employ a team of three Family Engagement Specialists who will engage in this work, along with an LA-SFEC Project Director and an LA-SFEC Project Coordinator. This team will be responsible for directly supporting the Parent and Family Engagement District Coordinators, training them with best practices for family engagement and developing additional intervention strategies. These supports and training will be based on research-based findings related to effective family engagement practices as well as the implementation of the Evidence-Based Practice Intervention in 2 Louisiana LEAs (CPP1).

LA-SFEC Statewide Resources

As part of its role as LA-SFEC and in support of the BE ENGAGED Initiative, The Center will provide family engagement tools to the general public through a comprehensive website equipped with evidence-based tools and community-based resources to advance meaningful family-school engagement. One section will be for educators, school administrators, and LEA personnel and will include resources and opportunities to increase family-engagement capacity-building of schools and school systems. Another section of the website will be for parents and families, with resources for family engagement, understanding report cards, and constructive and effective ways to engage with schools. This section will also include resources for parents and families of English Learners and students with disabilities (CPP3). The site will equip parents and families to engage in

policy making at the school, local, state, and federal levels, and it will incorporate at-home activity ideas and curated evidence-based and evidence-driven solutions that could be easily implemented at home (CPP1). The website will be ADA compliant and will include resources in English and Spanish (CPP3). The budgeted contract for marketing purposes will increase visibility of resources by disseminating flyers and select printed versions of resources through supporting schools, school districts, library systems, PTICs, local businesses, and community organizations.

The Center will also provide workshops and webinars throughout the state. These topics of these webinars and workshops will be responsive to observed need or community demand. The needs will be identified from discussions with the advisory board, parents and families attending LA-SFEC events or workshops, LEA-level Family Engagement Coordinators, and participating educators. The Center has already received preliminary commitments from EdNavigator, a non-profit organization whose mission is to “empower every family in the United States with access to affordable, high-quality, on-demand support along the path to a great education , from before preschool to college and beyond”, and Sesame Workshop whose mission is “helping kids grow smarter, stronger, and kinder” by meeting student needs in more than 150 countries, delivering their services through screens, in classrooms, and in communities, to create and deliver such content. Other content presented will include supporting child and adult literacy at home, understanding the annual school report card, parent advocacy, and evidence-based interventions and best practices that engage both educators and family members in supporting student success. The content of these workshops and webinars will also be informed by the outcomes of the Evidence-Based Interventions component of the Research Practice Partnership with LSU, outlined in the following section, and may be directed at different combinations of audiences including parents and educators.

As the Research Practice Partnership description will detail, this effort will result in resources to implement the equity-based, family-engaged model of PBIS across Louisiana.

Louisiana Reads!

The Center will also incorporate its highly successful Louisiana Reads! program, which promotes at-home reading opportunities and family engagement through literacy awareness, book distribution, and direct service to families, into the statewide programming. Louisiana Reads! provides parents and caregivers of students in grades PreK-3 access to resources on supporting their children's reading outside the school. Louisiana Reads! includes in-person programming, digital family engagement library available through a mobile application that is currently under development, and workshops (in person and online) on strategies for engaging read-aloud activities with children. Through Louisiana Reads!, The Center brings high impact, evidence-informed practices to increase parents' knowledge and confidence in language-based learning for their children, utilizing read-aloud strategies to foster deeper engagement and learning opportunities (CPP1). As part of this grant, each year, The Center, will provide its workshop on effective family supports for literacy development and distribute 300 book bundles annually for parents and families who complete the 45-minute workshop on at-home reading strategies. The events will be focused on reaching communities with high concentrations of disadvantaged students, including students who are English learners, minorities, students with disabilities, homeless children and youth, children and youth in foster care, and migrant students (CPP3).

Evidence-Based Practice Intervention:

In partnership with LSU, The Center will implement and evaluate the effectiveness of an equity-driven and family engaged Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model in two cohorts of schools across two local education agencies (LEAs) using a waitlist randomized

control trial. The partnership will support the curation of deep and meaningful family, school, and community engagement in their crucial role of informing policies, programs, and activities to improve student development and academic achievement; thus, changing learning outcomes that set students on a lifelong path to success. PBIS is a model that supports Addressing students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs through approaches that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status (CPP2). During the grant period, the equity-driven, family-engaged PBIS model will be implemented in a total of 4 schools (CPP 1 and CPP3).

The schools will be from Tangipahoa and Calcasieu parishes, both of which have significant room for improvement in student achievement but who also have the capacity to support this level of intervention. Calcasieu has a total enrollment of 27,681, and 58% of its students are classified as economically disadvantaged by the SEA; 7 of these schools meet the criterion of having greater than 5% of the student body having limited English proficiency (LEP). Tangipahoa has a total enrollment of 19,445, and 79% are classified as economically disadvantaged; 9 of these schools meet the criterion of having greater than 5% of enrolled students having LEP (CCP3).

LSU and The Center will develop the full intervention strategy in year 1, in collaboration with school districts, identified schools, and families of the identified schools. Implementation of the equity-based family engaged PBIS intervention in the initial cohort will take place during years 2 and 3, with ongoing supports in years 4 and 5. The Center has also secured additional letters of support from three other school districts (City of Monroe, Ascension Parish, and East Baton Rouge Parish) that would be willing to participate in the model should circumstances require the addition of other LEAs.

The dual capacity-building intervention model will include:

1. An equity-driven, family engaged Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) framework, which is evidence based and addresses social, emotional, and mental health (CPP1 and CPP2), and

2. A partnership with Family Engagement Lab to support the implementation of FASTalk, an evidence-informed text-message technology that facilitates informing parents and families of their students' progress on their schools' literacy, math, and SEL content.

The expected deliverables of this intervention include, but are not limited to, a step-by-step instructional manual for equity-driven, family engaged PBIS model implementation, video resources of school personnel trainings and family workgroup discussions, and a rubric for effective and meaningful family engagement. These resulting resources would be available through the LA-SFEC for any school or family member interested in implementing the model (CPP 1, CCP2, CPP3).

The results and best practices that emerge from careful implementation and evaluation of these interventions will add to the statewide resources for Louisiana as well as to the knowledge base on including family members in SEL efforts. The evaluation of this work will inform the resources and trainings that the LA-SFEC provides. The activities associated with the evidence-based intervention will include the following:

- School Recruitment
- Draft Memorandum of Agreement and sign with school district
- Meeting with the advisory board
- Needs assessment with local stakeholders, including interviews and survey data collection
- Focus groups (staff and families)

- Compilation of feedback from needs assessment data and focus groups to inform finalization of family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS approach and related resources
- School Staff Training on family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS approach
- Family Engagement Specialist Training on effective PBIS, formative assessment of PBIS fidelity, how to provide technical assistance and implementation support
- Initiation of family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS implementation
- Data collection: Records data, student-report, parent-report (via FASTalk), Teacher-report
- Parent workshop on supporting children’s positive youth development and prosocial behavior, applying principle from PBIS
- School Staff/ Family Engagement Specialists Booster Training
- School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) Fidelity assessment
- Family Engagement Specialists Training for sustainability support

A detailed timeline, is included in Appendix A.

Knowledge of Research and Effective Practice

The Center has chosen its partners and conceptual framework specifically to support implementation of up-to-date research and effective practices. The Evidence-Based Practice Intervention component of the model has been designed to serve as a laboratory for implementation which can then be disseminated through the Statewide Engagement Framework, including workshops and webinars for educators and families (CPP1). The initial interventions will be PBIS, which is evidence-based (CPP1), and FASTalk, which is evidence-informed.

Evidence-Based Intervention One: *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports*

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is the most commonly used approach for providing behavioral support in U.S. public schools and the only behavior prevention system

specifically mentioned in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (CPP2). The main goal of school-wide PBIS is to provide primary prevention by changing the school environment to increase student exposure to protective factors, while limiting their exposure to risk factors^{xi}. School-wide PBIS is an empirically and theoretically based system for providing students with proactive behavior supports using a tiered model^{xii}. The system is built upon well-established behavioral principles^{xiii} that create positive and structured learning environments^{xiv xv}.

Traditionally, PBIS is delivered across three tiers, school-wide (universal practices for all students), small group (selected practices for at-risk students), and individual (indicated practices for students of greatest need). However, most of the more than 20,000 schools implementing PBIS concentrate on its universal or school-wide elements^{xvi}.

There are two primary reasons for this focus on the universal. First, the implementation of high-quality universal practices is foundational to school success, minimizing the number of students requiring more intensive and costly interventions and supports^{xvii}. Second, increased resource needs are associated with implementing selective and indicated interventions which many schools struggle to manage^{xviii}. PBIS considers the whole school context and strives to create a supportive and positive social climate for all children, including consistent behavioral expectations and ways for promoting them across the school and between school staff, resulting in educational cohesiveness^{xviii}.

As a proactive approach, PBIS ensures the explicit teaching, modeling, prompting, and reinforcing of desired student behaviors^{xix} (CPP2). This behavioral approach emphasizes identifying and eliminating triggers for problem behavior and creating environmental contingencies that encourage appropriate behavior over punishing inappropriate behavior^{xx}. Fundamental to PBIS are the antecedent-behavior-consequence contingency^{xxi}. PBIS primarily focuses on preventive,

antecedent-based interventions and teaching prosocial, adaptive behaviors through the principles of reinforcement^{xxii}. When problem behavior does occur, the goal is to respond in the least intrusive and reinforcing manner as possible to diminish the likelihood of the behavior reoccurring and safeguard the relationship between the teacher and student^{xx}. PBIS are particularly effective in reducing externalizing problems in a manner that is not reactive or punitive^{xxiii}. Thus, PBIS places a priority on acknowledging and reinforcing prosocial behavior, rather than simply reacting to and punishing problem behavior. Notably, numerous studies have found that implementing PBIS is associated with a reduction in office discipline referrals (ODRs), a reduction in discipline recidivism or incidents, increased perception of school safety, and increased academic achievement^{xxviii xxiv xxv xxvi}(CCP2). Furthermore, past research has found that the effects of school-wide PBIS on student outcomes tend to be greatest among at-risk and high-risk children^{xvi}.

Additional evidence support for PBIS is included in Appendix B.

The LA-SFEC will implement a Family-Engaged, Equity-Driven PBIS. Equity within education confers the chance for students to attain their full academic and health potential regardless of background^{xxvii}. Therefore, equity requires a focus on exposing unequal outcomes that might highlight unique student needs and the factors contributing to these disparities between student groups (CCP3). A distinction can be made between educational practices that generally work and those that work and reduce inequities. Bal et al. (2014)^{viii} rightly state that disproportionality in student outcomes across culturally and linguistically diverse groups of students is “not a matter of statistical probability but a symptom of larger issues of equity in a society stratified along the intermingled lines of race and ability” (p. 329). Encouragingly, some suggest a benefit of implementing PBIS is reducing the disproportionate allocation of exclusionary discipline by student

race^{xxii xxviii}. Unfortunately, others report that discipline disproportionality remains in schools implementing PBIS^{xxix xvi}.

Bal et al. (2014)^{viii} suggest that inequities are not automatically addressed through the traditional implementation of PBIS because the current approach is assumed to be culture-free or culturally neutral and, therefore, neglects to adequately attend to the needs of increasingly diverse cultural school contexts. Also, traditional PBIS fails to facilitate family involvement. Yet, much research shows that family-school partnerships are critical to students' success, particularly culturally and linguistically diverse students^{xxx xxxi}.

Therefore, in partnership with LSU, The Center proposes a family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS approach for the LA-SFEC project that builds upon the extensive empirical literature supporting school-wide PBIS but addresses its present shortcomings. To best attend to the listed shortcomings, the family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS approach will include the following additional elements: shared PBIS goals and decision-making that consider students and families cultures, the dual-capacity building of educators' and parents' positive behavioral promotion, enhanced school-home communication (through a text-based app, FASTalk, including school-home notes), and data disaggregation and analysis. Furthermore, due to the flexibility of PBIS to be tailored to specific school contexts and integrated with standard school operations, LSU and The Center will be developing resources to assist schools in maximizing contextual fit and feasibility for implementation.

Evidence-Informed Intervention Two: *FASTalk*: Leveraging text message technology for “nudge” interventions with parents has been found to be highly impactful, cost-effective, and scalable^{xxxii xxxiii}. A Stanford study^{xxxiv} found that sending weekly early literacy activities by text message to parents increased parental involvement at home leading to significant early literacy

gains for preschool students. FASTalk builds on and improves upon the design of such evidence-based nudge interventions by making the text message content contextually relevant (i.e., aligned to the classroom curriculum); involving a trusted messenger; the child’s teacher; and allowing for 2-way parent-teacher communication (CPP1). With text messages automatically translating to over 100 languages, FASTalk promotes equity and builds partnerships between teachers and historically underserved families by sharing engaging, at-home learning activities via text messages in each family’s home language (CPP 3).

Building Capacity and Yielding Results in the Future

The conceptual framework of the LA-SFEC: Advancing Meaningful Family-School Engagement project is built upon systems that are, to some degree, already existing. The Center has a statewide footprint upon which the LA-SFEC framework builds (CPP4). LDOE has a family engagement model recently launched, with committed resources, which will be amplified significantly by the proposed work. By building this expanded program onto an existing framework, The Center is ensuring the continuity of the program and its implemented evidence-based practices well beyond the period of Federal financial assistance (CPP1). As the attached MOU from LDOE demonstrates, LDOE is committed to sustaining and promoting the resources developed and shared through LA-SFED throughout Louisiana through their Education Program Consultants. The Center is also committed to continuing the work launched through the LA-SFEC and will maintain a Family Engagement Specialist position to sustain the promotion of family engagement best practices (CPP4) in its statewide and national efforts to advance literacy in classrooms, homes, and communities.

B. Quality of the Management Plan

Adequacy of the Management Plan

The Center will manage all aspects of the LA-SFEC: Advancing Meaningful Family-School Engagement project. The Center assures that it will adhere to all stated federal requirements for the SFEC project. The Center's Vice President of Program Development is responsible for the overall project activities and will directly supervise the LA-SFEC Project Director. The Center's Vice President will serve as the interim LA-SFEC Project Director until a permanent Project Director with at least 5 years of family-school engagement experience is hired (by month 3 of Grant Year 1). An LA-SFEC Project Coordinator will support program-related communication, scheduling, and logistics, and report to the Project Director (to be hired by month 3 of Grant Year 1). Three Family Engagement Specialists (FESs), who have at least 3 years of experience in parent advocacy or school-family engagement efforts, will be hired by month 3 of Grant Year 1. At least one of the FESs will be fluent in Spanish to ensure reaching Spanish-speaking families. These FESs will receive training in Youth Mental Health First Aid and RULER, both of which are evidence-based programs that are designed for both educators, families, and community members in advancing a trauma-informed approach and social emotional learning respectively. Additionally, all SFEC staff will be required to attend a comprehensive training on diversity, equity, and inclusion to support the staff in i) celebrating and respecting the diverse populations from whom they learn from and work with, ii) ensuring inclusion, and advancing equity (CCP3). All personnel under the program will report directly to the Project Director. The Project Director will oversee all subcontractor and partner activities. The Project Director will ensure the scheduling and leading of planning and progress monitoring meetings that occur at least once every two months.

The Advisory Board, will be recruited intentionally to comprise a diverse group of stakeholders, will interface with the project staff at the quarterly Advisory Board meetings (CPP3, CPP4). Recruitment efforts will be done by reaching out to family members and students through

libraries and school systems and by highlighting the benefits of bringing their expertise and lived experiences to shape the statewide family engagement efforts as well as the associated stipends and childcare for participation in the quarterly meetings (CPP4). Recruitment information will be provided in at least English and Spanish, with additional translations for certain regions based on the population's linguistic characteristics. The Center will recruit educators, business leaders, and legislators by leveraging existing relationships across Louisiana (CPP4). This Advisory Board will monitor the outcomes of the project as it progresses, creating a feedback loop that engages all stakeholders. Staff and partners will meet at least every other month for planning and monitoring, as well, to review program implementation progress, successes and challenges. The team will engage in responsive problem-solving during these meetings.

Adequacy of Procedures Ensuring Feedback and Continuous Improvement

The Director of Evaluation and Data of The Center will develop i) a detailed logic model (initial concept draft included in Appendix C), ii) an evaluation plan with both process and outcome evaluation, iii) a dashboard to collect, monitor, and iv) quarterly and as-needed reports of grant-related activities. While the dashboard will collect primarily quantitative data, additional questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews that happen throughout the grant period will inform implementation decisions and efforts to ensure fidelity in delivery of grant activities, maximize reach and access to families and schools, and make necessary adaptations. The bi-monthly (every other month) planning meetings and quarterly advisory board meetings will also serve as opportunities to review progress and brainstorm ideas to overcome barriers or improve the quality of grant activities. The Research Practice Partnership with LSU is also designed to provide regular feedback and continuous improvement of the statewide model. LSU will be assessing the implementation of the evidence-based practices throughout a variety of instruments that collect both

quantitative and qualitative data (CPP1). Their role in this partnership is to assess the effectiveness of implementation, as well as to determine areas for improvement. The lessons learned from these pilots will be disseminated throughout the Statewide Engagement portion of the model. As the LA-SFEC, The Center will serve as the clearinghouse for feedback and continuous improvement and feed that information to LEAs, educators, and parents throughout the state.

FASTalk, the text-based school-note and two-way communication tool, is set up to ensure incorporation of feedback from parents and families, thereby promoting their engagement. Developed by the Family Engagement Lab, FASTalk supports rapid experimentation and data-driven continuous improvement in multiple ways.

1) The platform includes real time feedback loops which include dashboards and weekly reports of engagement analytics by school, grade, teachers, and language.

2) The Family Engagement Lab conducts parent and teacher surveys throughout the year to measure attitudes, knowledge, and behavior, as well as feedback on FASTalk. They also conduct multilingual interviews to ensure that the features being designed are responsive to families' diverse needs.

3) The Family Engagement Lab's agreements with school districts encompass comprehensive data sharing capabilities, which facilitate its ability to analyze how different families and teachers use the tool and to explore impact on student learning outcomes. The Family Engagement Lab receives expert guidance on its research strategy through formal engagements with EC PRISM, UC Berkeley, J-PAL MIT, and Harvard Center for the Developing Child.

Adequacy of Ensuring High-Quality Products and Services

This proposal has demonstrated the high quality and evidence-base of the planned interventions, products, and services, and The Center has the experience to ensure their successful

implementation. The Center has the capacity to manage programs of this magnitude and in partnership with LDOE and other leaders, as shown by past and current successful administration of contract and grant activities. The Center has trained tens of thousands of educators from Louisiana and beyond in evidence-based teaching practices. Its mission is to advance literacy and learning through evidence-based practices in the classroom, home, and community. Its vision is that everyone is empowered through literacy. Headquartered in Metairie, the Center opened a second office location in Baton Rouge in 2020 under the leadership of Dr. John Wyble, the organization's President and CEO. The organization currently has 32 full-time staff members with expertise in early childhood development, early literacy, dyslexia intervention, family engagement, public policy, and evaluation.

The Center has the organizational capacity to successfully execute this project. The Center has implemented a number of grants and projects in rural and urban settings in Louisiana. In the last three years, The Center has served 64 different school districts/LEAs and over 250 schools in Louisiana. The schools have been traditional public, private, parochial, charter, and specialized schools (juvenile corrections).

Most recently, The Center secured a large contract with the Louisiana State Department of Education to coordinate a central element of its CLSD program—Regional Literacy Coach Coordinators. This contract is a result of prior successful partnerships between The Center and the Louisiana Department of Education, including contracts to develop Literacy Coach Guides and a virtual course on the Science of Reading for Rethink Grant Literacy Tutors. The scope of this contract includes staffing management personnel and 15 regional literacy specialists to support the use of evidence-based literacy instruction practices in schools across Louisiana designated as

“Comprehensive Intervention Required” or “Urgent Intervention Needed” by the Louisiana Department of Education due to poor performance indicators.

The Center has a track record of successfully implementing new initiatives. In 2017, to extend the organization’s scope of services from birth to 8 years old, the Center created Cornerstones, a Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education-approved accelerated Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program. Through this program, The Center has provided training and support needed to obtain certification to 211 participants from 65 different childcare centers in South Louisiana. The Center also conducts Plain Talk About Literacy and Learning (Plain Talk), an international conference that brings together researchers, policy makers, educators and other practitioners for an intensive professional development on the Science of Reading and practical strategies based in research to improve literacy instruction and outcomes. For 2021, the organization quickly pivoted to offer Plain Talk as a two-day virtual conference in February 2021. In 2022, Plain Talk had its largest attendance ever with more than 1,800 educators from across the United States, England, and France.

The Center has served numerous families of children with developmental disabilities and has ongoing partnerships with Louisiana-based organizations for family members of individuals with disabilities such as Families Helping Families agencies in Louisiana and Decoding Dyslexia chapters around the country.

The Center has also completed seven Lunch and Learn events where the importance of literacy, evidence-based instructional practices, and community engagement were shared and discussed with a wide range of stakeholders – teachers, parents and families, school district personnel, legislators, community organizations, and business leaders. The locations included North, Central, and South Louisiana, with events in Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Monroe,

Hammond, Shreveport and Mandeville. Additionally, a statewide policy roundtable held in January 2022 brought together over 20 entities, LDOE, businesses, education consultants, non-profit leaders, and teachers to discuss legislative priorities for the 2022 Louisiana Legislative Session.

Appropriate and Adequate Time Commitments

The Center has committed five full-time roles to implement the LA-SFEC: Advancing Meaningful Family-School Engagement initiative. With the LA-SFEC Project Director overseeing all personnel with the support of the LA-SFEC Project Coordinator, three additional Family Engagement Specialists will work directly in sharing evidence-based and evidence-informed practices that can advance family-school engagement with school districts, schools, and communities across the state. This design, with regional liaisons and state-level leadership, is aligned with The Center's operational model and is appropriate to the deliverable activities assigned within this project.

The Center has also dedicated 20% of the Director of Evaluation and Data and 50% of a Research Associate to ensure the process and outcome evaluation of this project are well-planned and executed. Additionally, LSU has committed partial time for three of its researchers and two full-time graduate research assistants to support the project. Finally, the LA-SFEC design incorporates meaningful partnership and subcontracts to ensure the goals and commitments of the program design are advanced while responding to the family and school needs related to family-school engagement efforts that arise and are identified during the grant period.

Anna Long, Ph.D. will serve as the LSU Evaluation Team Principal Investigator on the intervention implementation portion of the Statewide Family Engagement Center. In this role, she will help to set up and execute a small randomized clinical trial of the proposed family-engaged, equity-driven school-wide PBIS program. She will also lead efforts in developing the innovative

PBIS model, facilitation of schools' intervention implementation, and lead the coordination and development of educator and parent workshops on supporting children's prosocial behaviors. Finally, she will lead the development and execution of training for school family engagement specialists' who will provide technical assistance and implementation support to schools throughout the project's duration. Dr. Long will direct all aspects related to research design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination of the Randomized Clinical Trial (RCT). She will supervise the graduate research assistants on the project, collaborate with her Co-Investigators, and maintain fiscal responsibility. Finally, she will provide specialized knowledge concerning PBIS, implementation science, and culturally responsive practice as it relates to educational equity. Dr. Long is committing one Summer Month in Years 1- 5 of the project.

Kelly Clark, Ph.D. will serve as the LSU Evaluation Team Co-Investigator on the RCT portion of the Statewide Family Engagement Center project and is committing one Summer Month in Years 1- 5 of the project. Dr. Clark will facilitate all aspects related to resource and material generation, research design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination. She will also aid with the development and delivery of professional workshops and trainings. She will assist in the supervision of the graduate research assistants on the project. Finally, she will provide specialized knowledge concerning school engagement and school climate.

Danbi Choe, Ph.D. will serve as the LSU Evaluation Team Co-Investigator on the RCT portion of the Statewide Family Engagement Center project and is committing one Summer Month in Years 1- 5 of the project. Dr. Choe will facilitate all aspects related to resource and material generation, research design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination. She will also aid with the development and delivery of professional workshops and trainings. She will assist in the supervision of the graduate research assistants on the project. Finally, she will provide specialized knowledge

concerning student social-emotional learning and effective practices for engaging culturally and linguistically diverse families.

Diversity of Perspectives

The Center will create a diverse Advisory Board representing many perspectives, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients of services, and educators (CPP3). The Center will work with EdNavigator, the LEA Family Engagement Coordinators, and The Center's existing relationships with LEAs and community partners across Louisiana to recruit parents, families, students, educators, community leaders, and business leaders to be part of the Advisory Board.

Advisory Board meetings will happen once every quarter. Considering the challenges of travel from different geographical regions of Louisiana, as well as the awareness of needed COVID precautions, some meetings may be conducted virtually or in person. Funds have been allocated to compensate all advisory board members. Up to three translators will be at each advisory board meeting to ensure equity in participation (CPP3). Any advisory board member that cannot attend in-person will have opportunities to be part of the advisory board meetings virtually. Additionally, The Center staff will volunteer time to provide childcare on site. Funds have also been allocated for travel in the form of mileage reimbursement or for transportation service from their home to the meeting site in Metairie.

The Evidence-Based Practice descriptions within this application, particularly the PBIS intervention, include deliberate plans to ensure representation and objective measures related to diversity. The evaluation plan in this proposal also details the collection of quantitative and qualitative data from a diverse array of stakeholders. The design, development, and refinement of FASTalk tool and services has been informed by cycles of research with families and educators

from school communities across the country. They also get ongoing feedback from school and district leaders across family and community engagement, teaching and learning, and equity. Additionally, Family Engagement Lab regularly collaborate with academic researchers and partners who represent diverse perspectives and needs.

C. Project Personnel

DeJenne' Clark Jackson, Vice President of Program Development for The Center, will oversee the development, execution, and evaluation of LA-SFEC. DeJenne' is an educational professional with over a decade of experience as a classroom teacher, school counselor, and interventionist. She holds a B.A. in Political Science and Sociology, an M.A. in Counseling and Guidance, an M.A.T. in PK-3, and an M.Ed. in Dyslexia Therapy. Among other achievements, DeJenne' is a Certified Academic Language Therapist who serves as a member of the Louisiana Department of Education's Early Literacy Commission, president of The Reading League Louisiana, state lead for Decoding Dyslexia Louisiana, a parent-led grassroots organization, and only one of three credentialed Association of Educational Therapists (AET) Educational Therapists in the state of Louisiana. As a former classroom teacher and school counselor with over a decade in education, DeJenne' has had the opportunity to work with many students with general and specific needs. To support parent advocacy, she facilitates awareness, early identification, and remediation of dyslexia. She specializes in training and awareness development for parents, educators, and employers surrounding neurodiversity and equity, offering proven cooperative strategies and methods for inclusivity. Her work focuses on accessibility of best practices and research findings to all families to facilitate and advocate for change. DeJenne' has been an invited speaker at many podcasts, conferences, and education summits of regional and national renown.

Family Engagement Specialists: In collaboration with partners and SFEC staff, the Family Engagement Specialists will develop resources and programming that are family-centered, strength-based, and directed at establishing trusting relationships; assisting in strengthening the family-school relationship; assisting families in improving their awareness to optimize the home learning environment; improving the family support system; and increasing the home-school-community relationship and assume the role of advocate for themselves and their children. The Family Engagement Specialists are responsible for overall planning, coordination, and facilitation of outreach events and communications. This position will also utilize information obtained during partnership efforts with LDOE's BE ENGAGED initiative to develop strategies to improve future outreach opportunities with local districts and communities. In addition, the Family Engagement Specialists will facilitate consistent feedback mechanisms between parents, families, the community at large to better inform the work. Specialists will ensure that all work is delivered on-time, within scope, and within budget; provide regular reports on progress against goals and indicators. Specialists will build and support relationships between local districts and key stakeholders, partners, and the community at large. Specialists will actively work with parent and community engagement efforts across institutions and sectors to drive alignment and improved coordination with the SFEC's activities and objectives. Specialists will conduct/facilitate presentations and workshops to build an understanding and greater alignment with The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships.

The Family Engagement Specialist will have a minimum of 3 years of experience working in the field of education or family-focused program areas. The Specialist will have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in counseling, teaching, psychology, sociology, social work, or related field. The Specialist's position will require travel, technology use, speaking/presentation delivery, and the

ability to communicate effectively. At least one Specialist will receive preference as a bilingual speaker, specifically as a fluent Spanish-speaker. Specialists will work remotely.

The Family Engagement Coordinator provides support for all activities related to the LA-SFEC. The Coordinator will have responsibilities and core functions as follows: Work with team members and supervisor to support, implement, and manage assigned program activities; Monitor relevant activity as directed ; Provide support to all programming and activities related to assigned program area(s); Develop well-written internal and external communications; Maintain strict confidentiality of all organization information; Maintain The Center's standards of quality for all services, programs, and operations; Contribute to team efforts to complete all organization focuses in alignment with the strategic plan; Manage special projects as requested by the Director; Conduct and/or participate in other services and priorities as directed by the Director. The Coordinator shall have the following qualifications: Minimum two (2) years of relevant experience, Education and/or experience may substitute; Experience working in office setting with preference given to experience within a nonprofit organization; Excellence organizational, interpersonal, and administrative experience with progressive responsibility; Demonstrated communication skills, written and verbal; Very strong, high level organization and attention to detail, skilled at managing competing priorities, and adept at working fluidly across diverse program areas; Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work effectively with diverse groups; Highly proficient, excellent knowledge and use of the internet, email, and applications including G-Suite, Dropbox, and Microsoft Office. The Coordinator's position will require some travel and may be a remote position.

Carolin Maney Purser, Ph.D., Director of Evaluation and Data, will evaluate the process and outcomes of LA-SFEC grant activities. She will also be responsible for progress-monitoring and data reporting, including GPRA annual performance measures. In her role, she will provide

planning and implementation of evaluation, data analysis, and program reporting related to LA-SFEC and the grant's federal program officer. Beyond documenting ongoing progress and effectiveness of grant activities, she will support data-driven program improvement.

Dr. Purser is a researcher and evaluator with over 8 years of experience working on a variety of federal grants and state-level contracts that address housing disparities in Louisiana, mental health access in public schools, substance abuse prevention and treatment, and workforce training. These projects involved collaboration with multidisciplinary researchers, practitioners, and government agencies. Her work in grant-funded and collaborative applied research projects has helped her maximize rigor of the design, data collection, and analysis in all research and evaluation endeavors, while being mindful of the resources and limitations. Her skills and experience make her an excellent choice to direct and execute the proposed mixed methods evaluation of LA-SFEC's grant activities. Dr. Purser holds a doctoral degree in Political Science and International Affairs from the University of Georgia, and a Bachelor of Arts in Government and Psychology from Colby College, ME.

Additional Center leadership, education, and finance staff resumes are in Appendix D.

Anna Long, Ph.D., LSU Evaluation Team Principal Investigator, earned her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and her Postdoctoral in School Psychology from the University of Connecticut. She has been an Associate Professor in the LSU Department of Psychology since 2013. She is a Licensed Psychologist and Certified School Psychologist. She is widely published and earned the award of Author of the Year from School Psychology Review in 2019. In 2021, she received LSU's Brji Mohan Distinguished Professor Award. Her resume is included in Appendix E.

Resumes for Dr. Long's colleagues from LSU are also included in Appendix E.

Family Engagement Lab (FEL) is a national nonprofit that catalyzes equitable family engagement and student learning by bridging classroom curriculum and at-home learning. Their family engagement service, FASTalk (Families and Schools Talk) promotes equity and builds partnerships between teachers and historically underserved families by sharing engaging, at-home learning activities via text messages in each family's home language.

D. Adequacy of Resources

Letters of Support and MOUs for all LA-SFEC partners are included in Appendix F. These demonstrate the commitment and relevance of each partner and their dedication to the success of the project. As the prior section details, the central partners are The Center and LSU, as well as the SEA (LDOE), the Family Engagement Lab, and the engaged LEAs.

The evaluation team will collect and report the required GPRA measures to the federal program officer annually. Additionally, The Center proposes the following objectives and number of persons served to demonstrate the impact of the design and significance, relative to the overall cost:

Statewide model:

- 1,500 served through Louisiana Reads! (300 families each year) (LA-SFEC resources included at these events)
- 500 educators served during the grant period; with at least 100 educators served each year between trainings provided to family engagement coordinators and trainings that family engagement specialists provide to interested LEAs
- 500 families reached through the website during the grant period, with least 100 families reached each year

- 500 families reached through webinars and workshops annually, with at least 100 families served each year

Intervention model:

- 1,000-1,500 students served in years 2 and 3
- 50-75 teachers served in Years 2 and 3
- At least 50% uptake of FASTalk reaching at least 500 parents each of years 2 and 3
- 1,800-2,400 students served in Years 4 and 5
- 90-120 teachers served in Years 4 and 5
- At least 50% uptake of FASTalk, reaching at least 600 parents each of years 4 and 5

Overall State Infrastructure:

The following high-impact activities or services will be provided to build a statewide infrastructure for systemic family engagement. These include support for SEA and LEA-level leadership and capacity-building:

- Y1: 23 activities/services
 - Website launch
 - 4 newsletters
 - 4 webinars with SEA or LEA staff
 - 2 training in the 2 LEAs
 - 2 Office Hours for LEA personnel
 - 6 Planning Meetings with program partners, including SEA
 - 4 advisory board meetings
- Y2-Y5: 26 activities/services
 - 4 newsletters

- 4 webinars with SEA and LEA staff
- 4 trainings for educators and LEA staff in the 2 LEAs
- 4 Office Hours
- 6 planning meetings with program partners, including SEA
- 4 advisory board meetings

E. Quality of the Project Evaluation

Evaluation Design: Performance Feedback and Producing Promising Evidence

The LA-SFEC Evaluation Plan will have two components, one focused on an evaluation of the statewide program implementation and outcomes, and another focused on an evaluation of the family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS intervention.

Evaluation of Statewide Efforts

The evaluation for the statewide efforts will use a mixed methods approach to capture the process and outcomes of the proposed grant activities. This approach will include both quantitative and qualitative data collection. The sources of data will include analytics data from the i) LA-SFEC website, ii) administrative data collected by LA-SFEC staff or contractors when providing services such as webinars and events, iii) publicly available school-level, LEA-level, and SEA-level data, and iv) data collected through a customized database, evaluation surveys, focus groups, and interviews with various stakeholders of the program.

The evaluation efforts will be utility-focused, based on what quantitative and qualitative data would be useful for the different stakeholders to inform program assessment and improvement. The evaluation team will also use participatory elements such as collaborating with the advisory board in shaping the evaluation plan and data collection efforts. The evaluation will include formative (with a focus on program improvement) and summative (with a focus on assessment of quantitative and

qualitative progress) aspects during the grant period.

Substantively, the evaluation team will draw from the dual capacity-building framework^{xxxv}, addressing i) the existing challenges educators and families faces related to family-school engagement, ii) the essential process and organizational conditions that are facilitated by grant activities, iii) the areas of capacity-building to which LA-SFEC contributes, and the attitudinal and behavioral shifts in individuals (parents and educators) and systems over the course of the grant. The evaluation team will also use National PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, the Power of Partnerships Family Survey, and the National Standards Assessment Guide,^{xxxvi} to guide outcome evaluation of grant activities.

The evaluation team consisting of The Center's Director of Evaluation and Data and Research Associate will develop and finalize the evaluation plan for the project, in collaboration with key program staff and the advisory board, by the end of month 4 of grant year 1. Each year, the evaluation team will collaboratively determine or revise reasonable targets for each of the six annual performance indicators, and set quarterly goals to support grant implementation and monitoring for the consequent grant year. The evaluation team will complete building a cloud-based database for LA-SFEC grant activities on Knack, an online database software. The LA-SFEC database will include customized data collection forms and reports. The program staff will document ongoing progress on identified outputs, outcomes, and federal performance measures on a customized database created on Knack.com, to ensure timely data collection and monitoring of all grant-related activities, outputs, and outcomes. Forms created on Knack.com will capture activity description, the date(s) of activity, the target audience (SEA, LEA, school administrators and staff, educators, parents and families), the number of individuals who were served or reached through activity, the summary of results from the evaluation questionnaire about the relevance and usefulness of the

event, training, or resources (where applicable) from all program staff, partners, and contractors. The dashboard associated with the program, also built on Knack.com, will allow for on-demand access to reports that reflect the latest activities related to each of the four major objectives of the grant, a process that will support continuous monitoring and program improvement.

The evaluation team will design questionnaires to be administered at the conclusion of each event, workshop or webinar that capture reaction, learning, and expected behavior change, in line with the New Kirkpatrick model^{xxxvii}, an evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of trainings. Trainings and webinars directed toward educators and family members will include a pre-event questionnaire that address aspects of the dual capacity-building framework such as i) level of exposure to strong examples of family engagement, ii) the number of trainings related to family-school engagement that the educator or family member has received, iii) attitudes about school-family partnerships, and iv) awareness of resources to increase capacity for meaningful family-school partnerships. The participants who attend trainings, information webinars, or other grant-related activities will fill out a short form after attendance to capture the relevant performance measures on whether the activity increased their capacity related to family-school engagement. The post-event questionnaires will also address other indicators of interest as guided by the logic model and evaluation plan.

Another major aspect of evaluating the statewide efforts is the design and administration of annual surveys of educators and families who have participated in LA-SFEC activities to capture quantitative data on their participation, perception of the value of LA-SFEC efforts, most significant achievements, barriers to improving family-school engagement efforts, barriers to participation in LA-SFEC grant activities, and individual-level and school-level needs that could be addressed in future grant activities. The level of diversity, inclusion, and equity in access to LA-SFEC resources

and activities will also be addressed in the annual surveys. Efforts will be made to ensure reaching a diverse group of families and educators (CPP3). Surveys will be translated to three non-English languages that are most common among Louisiana families. In grant years 2 and 4, the survey data will be supplemented with focus groups with at 2 focus groups each educators and families. Resulting data will provide a richer understanding of annual performance measures 3-6, which focus on the number and impact of grant activities intended to increase capacity of families and educators.

The evaluation team will also design and administer annual evaluation surveys to LDOE and participating LEA personnel that address perception of the value of LA-SFEC efforts, most significant achievements, shortcomings, barriers to improving family-school engagement efforts at the SEA and LEA level, barriers to participation in LA-SFEC grant activities, and SEA- and LEA-level needs that could be addressed in future grant activities. Key respondent interviews with key personnel and partners in grant years 2 and 4 will help to provide more context to perceptions of LA-SFEC efforts, most significant achievements, barriers, and areas in need of improvement.

The program staff will also review observational findings during each phase of the grant to identify strengths and challenges of the grant activities plan and implementation.

The advisory board members will receive a short survey at the conclusion of each advisory board meeting, capturing the strengths and limitations of the advisory board structure, including accomplishments, time commitment, convenience of time and venue of the meeting, any linguistic, cultural, or other barriers that impede participation (CPP3). Additionally in years 2, 3, 4, and 5, the advisory board will complete surveys on their perception of the value of LA-SFEC efforts, most significant achievements, barriers to improving family-school engagement efforts, barriers to participation in LA-SFEC grant activities, and individual-, school-, LEA-, community- and SEA-

level needs that could be addressed in future grant activities.

The evaluation team will facilitate interim reviews (6-8 times a year) of quantitative and qualitative data with project partners, advisory board members, participating educators and participating families will guide ongoing improvements to collaboration, grant activities, and sustainability of the program.

Objective performance measures will include, but are not limited to:

- a) The number of grant services provided to educators, families, LEA personnel, and SEA personnel (annual performance measures 1 and 2)
- b) The number of individuals served or reached through grant activities and resources (annual performance measures 3 and 5)
- c) The number of individuals who report increased capacity for family-school engagement efforts as a result of LA-SFEC activities (annual performance measures 4 and 6)
- d) The number of trainings attended by family engagement specialists
- e) The number of trainings, webinars, or office hours hosted by LA-SFEC, its partners, and contractors
- f) The number of families who attended workshop on supporting at-home learning
- g) The locations and number of books distributed to families to build home libraries and at-home learning
- h) School-level, LEA-level, or SEA-level changes that were directly related to LA-SFEC activities
- i) Numbers and types of efforts to ensure accessibility of events and resources to underserved populations

Evaluation of the Family-Engaged, Equity-Driven PBIS Intervention

Objective Performance Measures

The LA-SFEC Evaluation design will incorporate the following performance measures:

Variable	Brief Description
Respondent	
Demographics <hr/> Parents Teachers	Student records or participants (teachers or parents) will provide information about students' sex, age, race/ethnicity, disability status, eligibility for free and reduced lunch, home language, and school grade. Teachers will report information about their sex, gender, age, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, years of teaching, and education/certification.
Intervention Fidelity <hr/> Parents Teachers Administrators/Staff	PBIS intervention fidelity will be collected through School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) . ^{xxxviii xxxix} The SET includes a review of progress and product documents, observations, and staff/student interviews or surveys. The results will be used to assess the fidelity and integrity of PBIS and revise procedures if needed.
Academic Outcomes <hr/> Teachers	Individual level academic test scores and attendance rates will be collected for students participating in the interventions. Test scores and attendance will be used to assess the intervention's impact on academic outcomes throughout the length of the intervention. Teacher retention data will also be collected to assess the rate of educator turnover.

<p>Social-Emotional and Behavior Outcomes</p>	<p>Behavioral data will be collected through teacher-family communication tool (i.e., FASTalk), student exclusionary discipline records (ODRs, suspensions, expulsions), and two standardized questionnaires. Teachers</p>
<p>3rd-5th grade students</p>	<p>suspensions, expulsions), and two standardized questionnaires. Teachers</p>
<p>Parents</p>	<p>will collect students' classroom behavior data based on 0 to 10 rating scale</p>
<p>Teachers</p>	<p>on daily basis and share the information with their parents.</p>
<p>Administrators/Staff</p>	<p>The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* (SDQ) is a 25-item questionnaire including five 5-item subscales (i.e., designed to measure Emotional Problems (5-items), Peer Problems (5-items), Behavioral Problems (5-items), Hyperactivity, (5-items) and Prosocial Behaviors (5-items)) among students ages 3 to 16 years old.^{xi} The SDQ has shown high reliability and construct validity in previous studies.^{xi} The teacher version of the SDQ has demonstrated adequate internal consistency and test-retest reliability, as well as concurrent validity with similar teacher-report instruments.^{xli}</p> <p>In addition to teacher reports, third through fifth grade students will self-report their internalizing and externalizing concerns via the 12-item Behavior and Feelings Survey.^{xlii} The Behavior and Feelings Survey was developed for use with youth ages 7-15 and includes two 6-item subscales: Internalizing and Externalizing. The Behavior and Feelings Survey demonstrated strong internal consistency and test-retest reliability, as well as concurrent validity with the SDQ and other similar measures.^{xlii}</p>

<p>School Climate</p> <hr/> <p>3rd-5th grade students</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Administrators/Staff</p>	<p>Delaware School Climate Survey (DSCS) will measure how each stakeholder (student, parents, teachers) perceives the school environment. All versions of DSCS commonly have four subscales; teacher-student relationships, student-student relationships, clarity of expectations, and fairness of rules. DSCS for students (DSCS-S) and teachers (DSCS-T) has additional subscales for student engagement schoolwide subscale and bullying schoolwide subscale. DSCS for teachers and staff (DSCS-T) and parents (DSCS-P) has also a teacher-home communications subscale. DSCS-T has a teacher-staff relations subscale. In summary, DSCS-S, DSCS-T, and DSCS-P consist of 29, 36, and 26 items respectively. A Total School Climate score is derived for each of the three surveys by summing scores across all subscales. All versions of DSCS demonstrated strong evidence of internal consistency and concurrent validity in its validation study by the measure’s authors.^{xliii}</p>
<p>School Belonging</p> <hr/> <p>3rd-5th grade students</p>	<p>Students’ sense of school belonging will be measured using the 4-item School Connectedness subscale of the Student Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (SSWQ).^{xliv} The SSWQ also demonstrated adequate reliability and evidence of concurrent validity in recent studies.^{xlv}</p>
<p>Student Engagement</p> <hr/> <p>3rd-5th grade students</p> <p>Parents</p>	<p>Delaware Student Engagement Scale (DSES) will be used to measure student engagement which refers to students being involved, committed, or invested in aspects of schooling. DSES for students consists of 13</p>

	items and for parents consist of 12 items. DSES demonstrated strong internal consistency, reliability, validity. ^{xlvi}
Teacher Classroom Management Techniques <hr/> Teachers	Delaware Positive, Punitive, and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Techniques Scale (Techniques) will be used to assess teachers’ perceptions of the extent to which techniques are used in the school to manage student behavior. The techniques scale includes use of positive behavior techniques, use of punitive/corrective techniques, and the use of social emotional learning techniques. The techniques scale demonstrated strong internal consistency reliability and concurrent validity. ^{xlvii}
Social-Emotional Learning <hr/> 3 rd -5 th grade students	The 16-item self-report Delaware Social and Emotional Competency Scale - Student (DSECS-S; Bear et al., 2019) will be used to measure students’ perceptions of their own social and emotional competencies. The DSECS-S includes four 4-item subscales: Responsible Decision-Making, Social Awareness, Self-Management, and Relationships. The DSECS-S has demonstrated measurement invariance across grade-level, gender, and race/ethnicity in its factor structure, as well as strong internal consistency reliability and concurrent validity. ^{xlvi}

Evaluation Design: Performance Feedback and Producing Promising Evidence

The LSU evaluation team will be responsible for the rigorous execution of a small-scale RCT evaluating the effectiveness of the family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS model. Study

preparation will begin by identifying four participating elementary schools, completing a matched random assignment to the treatment (Cohort 1) or waitlist control (Cohort 2) conditions, and laying the groundwork for intervention launch.

For Cohort 1, the first year of the project will be designated for gearing up and preparing for program implementation, as evaluation will occur in years two and three. This year of preparation will include a multi-level school needs assessment with key stakeholders. The LSU team will lead interviews with school leaders and support the review of school policies, practices, and procedures to identify areas requiring alignment and refinement to support family-engaged, equitable PBIS practices. In addition, school leaders will be asked about organizational factors that may help to facilitate or hinder successful program adoption and implementation. Survey data collection will occur and contribute to the LSU team's understanding of school needs. Also, in the preparation phase for Cohort 1 (Spring of Year 1), information gathered during the needs assessment in the Fall will be summarized and made available to key stakeholders participating in focus groups (i.e., one administrator, two teachers, and two parents/caregivers minimum per school). The LSU team will carry out the focus groups to ensure full collaboration in tailoring the family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS approach to target schools.

In the summer following the first year (for Cohort 1), school personnel and the family engagement specialists will be provided with training by the LSU team to support the successful initiation of the family-engaged PBIS program to start Fall of year two. For Cohort 1, years two and three will include implementing and evaluating the family-engaged PBIS program. Then, in years four and five, the LSU team will complete follow-up assessments to examine the sustainability and longevity of the family-engaged PBIS universal programming, as well as its long-term outcomes.

For Cohort 2, the third year of the project will be designated for gearing up and preparing

for program implementation, as evaluation will occur in years four and five. This year of preparation will include the same needs assessment, focus groups, and steps outlined above for Cohort 1's preparation year. During years one, two, and three, archival record and survey data collection will occur consistent with and simultaneous to Cohort 1 as control group comparison data.

In the summer following the third year (for Cohort 2), school personnel and the family engagement specialists will be provided with training by the LSU team to support the successful initiation of the family-engaged PBIS program to start Fall of year four. For Cohort 2, years four and five will include implementing and evaluating the family-engaged PBIS program.

School Recruitment/Retention: The LSU evaluation team will work closely with the administration and staff at all of the participating elementary schools in Louisiana to oversee experimental control and coordinate study enrollment, educator and parent training, and data collection. The LSU team will meet with the staff, administration, and parent-teacher groups to introduce the study to ensure that the community and school are familiar with the purpose of the study, the study design, and their rights related to participation. The LSU team will also be responsible for educator and parent trainings on the innovative family-engaged, equity-driven model of PBIS. In relation, the LSU team will lead the development and execution of training for school family engagement specialists' who will provide technical assistance and implementation support to schools throughout the project's duration. The LSU team will also provide a copy of the data collection surveys and consent forms to the school, prepare newsletters and emails to be disseminated to parents of students at the participating schools, and provide summary reports to the school district and/or The Center for Literacy and Learning annually as requested.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Renewal & Amendments: Dr. Long will work to

secure IRB approval from Louisiana State University. In addition to securing IRB approval, she will also work to have a data security plan and the Certificate of Confidentiality established.

Survey Development & Administration: The LSU team will coordinate data collection at each of the participating elementary schools at each data collection time point (see Detailed Project Timeline). Dr. Long will supervise the graduate student research assistants to enter and clean data at each time point.

Intervention Implementation: Dr. Long will coordinate the implementation of the family-engaged, equity-driven PBIS program for each of the partner schools across Cohorts 1 and 2. Dr. Long in tandem with the graduate research assistants and family engagement specialists will engage in formative assessment of fidelity to the model to inform technical assistance and support activities. Dr. Long in tandem with the graduate research assistants and family engagement specialists will conduct summative fidelity checks once annually using the PBIS Schoolwide Evaluation Tool (SET). The SET is a validated instrument designed to assess and evaluate the critical features of school-wide effective behavior support across each academic school year. These summative fidelity data (the SET data) will reveal the extent of fidelity to the family-engaged PBIS program as designed, as well as track experimental control over the independent variable.

Conference Calls & Dissemination: The LSU team will participate in weekly calls or video-conferences with The Center for Literacy and Learning, and more frequently as needed. The LSU evaluation team will also be available for communications with school partners and family engagement specialists. The LSU team will present and publish research findings that may inform the field of education or advance educational science. Drs. Long, Clark, and Choe will assist with conference presentation proposals, manuscript creation, and year-end reports.

Resource Generation

Any resources or training materials generated through the evaluation study (i.e., RCT of the family-engage, equity-driven PBIS program) will be made available broadly across the state of Louisiana through the Statewide Family Engagement Center. The LSU team may provide consultative support and guidance to The Center for Literacy and Learning as they build a library of high-quality, research-supported resources for schools.