

Narrative

The district recognizes the importance of collaborative approaches to improve district challenges in the areas of teaching and student learning, student learning conditions, and teacher shortages and retention. We seek to continue to invest in human capital management systems or to put it simply we view employees as assets to be invested in.

To tackle these challenges, Cahokia Community Unit School District 187 proposes the Teacher Leader Incentive Program (TLIP) a conduit of the Professional Learning Organization. The district aims to increase the number of teacher leaders in our high-need community, develop sustainable teacher leader pipelines, create opportunities for teacher leaders to excel and grow, improve outreach and collaboration with families and the community, increase teacher support and retention, increase student achievement, and redefine the school culture to shift towards instructional leadership models.

This grant will provide the necessary resources to empower and prepare teacher leaders, expand the number of teacher leaders in the district, address teacher shortage and retention, and improve learning conditions for students. The grant will enable the district to address teacher turnover and burnout by providing mentoring and support for teachers, as well as opportunities for career advancement within the district while remaining in the classroom.

Cahokia Unit School District intends to utilize the TSL grant to provide training, support, and incentives to improve staff performance and, thereby, increase student achievement. The District recognizes that it takes a team to educate and foster success for students. In that vein, many teachers and other staff members become important leaders in that process. As a part of this proposal, the District will utilize a Performance Based Compensation System (PBCS) to incentivize staff and recognize these leaders when their efforts result in marked improvement.

The PCBS will take the form of bonuses to staff members who are part of the team(s) that move students to success. These will include classroom teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service personnel such as social workers and speech language pathologists. Performance goals will be determined by the district, in conjunction with its grant partners, at the beginning of the grant period. Staff will receive annual bonuses for the achievement of those performance goals. We expect that at least 1 classroom group per building (total of 8 in the district) will meet the performance goals during the first year of the grant. We expect to add at least one classroom group per building for each of the following two years of the grant cycle (16 total for year two; 24 total for year three).

In addition to teacher and staff leaders, administrators also play an important role in teacher/ team support and student success. As such, administrator bonuses will also be part of this project. Administrator bonuses will be based on the number of teams who are successful in meeting the identified goals. One team will be \$5000; 2 teams will be \$8000; and 3 teams will be \$10,000.

Depending on the classroom, the team of staff working with that group will range from two to five.

The performance bonuses will be \$5000 for each licensed staff member and \$2500 for paraprofessionals.

Overall, the project aims to enhance student achievement, promote collaboration and professional learning, improve school and district culture, and cultivate emerging talent through teacher leadership.

Cahokia CUSD 87 will focus on improving human capital management systems and Performance Based Compensation Systems. We will partner with 7 Mindsets, Varsity Tutors, McGraw Hill, and Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIU-E), Black Educational Advocacy Coalition (BEAC), and Joseph and Associates. Student First Consulting Group (SFCG) will provide targeted trainings to teacher leaders, administrative/governance team, instructional coaches, and general staff as appropriate in assisting with various PLC/staff trainings.

Varsity Tutors will play a pivotal role in addressing learning loss due to the pandemic. Varsity Tutors will collaboratively work with teachers and learning tutors to ensure students have qualified instructors who are also diverse. Seven Mindsets is a teacher-first approach designed to drive student well-being, healthy school cultures, educator happiness and retention.

A key focus area is providing teacher leaders professional development in how to effectively serve diverse learners (e.g., minority, disabilities, and gifted) in order that teacher leaders can properly coach other teachers. And, how to strengthen school-parental engagement. BEAC will work with staff on various diversity, equity, and inclusion issues and parental engagement.

SIU-E will help address teacher pipeline shortages by working with paraprofessionals who desire to become teachers within our district. McGraw Hill representatives will work directly with SFCG and district representatives to address curriculum challenges and align curriculum to state standards.

Collaborative Partnership Expertise:

Student First Consulting Group (SFCG)

SFCG provides customized educational consultation and training. SFCG consultants are highly qualified and have over 25 years of experience with working in public schools to help expand professional learning communities, promote community/parent engagement, SEL, mental health, effective instructional strategies, board training, and provide staff development speakers. SFCG consultants work side-by-side board members/trustees, administrators, teachers, and other educational stakeholders as professional coaches.

Seven Mindsets

Since 2016, Seven Mindsets has been providing an award-winning, easy-to-implement, proven, and transformational SEL program to PreK-12 schools and districts. The research-based program helps PK-12 districts and schools create and sustain positive school cultures rooted in healthy

relationships. Seven Mindsets parent company is Gauge Capital is a leading middle-market private equity firm based in Southlake, Texas. Gauge invests in five key sectors: healthcare, technology, business services, government & industrial services, and food & consumer. The firm manages approximately \$2.5 billion in capital and in 2020 and 2021, Inc. Magazine named Gauge one of the top private equity firms for founders. In 2021, Gauge was also named to the Top 50 PE Firms in the Middle Market by Grady Campbell.

Varsity Tutors

Since 2007, Varsity Tutors has delivered tutoring from subject matter experts for over 1M+ students and families. Using our experience as a foundation, Varsity Tutors for Schools provides equitable access to personalized live learning that's proven to advance academic, social, and emotional student outcomes. With a customizable all-in-one platform and a network of 40K+highly vetted U.S.-based tutors, we are ready to help meet the needs of every student in every school.

Black Educational Advocacy Coalition

The Black Educational Advocacy Coalition (BEAC) is a nationally based non-profit organization dedicated to promoting equity and ensuring the success of Black students and educators. Founded in 2018, BEAC seeks to improve the educational opportunities and experiences of Black students and educators and decrease barriers to their success. The mission of the Black Educational Advocacy Coalition (BEAC) is to advocate on matters affecting Black students and educators based on research, and cultural and historical traditions by way of a holistic approach.

McGraw Hill

McGraw Hill is an American learning company and one of the "big three" educational publishers that provides customized educational content, software, and services for pre-K through postgraduate education. The company also provides reference and trade publications for the medical, business, and engineering professions. McGraw Hill operates in 28 countries, has more than 3,900 employees globally, and offers products and services to over 135 countries in 60+ languages.

Joseph and Associates, LLC

Joseph and Associates LLC is an education and leadership consulting firm dedicated to helping leaders and school districts improve outcomes for children. Joseph and Associates LLC provides expert guidance and support to help school districts, schools, and leaders achieve their most complex goals. Joseph and Associates LLC specializes in leadership training, executive coaching, strategic planning, program evaluation, diversity, equity, and inclusion training, executive searches, keynote speaking engagements, and business development.

Integration with Related Services

The district utilizes a number of incentives aimed at improving academic achievement for our students including, but not limited to the following:

Teacher Evaluation: The evaluation of teachers using the Charlotte Danielson framework (Danielson, 2007) is important for several reasons:

1. **Clear and Comprehensive Standards:** The Charlotte Danielson framework provides a clear set of standards and indicators for effective teaching. It offers a comprehensive approach that covers all aspects of teaching, including planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. By using this framework, evaluators can assess teachers across multiple dimensions, ensuring a holistic evaluation of their performance.
2. **Alignment with Research-Based Practices:** The Charlotte Danielson framework is grounded in research-based practices and widely accepted principles of effective teaching. It reflects the current understanding of what constitutes high-quality instruction and provides a common language and framework for evaluating and improving teaching practice.
3. **Professional Growth and Development:** The framework serves as a valuable tool for teacher professional growth and development. It helps teachers reflect on their practice, identify areas of strength and areas that need improvement, and set goals for professional growth. The framework encourages teachers to engage in self-reflection and self-assessment, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
4. **Individualized Feedback:** Using the Charlotte Danielson framework allows for individualized feedback that is specific, actionable, and meaningful. The framework provides a structure for evaluators to observe and assess teachers' performance against specific criteria. This feedback can help teachers understand their strengths and weaknesses, make targeted improvements, and enhance their instructional practice.
5. **Alignment with Professional Standards:** The Charlotte Danielson framework aligns with many professional teaching standards, including state standards and the TASC Model Core Teaching Standards. By using this framework, teacher evaluations can be aligned with broader professional expectations, ensuring that evaluations are valid and reliable.
6. **Evaluation Consistency and Fairness:** The Charlotte Danielson framework promotes consistency and fairness in teacher evaluations. Its explicit criteria and indicators provide a common language and understanding for evaluators. This helps to minimize bias and ensure that evaluations are conducted in a fair and equitable manner.
7. **Accountability and School Improvement:** The evaluation of teachers using the Charlotte Danielson framework contributes to accountability and school improvement efforts. By providing a systematic and rigorous evaluation process, the framework helps identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement at the individual teacher level. Aggregated data from these evaluations can inform professional development initiatives, resource allocation, and instructional improvement strategies at the school and district levels.

Overall, the evaluation of teachers using the Charlotte Danielson framework supports teacher growth, ensures consistency and fairness, and contributes to school improvement efforts. It provides a comprehensive and research-based approach to evaluating and enhancing teaching practice, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.

Teacher Professional Development: Teacher staff professional development is of utmost importance for several reasons (Darling-Hammond, et. Al.; 2009):

1. **Enhancing Instructional Practices:** Professional development opportunities provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to improve their instructional practices. Through workshops, seminars, conferences, and training sessions, teachers can learn about new research-based strategies, teaching methodologies, and instructional technologies. They can explore innovative approaches to engage students, differentiate instruction, and address diverse learning needs. Continuous professional development helps teachers stay current with best practices and adapt their teaching methods to meet evolving educational needs.
2. **Improving Student Learning Outcomes:** Effective professional development directly impacts student learning outcomes. When teachers receive targeted and high-quality professional development, they gain new tools and strategies to create engaging and rigorous learning experiences for their students. Professional development can improve teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and ability to use data to inform instruction. As a result, students are more likely to achieve academic success and develop the necessary skills and competencies for future success.
3. **Fostering Collaboration and Networking:** Professional development opportunities often involve collaboration and networking among teachers. These interactions create valuable learning communities where educators can share ideas, exchange best practices, and engage in meaningful discussions. Collaborative professional development fosters a culture of peer support, promotes a sense of belonging, and encourages teachers to learn from one another. It allows teachers to tap into a collective expertise, gain fresh perspectives, and build professional relationships that can extend beyond the professional development setting.
4. **Addressing Specific Needs and Challenges:** Our professional development are tailored to address specific needs and challenges faced by teachers (e.g., English language learners, implementing new curriculum standards, or utilizing technology effectively).
5. **Boosting Teacher Morale and Job Satisfaction:** Professional development opportunities contribute to teacher morale and job satisfaction. When teachers feel supported in their professional growth and see their efforts recognized, they are more likely to feel valued and motivated.
6. **Keeping Pace with Educational Trends and Policies:** Professional development ensures that teachers stay informed about these trends and policies, enabling them to navigate changes effectively.

7. Cultivating a Culture of Lifelong Learning: Professional development promotes a culture of lifelong learning among teachers. It encourages educators to embrace a growth mindset, seek new knowledge and skills, and continuously reflect on and refine their practice.

In summary, teacher staff professional development is crucial for improving instructional practices, enhancing student learning outcomes, fostering collaboration, addressing specific needs, boosting morale, staying abreast of educational trends, and cultivating a culture of lifelong learning. Investing in high-quality professional development opportunities for teachers is an investment in the overall quality of education and the success of students.

Project Need

Cahokia Unit School District #187 is located in southwestern Illinois that provides educational services to the villages of Cahokia, Centreville, Alorton, and Sauget. All of the villages served by the district are located within St. Clair County.

Cahokia, Centreville, and Alorton recently consolidated as Cahokia Heights. Over 90% of the students and community members are African American.

Gaps and Weaknesses (Absolute Priority 2)

The Illinois State Board of Education identified Cahokia as an early childhood desert in its most recent listing posted in Spring 2023. There are no Head Start programs to serve at-risk early childhood learners. Cahokia Unit School District #187 had a Pre-K to 12th grade enrollment of 3128 to end the 2022-2023 school year.

The median income of the district's residents is \$30,000 compared to the state average of \$63,000. The graduation rate of Cahokia High School is 68% compared to the state average of 83%. The unemployment rate is over 10%. Dropout rates were 7% (2018); 12% (2019); 9% (2020). High chronic absenteeism - 41% (2018); 51% (2019)

Cahokia School District qualifies for the TAEOP grant that focuses on highly chronic students who are behind in earning credits towards graduation. Less than 10% of the residents have earned a bachelor's degree compared to 30% in the state. St. Clair County has the 4th highest homelessness rate in the state. In the 2022-2023 school year, 354 district students were reflected as homeless (over 10%) with 203 needing transportation support of some kind throughout the year.

Approximately 650 students qualify for special education services. Over 90% of the students served by the district live at or below the federal poverty guideline. The district is identified as a CEP (Community Eligibility Program) district for several years resulting in free breakfast and lunch for every student. REACH data reflects that 5.85% of children under 5 years of age receive mental health services in St. Clair County.

For FY22, Cahokia had the following academic data.

- **DIEBELS Reading:**
 - 75% of Kindergarten well below benchmark 83% of 1st grade well below benchmark 74% of 2nd grade well below benchmark
- **DIEBELS Math:**
 - 62% of Kindergarten well below benchmark 78% of 1st grade well below benchmark

- STAR Reading:
 - 61% of 2nd grade below 10th percentile
 - 52% of 3rd grade below 10th percentile
 - 44% of 4th grade below 10th percentile
 - 74% of 5th grade below 10th percentile
 - 55% of 6th grade below 10th percentile
 - 39% of 7th grade below 10th percentile
 - 51% of 8th grade below 10th percentile
 - 67% of 9th grade below 10th percentile
 - 55% of 10th grade below 10th percentile
 - 60% of 11th grade below 10th percentile
 - 69% of 12th grade below 10th percentile

- STAR Math:
 - 59% of 2nd grade below 10th percentile
 - 49% of 3rd grade below 10th percentile
 - 44% of 4th grade below 10th percentile
 - 73% of 5th grade below 10th percentile
 - 57% of 6th grade below 10th percentile
 - 38% of 7th grade below 10th percentile
 - 43% of 8th grade below 10th percentile
 - 49% of 9th grade below 10th percentile
 - 36% of 10th grade below 10th percentile
 - 38% of 11th grade below 10th percentile
 - 56% of 12th grade below 10th percentile

School Improvement Grant Schools:

- Prior to 2023-2024:
 - 8 schools identified as Comprehensive (lowest 5%) 2 schools identified as Targeted (subgroup issues)

- Beginning in 2023-2024:
 - All 10 schools identified as Comprehensive (lowest 5%)

Need for Teacher Leaders

The need for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) led by Teacher Leaders is evident based on current research (Rice, 2019). Here are some reasons why they are important:

1. **Maximizing Student Achievement:** PLCs provide a structure for sustained, collaborative school improvement focused on student learning. By bringing teachers together to share expertise, analyze student data, and develop effective instructional strategies, PLCs help maximize student achievement.
2. **Teacher Leadership Development:** The PLC model recognizes the importance of teacher leaders who can guide and support their colleagues. Developing a pipeline of teacher leaders and creating opportunities for their growth and advancement within the district helps ensure the availability of strong instructional leaders who can drive improvement initiatives.
3. **Inclusion of Teacher Voice:** Establishing a systemic system that allows teachers to have a voice in the district's mission, vision, and goals fosters a sense of ownership and engagement. When teachers are involved in decision-making processes, they feel valued and are more likely to contribute to school improvement efforts.
4. **Collaboration with Families and the Community:** Effective PLCs extend beyond the school walls and actively involve families and the community in supporting student learning. Teacher leaders can play a vital role in facilitating outreach and collaboration, creating stronger partnerships between schools and their stakeholders.

Teacher leaders can help enhance parental engagement by:

- Communicate with families about school programs and children's progress
- Ensuring communication can be understood by parents
- Communicate with parents about good behavior and academic successes, not just negative happenings
- Strive to make parents comfortable when they try to communicate with school personnel
- Understand the challenges faced by single parents, grandparents, Godparents, foster parents and other caregivers regarding participation
- Utilize parents as volunteers who assist in classrooms
- Provide parents with information, resources, and skills related to helping their children at home and understanding the expectations of each grade level

5. **Retention and Support of Teachers:** To prevent turnover and burnout, providing opportunities for teacher leaders to advance while remaining in the classroom is crucial. Teacher leaders can serve as mentors to new teachers and facilitate induction programs, providing support and guidance that contribute to teacher retention.
6. **Instructional Leadership:** Shifting from a manager-as-leader model to an instructional leader model helps redefine the school culture. Teacher leaders can take on leadership roles in promoting effective instructional practices, coaching their peers, and creating a collaborative culture focused on continuous improvement.
7. **Peer-to-Peer Learning:** Developing collaborative adult communities of practice within schools promotes peer-to-peer learning and professional growth. Teacher leaders can facilitate these communities, providing a platform for educators to share ideas, collaborate, and learn from one another.
8. **Training and Support:** Investing in training for teacher leaders is crucial to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary for their roles. Training should focus on areas such as cultural competency, inclusive practices, leadership, assessment and data analysis, curriculum and instruction, and technology integration.
9. **Time for Collaboration and Innovation:** Teacher leaders can play a pivotal role in providing teacher teams with dedicated time for collaboration, skill development, identifying professional development needs, and incubating innovative ideas. This enables educators to work together effectively and implement strategies that positively impact student learning.
10. **Building Collaborative Cultures:** Research suggests that successful principals focus on building collaborative cultures rather than relying on top-down management approaches. Teacher leaders, empowered by the PLC model, contribute to fostering a collaborative culture by harnessing the creativity and skill sets of their colleagues to improve student learning.
11. **Influence Beyond the School Level:** Teacher leaders have the opportunity to make a difference not only within their schools but also throughout the district and community. Their role as representatives on various teams and their interactions with stakeholders contribute to the development of student-centered learning environments.

Other benefits of teacher leaders include:

- Teachers will benefit from having teacher leaders from their peer groups.
 - Teachers welcome authentic collaboration with peers because many teachers are growing tired of working in isolation. According to the *MetLife Survey of the*

American Teacher (2009), today's teachers spend an average of 93 percent of their time working alone, apart from their peers.

- According to Dufour and Eaker (2008), the most promising strategy for sustained school improvement is developing the ability of school personnel to function as PLCs led by teacher leaders.
- Teacher leaders can help solve the issue concerning how some teachers leave the profession because of a lack of career advancement.
- Teacher leaders improve staff turnover through mentoring and induction programs.
 - Forty-four percent of new teachers in Illinois leave their initial school of employment within the first two years (Teach for Illinois, 2018).
- Students will benefit from teacher leaders. According to Chubb and Moe (1990), “All things being equal, a student in an effectively organized school achieves at least a half-year more than a student in an ineffectively organized school over the last two years of high school.”

Teacher leaders allow district to become more efficient in the matter in which our schools are organized to promote learning.

Our district understands and recognizes the need to empower the teacher leaders at the building level. It is at the building level where the rubber meets the road. Unfortunately, too many educational reforms have placed too much focus on a single educational leader such as the principal to be the chief facilitator in improving learning conditions of schools rather than relying on collaborative approach (Rice, 2019).

In our TLIP model, teacher leaders will play a crucial role. Not only will teacher leaders help lead and guide teacher teams, but will also serve a lead role on the overall school team, parent team, as well as serve as a representative on various district teams (Rice, 2019).

Our TLIP model will allow teacher leaders who have a record of student achievement to work with administrators to decide how to reallocate the school's budget and redesign teacher classroom schedules so that teacher leaders will have the time to coach, plan, and collaborate through the teams they lead.

It is vital that we provide opportunities for top-notch educators to utilize their skill sets, provide leadership, and provide opportunities for career advancement in the district. For taking on additional responsibilities, the district is seeking various resources to compensate teacher leaders.

Teacher leaders will be empowered to make a difference not only at the school level, but throughout the district and community as well. We expect that our teacher leaders will continue to re-culture the school, district, and community in order to support student-centered learning.

In conclusion, PLCs and Teacher Leaders are essential components of effective school improvement efforts. They foster collaboration, support professional growth, amplify teacher voice, strengthen community partnerships, and ultimately enhance student-centered learning experiences.

Human Capital Management Systems, Performance Based Compensation Systems and Professional Learning Communities: (Lazear & Gibbs, 2014; Becker & Gehart, 1996; Stoll, Bolam, et. Al., 2006)

Human capital management (HCM) systems and professional learning communities (PLCs) are interconnected in several ways. **Alignment of Professional Development:** HCM systems can help identify the professional development needs of teachers based on performance evaluations, feedback, and ongoing assessments. This information can be utilized to align the professional development opportunities offered within PLCs. HCM systems provide data-driven insights that guide the selection and design of relevant professional learning experiences for teachers.

Alignment of Goals: HCM provide the overarching structure and strategy for managing our organization's workforce, including recruitment, hiring, training, and performance management. Within this system, **Performance Based Compensation Systems** and PLCs will be aligned with the broader goals of attracting and retaining high-quality educators and improving student outcomes.

Performance Evaluation and Feedback: Our PBCS will rely on performance evaluation metrics to determine compensation levels. These metrics often include student growth and achievement data as well as other indicators of educator effectiveness. PLCs will play a vital role in this process by fostering collaboration among educators, providing a platform for sharing best practices, and facilitating ongoing feedback and support. PLCs contribute to the improvement of educators' performance, which ultimately affects their compensation through the performance-based system.

Targeted Professional Development: PLCs will serve as a catalyst for targeted professional development (PD) opportunities. Based on the feedback and evaluation data collected through PBCS, PLCs help identify specific areas where educators may require additional support or skill development. PD programs will be designed to address these needs and enhance educators' effectiveness. We hope to further incentivize educators to engage actively in professional development opportunities facilitated by PLCs.

Tracking and Monitoring Professional Growth: HCM systems often include features for tracking and monitoring employee growth and development. These systems will be leveraged to

monitor the progress of teachers' professional learning within PLCs. The data captured in HCM systems will track attendance, completion of professional development activities, and the impact of those activities on teacher performance and student outcomes.

Performance Management and Feedback: HCM systems support the process of performance management by providing a platform for setting goals, documenting observations, and conducting evaluations. Our PLCs will leverage this feedback loop to inform their collaborative work. Performance data captured in HCM systems can be used as a starting point for PLC discussions, helping teachers identify areas for improvement, share strategies, and collectively problem-solve to enhance instructional practices.

Talent Identification and Utilization: HCM systems can help identify teacher strengths and areas of expertise through performance data, certifications, and qualifications. These insights can be utilized by PLCs to identify teacher leaders and subject matter experts who can play a crucial role in guiding professional learning activities. By leveraging the expertise of these teachers, PLCs can tap into the human capital within the organization to support ongoing learning and improvement.

Data-Informed Decision Making: PLCs emphasize data analysis and collaboration to improve instruction. HCM systems provide access to various data points, including student achievement data, teacher performance data, and demographic information. These data sources can inform the work of PLCs, enabling teachers to analyze trends, identify areas for improvement, and make data-informed decisions about instructional strategies and interventions.

Cultivating a Learning Culture:

Absolute Priority 1. In summary, *HCM, PLCs, and PBCS* work together in a symbiotic relationship. They align goals, support performance evaluation and feedback, drive targeted professional development, enhance recruitment and retention efforts, and promote continuous improvement within an organization's educational ecosystem.

HCM systems and PLCs together contribute to the development of a learning culture within schools or districts. HCM systems facilitate the collection and analysis of data related to teacher performance, professional growth, and student outcomes. PLCs, on the other hand, provide the collaborative structure for teachers to share knowledge, engage in reflective practice, and continuously improve their instructional approaches. The integration of HCM systems and PLCs fosters a culture of continuous learning, where professional development is aligned with organizational goals and driven by data.

In summary, HCM systems and PLCs are interconnected through their shared focus on supporting and enhancing teacher professional growth and performance. HCM systems provide the data and infrastructure to inform decision-making and monitor progress, while PLCs create the collaborative environment necessary for teachers to learn from one another, share best

practices, and collectively improve instructional practices. By leveraging the strengths of both systems, our organization aim to create a comprehensive approach to human capital management that aligns with the goals of professional learning communities.

Grow Your Own Teacher Program

GYO programs are supported by research (Johnson & Davis, 2019). It should be noted that our district is limited because a teacher leader pipeline is not in place and that specified roles and duties. Logically, when responsibilities associated with leadership are not delineated, confusion and tensions mount, not only for teacher leaders but also for the teachers and administrators who work with them. Flexibility with teacher leader time constraints stemming from the dual roles of a teacher and leader was also a challenge that prevented teacher leader expansions.

By empowering a diverse group of teacher leaders, our district hopes to see multiple benefits such as:

- Increased student achievement and growth through the development of a shared leadership model at the school and district level
- Broader dissemination and school wide use of effective teacher strategies through an increase in teacher collaboration
- Enhanced positive school and district culture through the development and retention of highly effective teachers.
- Leadership transitional planning

This grant will allow us to create a pipeline to increase the diversity of teacher leaders in our schools. Moreover, the grant will allow us to provide teacher leader training (e.g., curriculum and instruction, diversity and inclusion, English Learners, disabilities, leadership, and data and assessment) and offset stipends for Teacher Leaders. A teacher leader pipeline will enhance the district by cultivating emerging talent while also promoting organizational capacity.

The majority of teachers in the U.S. are white; whereas the majority of students are non-minority. Our district staff mirrors this trend. We seek diversity among our teacher leaders who reflect the diversity of our communities and students we serve by creating a teacher leadership pipeline. This grant will also enable us to provide training for teacher leaders who work with teachers to better serve our diverse students, especially since many of our students are from low-income families.

A district Grow Your Own (GYO) Teacher Program is an initiative designed to recruit, support, and develop aspiring educators from within the local community to become teachers in the district's schools. It aims to address teacher shortages, improve teacher diversity, and enhance the quality of education by cultivating a pipeline of talented individuals who are already familiar with the community and committed to its success.

There is a significant need for Grow Your Own (GYO) programs and a focus on teacher diversity within the education system. The following points highlight the importance of GYO programs in addressing this need:

1. **Teacher Shortages:** Many school districts face challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers, particularly in high-need areas such as low-income communities and rural regions. GYO programs will help us address these shortages by cultivating a local talent pool of aspiring educators who have a vested interest in serving their own communities.
2. **Community Connection:** GYO programs enable us to tap into the strengths of the local community by recruiting individuals who are already familiar with the unique needs, culture, and context of the students they will serve. These candidates bring a deep understanding of the community's dynamics, challenges, and strengths, allowing for more meaningful and relevant connections with students and their families.
3. **Improved Teacher Retention:** Research shows that teachers who have strong ties to the community in which they teach are more likely to stay in their positions long-term. Our GYO programs will increase the likelihood of teacher retention by selecting candidates who are committed to making a difference in their own communities and who have personal connections and roots in the area.
4. **Enhanced Cultural Competence:** Increasing teacher diversity is essential for creating inclusive and equitable learning environments. Students from diverse backgrounds benefit from having teachers who share their cultural experiences and can serve as relatable role models. Our GYO program can help address the underrepresentation of minority teachers in the profession, thereby promoting cultural competence and providing positive representation for all students.
5. **Achievement Gap Reduction:** Research suggests that having diverse teachers can positively impact student achievement, particularly for students from marginalized backgrounds. Our GYO programs will contribute to closing the achievement gap by ensuring that students have access to teachers who understand their cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs, and unique challenges, ultimately fostering more effective teaching and learning experiences.
6. **Breaking Barriers:** GYO programs can remove barriers to entry into the teaching profession by providing financial assistance, mentorship, and support to individuals who may not have otherwise pursued a career in education due to financial constraints or lack of access to resources. By nurturing aspiring educators from diverse backgrounds, our GYO program will create a more inclusive teaching workforce.

7. Representation Matters: Students benefit from seeing teachers who reflect their own racial, ethnic, and cultural identities. When students see teachers who look like them, they are more likely to feel valued, supported, and motivated to succeed academically. Our GYO program will help increase the representation of teachers from underrepresented groups, fostering a sense of belonging and promoting educational equity.

In summary, our proposed GYO program will play a crucial role in addressing teacher shortages, promoting teacher diversity, and fostering community connections. By recruiting and supporting aspiring educators from local communities, these programs contribute to more effective teaching, increased retention rates, reduced achievement gaps, and improved outcomes for all students.

SFCG will facilitate and take part in board learning sessions. School board training plays a crucial role in ensuring the hiring of diverse staff members within educational institutions and ensuring a transitional leadership plan in place; often Teacher Leaders go on to become administrators (Rice, 2019).

Project Design

Executive Summary

Introduction: The purpose of this grant proposal is to seek funding for a Teacher Leader and Grow Your Own (GYO) teacher program. The program aims to address teacher shortages, improve teacher diversity, and enhance student achievement by recruiting, supporting, and retaining high-quality educators from within our community. And, the program will focus on building a collaborative culture and empowering teacher leaders to improve student learning and providing them with opportunities for growth outside the classroom.

Theory of Change: Our theory of change is based on the understanding that if students have access to high-quality, diverse teachers and teachers and administrators who feel supported, then student achievement will increase. We believe that investing in our staff and creating teacher leader pipelines will lead to improved student outcomes.

Objectives and Evidence-Based Methods: Our proposed program will employ evidence-based methods to foster and develop teacher leaders who are respected, valued, engaged, and supported by staff members. The Teacher Leader Incentive Program will utilize a mixed methods approach for recruitment and identification of diverse teacher leaders, including input from teachers, building administrators, years of experience, teacher evaluations, and community engagement.

Training and Professional Development: The Teacher Leader Model Standards (TLMS) will guide the work of our teacher leaders. Clearly defined roles and duties will be established to avoid confusion and foster unity among teachers and administrators. SFCG will provide training to district teacher leaders in various areas such as cultural competency, working with adult learners, leadership, assessment and data, curriculum and instruction, and technology. Similar training will be provided to principals to support their collaboration with teacher leaders.

Partnership with SFCG: SFCG will play a crucial role in the implementation of the program. They will assist in increasing the number of teacher leaders, developing sustainable teacher leader pipelines, and providing coaching and support to administrators and teachers. SFCG will also help redefine the school culture, promote peer-to-peer learning, train teachers in cultural competency/inclusion and student achievement, and play a role in board learning sessions.

Monitoring and Evaluation: To monitor the success of the program, processes and procedures will be developed in collaboration with SFCG and [REDACTED] and Associates. Surveys, interviews, and qualitative data reports will be utilized to measure success. Diversity and inclusion, accountability of school administrators, unbiased interviewing and selection processes, succession planning, and a transparent process for becoming a teacher leader will be key areas of focus for evaluation.

Use of Grant Funds: Grant funds will be used to offset teacher leader stipends, compensate the district for professional development expenditures, and support the implementation of the program. Funds will also be allocated to provide training in DEI, parental engagement, and personalized learning, as well as to build the district's GYO program in partnership with SIU-E.

GYO Program in Partnership: SIU-E will assist in recruitment, support and mentorship, financial assistance, education and training, classroom experience, graduation and employment, and ongoing support and professional development of GYO program participants. The program aims to develop a sustainable pool of highly qualified teachers who are committed to the community's success.

Long-Term Impact of GYO: The GYO Teacher Program is a long-term investment in developing a diverse and highly qualified teaching workforce. By nurturing local talent, the program will address teacher shortages, improve teacher diversity, and enhance educational outcomes for all students in the district.

Absolute Priority 1. In our organization, we have implemented a comprehensive Human Capital Management System (HCMS) and a Performance-Based Compensation System (PBCS) to optimize our workforce management and reward high performance. These systems are integral to our approach in fostering teacher development and enhancing overall educational outcomes.

At the heart of our HCMS is our Teacher Development Program, a process that enables administrators to effectively support teachers in their journey toward success. Through our TDP, administrators equip teachers with constructive feedback that is essential for their growth, development, and competence as educators. Additionally, the TDP process includes periodic walkthroughs conducted by building principals and/or assistant principals. These walkthroughs serve as opportunities for principals and assistant principals to collaborate with teachers, offering constructive suggestions, tools, and professional development (PD) opportunities to enhance their efficacy and facilitate student progress.

Our PBCS is thoughtfully designed to uphold principles of fairness, rigor, validity, reliability, and objectivity. It encompasses clear and equitable measures of teacher, principal, and other school leader performance, predominantly based on student growth and achievement. Through the PBCS, we provide educators with ongoing support and feedback tailored to their specific needs, fostering differentiation, targeting, and personalization. This includes access to relevant PD opportunities aimed at increasing effectiveness in the classroom. The results derived from our comprehensive educator evaluation and support system play a crucial role in shaping decisions related to educator preparation, recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, compensation, professional development, tenure, and promotion.

By integrating the HCMS and PBCS, we have established a robust framework that not only recognizes and rewards exceptional performance but also enables continuous improvement through targeted support and personalized development opportunities for our educators. These systems form the backbone of our organization's commitment to enhancing the quality of education and cultivating a culture of excellence among our teaching professionals.

Conclusion: This proposal seeks to create a sustainable model that will empower teacher leaders, improve student achievement, foster a collaborative culture within our district, and establish a GYO program. Our approach is embedded in the theories of HCMS and PBCS. With

the support of the grant, we aim to create lasting change by investing in our staff and building a strong and diverse teaching workforce that is deeply connected to the needs of our community.

Detailed Proposal

According to research by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research, principals are effective not by utilizing top-down management approaches but by focusing on building a collaborative culture. Successful principals are those who invest in professional learning communities and empower and harness the creativity and skill sets of teacher leaders to improve student learning (Allensworth and Hart, 2018).

Human Capital Management System and Performance Based Compensation System

As noted, Human Capital Management System (HCMS) and Performance Based Compensation System (PBCS) is our strategies for improving student achievement. We value and invest in our staff. The Teacher Leader Incentive Program is based on the theory that if there are gaps to quality, diverse educators at our schools and student achievement, then we must seek ways to support, induct and recruit staff to become quality educators. In short, our theory of change is as follows: if students had access to high quality diverse teachers and administrators who felt supported, then student achievement will increase.

Teacher Leaders

Based upon current research, we will employ a myriad of evidence based methods in our plan of action of creating teacher leader pipelines that is correlated with gains in student achievement. Evidence based methods will foster and develop teacher leaders who are:

- Respected as teachers and desire and have the capacity to learn leadership skills
- Valued by their peers
- Engaged and visible in the school and community
- Supported as teacher leaders by staff members
- Provided the time, resources, and opportunities to develop leadership skills
- Focused on student learning, results and collaboration

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/what-does-research-tell-us-about-teacher-leadership>

We will rely on a mixed methods approach to recruit and identify diverse teacher leaders including:

- Input from teacher and building administrators
 - Use trained interview teams comprised of teacher and administrators
- Years of experience (preferably 3 or more)

- Teacher evaluations
- School, district, and community engagement
- Input from building administrators

Teacher leaders and building administrators will work with SFCG to co-develop a simple and transparent process for teachers to become or be considered for teacher leaders in our efforts to create a diverse teacher leader group. These initial meetings will occur prior to the start of the school year.

Concerning training and professional development needs, the TLMS (teacher leader) Standards will guide the work of our teacher leaders. In order for teacher leaders to be successful, roles and duties must be clearly defined. If roles are not delineated, confusion will abound thus tearing down unity among our teachers and administrators.

The TLMS standards will guide teacher leaders in their understanding of the importance of being servant leaders and establishing a culture of collective responsibility (see TLMS standard breakdown in Evaluation Design section).

Our district will work with SFCG to provide training in each of the seven TLMS standards which are:

- Fostering a Collaborative Culture
- Accessing and Using Research
- Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement
- Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning
- Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement
- Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community
- Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession

SFCG will take the lead in training district teacher leaders and Teacher Leaders will receive target training in various areas (e.g., training on cultural competency, working with adult learners, leadership, assessment and data, curriculum and instruction, and technology) which will increase their capacities as teachers and teacher leaders.

Principals will be provided similar training as well as training regarding how to work with teacher leaders. SFCG will work with school principals to develop a yearly training calendar for Teacher Leaders and PLC groups. It should be noted that a key goal of the program is to invest in a distributive leadership model whereas teachers lead alongside of principals. Areas will include:

- teacher-led instructional improvement efforts;
- opportunities to shape school-wide policies and climate;
- lead professional learning communities;
- teacher mentorship programs;
- job-embedded content coaching;

- and the implementation of advisory systems

Equity Audit and Teacher Leaders

SFCG will work with district officials and [REDACTED] and Associates to help conduct an equity audit to ensure equitable student access to educational resources and opportunities through continued professional development and enrichment opportunities that grow and retain educators (**competitive preference priority 1**).

SFCG will assist with the following:

- Increase the number of teacher leaders in our high-need urban community and develop teacher leader pipelines that are sustainable
 - Help develop a rigorous selection criterion for teachers in leadership roles while ensuring a diverse pool of teacher leader candidates (selection of candidates will include a strong track record of improving student learning, and a proven ability to work with adult learners)
- Provide specialized content for a Teacher Leader Master Program (Department's Institute of Education Sciences concluded that student achievement can improve by as much as 21 percentile points when teachers participate in well-designed professional development programs)
 - SFCG will provide various resources and learning opportunities needed for Teacher Leaders to excel. It should be noted that we believe traditional colleges is not the "end all, be all" in preparing our teachers in working with our diverse students.
 - Identify and participate in various other learning sessions.
- Help create opportunities for teacher leaders to excel and grow in the district
 - Teacher Input (e.g., create a systemic system that allows teachers to have a voice in the district's mission, vision, and goals)
 - Improve outreach and collaboration with families and the community in order to support student learning
 - Leadership skill coaching
 - Response to Intervention training
 - How to formulate teacher resources?
 - How to mentor and orientate new staff members; we seek to enhance our induction and mentoring program.
- Provide coaching and support to administrators and teachers regarding teacher support and retention (SFCG will work with district administrators and Teacher Leaders to develop a yearly training schedule)
 - Develop innovative, results-based approaches to educator preparation (including a focus on robust teacher mentorship and induction programs)
 - Leadership skill training
 - SIP planning

- Help redefine the school culture to migrate educators from manager-as-leader models to instructional leader models
 - Develop collaborative adult communities of practice within a school to promote peer-to-peer learning
 - Train teachers that agree to serve in leadership roles with a focus on cultural competency/inclusion and student achievement (e.g., training on equity and implicit bias, working with adult learners, leadership, assessment and data specialists, curriculum and instruction, and technology)
- SFCG will facilitate and take part in school board learning sessions. School board training plays a crucial role in ensuring the hiring of diverse staff members within educational institutions. According to Rice (2019) here are some key reasons why school board training is important in this regard:
 - Promoting inclusivity: School board training emphasizes the value of diversity and inclusion in education. It helps board members understand the importance of creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for students, staff, and families from various backgrounds. By hiring diverse staff members, schools can foster a sense of belonging and provide role models that reflect the diversity of their student population.
 - Enhancing cultural competence: School board training provides board members with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively navigate cultural differences. It helps them recognize biases, stereotypes, and barriers that may hinder the recruitment and retention of diverse staff members. Through training, board members can develop cultural competence and sensitivity, enabling them to make informed decisions that promote equity and diversity.
 - Ensuring equitable hiring practices: School board training educates board members about the legal and ethical aspects of hiring practices. It emphasizes the importance of fair and unbiased recruitment processes that consider the qualifications, experiences, and potential of candidates, rather than their demographic backgrounds. Training helps board members understand the need to establish transparent procedures, mitigate unconscious biases, and implement measures to attract a diverse pool of applicants.
 - Reflecting student demographics: Hiring a diverse staff is crucial for creating an inclusive learning environment that reflects the experiences and perspectives of all students. School board training helps board members recognize the demographic makeup of their student population and understand the benefits of hiring staff members from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds. This ensures that students have access to educators who can relate to their experiences and provide culturally responsive instruction.
 - Promoting innovation and excellence: Diverse staff members bring a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and talents to the school community. By hiring

individuals with diverse backgrounds, schools can tap into a variety of ideas, approaches, and teaching methods. This diversity of thought and experience fosters innovation, encourages collaboration, and enhances the overall quality of education provided.

In summary, school board training is essential for promoting the hiring of diverse staff members. It helps board members develop the knowledge, skills, and awareness necessary to create inclusive hiring practices that reflect the diversity of their student population. By embracing diversity, schools can enhance educational outcomes, foster a positive school climate, and prepare students for a multicultural society.

Grant funds will be used to offset teacher leader stipends (serving as teacher leaders and obtaining professional development) and to compensate the district for professional development expenditures in training teacher leaders, administrators, service partners and staff. Teacher leaders will be expected to enhance the capacity of their learning teams to work interdependently *to achieve common goals*):

- Chair meetings
- Develop team norms and agendas
- Serve as a link between teacher teams and the building learning team (e.g., administration and faculty; help to create a school improvement plan and help determine how the schools budget should be prioritized)
 - Develop and/or review building protocols (e.g., safety)
 - Planning/implementing school-wide initiatives and celebrating success
 - Provide assistance with federal, state, or local student assessments
- Coach teachers in how to analyze student assessment data and instruct teachers on instructional best practices
 - Ensuring that teachers are provided copies of various learning standards and assisting in soliciting staff input regarding the district's curriculum guide
 - Ensuring that staff knows and understand how to “unpack” learning standards
- Identify professional development needs
 - Serving as a guide on how to teach culturally responsively
- Assisting with staff professional development needs
 - New teachers are mentored.
 - Staff development is maintained.
- Improve communications with parents and community stakeholders
- Promote equitable classroom practices and promote an understanding of implicit bias in classroom settings
- Model a desire to continuously learn in order to effectively lead
- Serve as a link regarding teacher input regarding district goals and objectives and ensure district goals and objectives are aligned to teachers' work

A key duty of Teacher Leaders will be to oversee PLC teams. To support development and incentivize Teacher Leaders and PLC teams, we will develop a tiered reward recognition system (gold/silver/bronze) (**Absolute Priority 1**). We will recognize Teacher Leaders, PLC teams, and

general teachers and support staff who demonstrates success that merits recognition and replication. Criteria will include the obtainment of meeting group and individual goals. When goals are reached, individuals and groups will receive financial compensation. SFCG will assist administrators and Teacher Leaders in designing this program.

Teacher leaders can help promote parental engagement which is critical to student achievement. Who knows our students better than our parents and guardians? Working alongside parents and guardians can help our district better instruct students. BEAC will provide targeted trainings in the areas of DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) and parental engagement. BEAC will work with district administrators to develop a training schedule. BEAC will work with district administrators, Teacher Leaders, and SFCG to plan collaborative work sessions with other districts who are investing in PLCs and Teacher Leaders.

Learning Partners

7 Mindsets will work with principals to develop trainings for teachers. This training will occur on staff professional development days and/or after school as staff will receive a stipend. Also, SFCG will provide administrative assistant learning sessions to district staff to help support educational reforms and provide general training related to staff health and well-being.

Varsity Tutors will train staff during teacher professional development days during the start of the school year. Their training will help ensure diversity in student instruction. Training schedules will be made in collaboration with administration.

McGraw Hill will work with Teacher Leaders and administrators to align the districts' curriculum to state standards. This will entail the adoption of funding new curricula materials as some of our math and ELA materials are dated. McGraw Hill representative will work with administrators to secure learning session dates.

SIU-E will work with the district in helping us to build the district's GYO program; increase the diversity of our workforce (**competitive performance priority 2**). Studies suggest that all students benefit from having teachers of color; white students also benefit from academically and socially from having teachers from diverse backgrounds. Sadly, although 50% of public school students are of color, only 25% of teachers were of color (Will, 2018). SIU-E will work with district administrators to:

1. **Recruitment:** The program identifies prospective diverse candidates within the community who have a passion for teaching and a desire to make a positive impact on students' lives and mirror our students. Recruitment efforts may target high school students, paraprofessionals, community members, and individuals from underrepresented backgrounds.
2. **Support and Mentorship:** Selected candidates are provided with comprehensive support throughout their journey to become teachers. This support includes mentoring, guidance, and access to resources that help them navigate the process of becoming certified teachers. Mentors, who are experienced educators in the district, offer guidance and

support to GYO participants, helping them develop their teaching skills and adjust to the profession.

3. **Financial Assistance:** We will offer financial incentives or scholarships to participants to help cover the costs associated with obtaining teaching credentials or pursuing a degree in education. This support helps reduce financial barriers and encourages individuals to pursue a career in teaching.
4. **Education and Training:** We will work directly with the college to ensure that participants receive high-quality instruction and are equipped with effective teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and an understanding of educational theories and practices. More importantly, how to work with our demographic of students.
5. **Classroom Experience:** GYO participants will be given opportunities to gain practical classroom experience through internships, field placements, or apprenticeships. They will work closely with experienced teachers, observing and gradually assuming teaching responsibilities under their guidance. This hands-on experience allows participants to apply their knowledge in real classroom settings and build confidence in their abilities.
6. **Graduation and Employment:** Upon completing the required coursework, examinations, and student teaching experiences, GYO participants graduate from the program and are eligible for teaching positions within the district.
7. **Ongoing Support and Professional Development:** Once employed as teachers, GYO program graduates will receive ongoing support and professional development opportunities. The district will continue to provide mentorship, coaching, and access to relevant training to help these new teachers further develop their instructional skills and continue growing as educators.

Initial meetings will take place during the summer and/or before September. We aim to recruit individuals based on our teacher shortages for the program and provide them a salary.

All of our schools are labeled as **high-need schools**. Under **Competitive Preference Priority 2**, our program will cultivate and ultimately place trained teachers in teaching assignments throughout the district, which will address our overall academic deficiencies. All individuals who matriculate through our GYO will receive training in how to teach our student population successfully.

We consider our GYO Teacher Program to be a long-term investment that aims to develop a sustainable pool of highly qualified teachers who are deeply committed to the success of the community's students. By recruiting, supporting, and nurturing local talent, our GYO program will help address teacher shortages, improve teacher diversity, and ultimately enhance the educational experience and outcomes for all students in the district.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To increase the number of teacher leaders and to monitor our program's success, we will work with SFCG and [REDACTED] and Associates to develop processes and procedures and protocols such as surveys and interviews to measure success. And, we will rely on SFCG and [REDACTED] to:

- Measure diversity and inclusion (monitoring how many people have risen to leadership posts with a focus on minority candidates)
- Holding school administrators more accountable to encourage top-notch educators to become leaders
- Provide training for unbiased interviewing and selection processes
- Incorporate succession planning; focus on transitions
- A simple and transparent process to become a teacher leader

Additionally, to monitor the success of the TLIP program, various methods will be employed such as: qualitative data reports (e.g., number of teacher leader trainings, increase in teacher leaders, and increase in peer collaboration), surveys, external evaluator, and partner feedback. Surveys will be twice a year; [REDACTED] will help examine and student the trends between pre and post surveys during the school year.

As noted, SFCG works with a plethora of districts in establishing Teacher Leaders and PLC groups. We will rely on SFCG as the linchpin to work collaboratively with other districts who have agreed to share resources, expertise and engage in thoughtful dialogue. These districts include Cairo School District 1, Lincoln SD 156, and Englewood Public School District.

A key focus area is providing teacher leaders professional development in how to effectively serve diverse learners (e.g., minority, disabilities, and gifted) in order that teacher leaders can properly coach other teachers. Learning how to teach according to student needs (personalized learning) and building relationships with students will foster student achievement.

Management Plan

The below management plan and staffing structure will be used to support the TLIP program.

Position	Qualifications	Key Roles/Duties
Superintendent: (20%)	PEL Administrative Endorsement	Provide oversight
Assistant Superintendent (20%)	PEL Administrative Endorsement	Work with principals to help establish Teacher Leaders and PLCs and work with service providers
Principal (50%)	PEL Administrative Endorsement	Work with Teacher Leaders and Service Providers
Teacher Leaders (receive stipend)	Certified Teachers	Model proficient and replicable practice; coach residents and evaluate resident performance; help professionalize the field.
Administrative Assistant (100%)	High School Diploma and/or experience	Provide clerical support
Project Director: [REDACTED] (contractual)	Advanced Education Degree and specializes in organization and management	Work with the superintendent to carry out program initiatives
SFCG (Contractual)	Appropriate experience in PLCs and Teacher Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide lead support in establishing PLC teams and Teacher Leader trainings. ▪ Facilitate and participate in school board trainings. ▪ Help develop a Tiered Recognition System
[REDACTED] and Associates (Contractual)	Over 30 years' experience and doctorate degree	External evaluators
SIU-E	State approved	Teacher Endorsement Programs-Grow Your Own
BEAC (contractual)	Appropriate experience in education and working with diverse populations	DEI trainings and parental engagement
7 Mindsets (contractual)	Appropriate experience in education and working with diverse populations	Work with staff and students regarding health and well-being and how to improve work cultures
Varsity Tutors (contractual)	Appropriate experience in education and working with diverse populations	Work alongside staff to ensure instruction by a diverse staff

McGraw Hill
(contractual)

Appropriate experience in
education and working with
diverse populations

Work with Teacher Leaders
to align curriculum to state
standards

Time Frame

Key Tasks for Implementation	Responsibility	Timeframe
Recruit and identify diverse teacher leaders	Principal	Aug.-Sept
General Staff training on PLCs	SFCG	Aug.-Sept
Board Training on Hiring and Diversity	SFCG	Aug.-Sept.
Develop a simple and transparent process for teachers to become or be considered for teacher leaders	SFCG/Principal	Aug.-Oct
Surveys of parents/community, teachers, and administrators given	SFCG/District Admin.	Aug.-Sept.
Benchmark data will be analyzed	SFCG/ [REDACTED] and Assoc.	Aug.-Sept.
Teacher leader training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NNT0Y standards and role of teacher leaders ○ Data, curriculum, and instruction (e.g., differentiated instruction) ○ Cultural competency ○ Collect research ○ Community/parental engagement ○ PLO presentation ○ Advocates for student learning ○ RTI ○ Gallup ○ Curriculum Resources ○ SIP 	SFCG	Sept.-Apr.
Administrative Leaders Training: how to work with Teacher Leaders, Skill Strength Building, and SIP	SFCG	Sept.-Apr.
Periodic teacher leader meetings with administration	Principals	Sept.-Apr.
Ensuring practices are aligned to district policies and procedures	Supt./Board	Sept.-Mar.
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Parental Engagement	BEAC	Sept.-Apr.
Health and Well-being trainings	7 Mindsets and SFCG	Sept.-Apr.
Administrative Assistant Trainings	SFCG	Sept.-Apr.
Ensure diverse instruction between students/teachers	Varity Tutors	Sept.-Apr.

Curriculum Alignment	McGraw Hill	Sept.-Apr.
Identify future diverse teachers	SIU-E	Sept.-Apr.
Equity Audit to ensure adequacy of resources and opportunity for undeserved students	SFCG and [REDACTED] and Associates	Oct.-Nov.
Develop Tiered Recognition System	SFCG, Administrators, and Teacher Leaders	Sept.-Oct.
Program evaluation		Apr.-May

Adequacy of Resources

Sustainability

We believe that leadership starts from out front and on top and not from behind. Therefore, our corporation is optimistic that the TLIP program will be sustained because it is supported and approved by our school board. The governance team (school board and superintendent) remains firm in their commitment to expanding the district wide collaboration model of PLCs and Teacher Leaders.

To ensure the model is sustained and the crucial role teacher leaders will perform in the model, the governance team will seek to codify and align the program to district's policies and procedures. Our governance team regularly reviews its policy manual which serves as the guide to district operations.

Building administrators will play a lead role in making sure that teacher leaders play a key role in the development of the school improvement plan and for ensuring that various systems are in place that utilizes teacher leaders (e.g., PLC meetings led by teacher leaders). Administrators will be evaluated in part based on the how they are working with and through teacher leaders to help govern the affairs of the school.

To assist in making sure that teacher leaders are engrained throughout the district, annually the district will offer district wide training concerning the role of PLCs and the important role teacher leaders play in various school buildings. The district will monitor the success of our PLCs and teacher leaders by deploying various surveys and collecting other types of data (e.g., trainings offered, number of meetings, and focus groups).

We will seek to sustain the relationship of our various partners for training purposes. To enhance our relationship, we will solicit annual feedback from our partners in an effort to better understand our program strengths and weaknesses which will increase the sustainability of our program model. Our organization will continue to work with our partners to help provide training based on the professional development needs that may arise from our teacher leaders and the teams they represent.

A major cost factor related to the sustainability of the PLC model is providing stipends for staff and providing compensation for trainers. The superintendent will annually propose a budget to the school board that allocates for PLC training and stipends of teacher leaders. We will use district funds to continue to complement overall reform efforts.

Annually, the district will analyze our staff needs to ensure we have sufficient human capacity to serve as teacher leaders.

Evaluation and Monitoring of the Plan

The evaluation will be led by [REDACTED] who has over 30 year' experience. He is a noted educator and research and is on staff at Howard University. He is fluent in program development and the use of qualitative and quantitative research including statistical analysis.

Additionally, he was the superintendent of Metro Nashville Public Schools (Director of Schools), resulted in schools that became more equitable as the district saw accelerated growth for all student groups in both reading and mathematics Pre-K through grade 5.

[REDACTED] work has garnered him numerous honors and awards and he humbly serves on numerous local and international boards. Some of them include being honored as the Met-Life Middle School Principal of the Year for the State of Maryland in 2009. In 2010, [REDACTED] was the recipient of the American Educational Research Association's Outstanding Dissertation Award in the area of Educational Leadership. He was awarded the Ambassador Andrew Young Leadership Award in 2016. In 2018, both Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. honored him with the Environmental Leadership Award and the Community Impact Award.

[REDACTED] and Associates will work with SFCG to help ensure program work is properly monitored, evaluated, and analyzed by utilizing sound research methodologies. The following research questions will guide our program:

- How can we improve the pipeline to teacher leaders
- How can we strengthen the program
- How can we share our findings (e.g., with other districts; ISBE)
- What additional trainings teacher leaders need to be effective
- How teacher leaders would like to be more involved in the school/district outside of their classrooms
- How to measure the impact teacher leaders have on student achievement and school culture

In order to properly monitor, evaluate, and analyze the district's efforts to expand our program, a mixed methods approach will be utilized comprised of collecting qualitative and quantitative data by relying on focus groups, surveys, and relying on evaluation feedback (evaluation forms) obtained by district providers.

Baseline data will be collected and periodically reviewed by the following:

- Community/parent survey
- Teacher survey
- Administrative survey
- Interviews with teacher leaders
- Documents (Standardized tests)
- NNTOTY Teacher leader model standards

To ensure research methodology credibility, appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that we analyze what we intended to analyze as noted in our district research questions. Further, to insure credibility, we will explore various themes from our research that aligns with our research questions.

Triangulation will be utilized to ensure research trustworthiness. Thus, [REDACTED] and Associates will collect and analyze data from various sources such as surveys and interviews as well as corroborating evidence from various stakeholders.

The NNTYO standards will guide the effectiveness of teacher leaders. Interviews and/or focus group will commence with teacher leaders to understand their level awareness with the NNTYO standards. After this awareness measure, teacher leaders will receive training on the standards throughout the course of the school year.

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Appendix C Logic Model

Logic Model: Teacher Leader Incentive Program (TLIP) and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Inputs:

- Funding: Grant funds to support teacher leader stipends, incentives, and professional development expenditures.
- Human Capital: Teachers and administrators with diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- PBCS: merit based incentive program.
- External Support: Partnership with SFCG (Strategic Funding and Consulting Group), Shawn Joseph and Associates, and collaborating districts (Richmond Community Schools, Lincoln SD 156, Englewood Public School District).
- Training Resources: BEAC (Example training provider) to deliver targeted trainings on diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and parental engagement.

Activities:

1. Recruitment and Selection of Teacher Leaders:
 - Conduct interviews and evaluations using a trained interview team comprising teachers and administrators.
 - Consider years of experience, teacher evaluations, school, district, and community engagement for selection.
 - Develop a transparent process for teachers to become or be considered as teacher leaders.
2. Training and Professional Development for Teacher Leaders and Administrators:
 - Utilize TLMS (Teacher Leader Management System) standards to guide teacher leaders.
 - Provide training in the seven TLMS standards to enhance teacher leaders' capacity.
 - Offer training on cultural competency, working with adult learners, leadership, assessment and data, curriculum and instruction, and technology.
 - Provide similar training to principals on working with teacher leaders.
3. Support for Teacher Leaders and Administrators:
 - Provide coaching and support to administrators and teachers regarding teacher support, retention, and leadership.
 - Develop innovative approaches to educator preparation, including robust teacher mentorship and induction programs.
 - Establish collaborative adult communities of practice to promote peer-to-peer learning.
 - Foster a culture of collective responsibility and instructional leadership.

Outputs:

- Increased number of teacher leaders in the high-need community.
- Sustainable teacher leader pipelines established.
- Improved outreach and collaboration with families and the community.
- Redefined school culture to emphasize instructional leadership and collaboration.

- Collaborative adult communities of practice established.
- Teacher leaders trained in cultural competency, inclusion, and student achievement.

Outcomes:

- Improved student achievement resulting from increased access to high-quality diverse educators.
- Enhanced teacher performance and instructional practices through the leadership of teacher leaders.
- Increased parental engagement and collaboration, leading to better student outcomes.
- Improved understanding of implicit bias and equitable classroom practices.
- Increased capacity of teacher leaders to provide effective coaching and support to their peers.
- Aligned district goals and objectives with teacher input and ensure teacher work aligns with district goals.

Impact:

- Creation of a collaborative culture led by effective principals/teacher leaders.
- Continuous improvement of student learning through the empowerment of teacher leaders.
- Building a sustainable and diverse pool of teacher leaders.
- Cultivation of a learning community focused on student-centered education.
- Improved communication and coordination between teachers, administrators, and the community.
- Progress towards achieving district-wide goals and objectives.
- Development of personalized learning approaches and strategies for diverse learners.
- Increased awareness and implementation of DEI principles and practices.

Evaluation:

- Utilize surveys, interviews, and qualitative data reports to measure success.
- Monitor diversity and inclusion in leadership positions.
- Hold school administrators accountable for encouraging educator leadership.
- Implement succession planning and transition support.
- Assess the effectiveness of TLIP program through external evaluators and partner feedback.